



Qi Benyu was a member of Chairman Mao's staff, and of the Central Cultural Revolution Group until his arrest and imprisonment in 1968. He remained fervently loyal to Mao Zedong's belief in the necessity for continuing the revolution under the dictatorship of the proletariat so as to combat revisionism and prevent the restoration of capitalism. After his release from prison, Qi Benyu wrote this memoir revealing his continuing commitment to Chairman Mao's proletarian vision for the future.

# QI BENYU'S MEMOIRS

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## Translator's Preface

Qi Benyu was a member of Chairman Mao's staff, and of the Central Cultural Revolution Group until his arrest and imprisonment in 1968. He remained fervently loyal to Mao Zedong's belief in the necessity for continuing the revolution under the dictatorship of the proletariat so as to combat revisionism and prevent the restoration of capitalism. After his release from prison, Qi Benyu wrote this memoir revealing his continuing commitment to Chairman Mao's proletarian vision for the future.

This memoir contains valuable insights into the earliest days of the People's Republic of China including all of the major political movements and campaigns up to and including the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution.

It also helps to understand the profound differences between the genuine proletarian revolutionaries, at the head of which stood Mao Zedong, and the leaders who lacked confidence in the socialist road, and who paved the way for the restoration of capitalism, and ultimately, for the emergence of China as a country pursuing a social-imperialist agenda.

The crucial importance of the battle between restricting what Marx called bourgeois right, or allowing it to expand and grow, is central to the differences between Mao Zedong and the Liu Shaoqi-Deng Xiaoping revisionist faction.

This is a long memoir, and my Chinese is far from fluent. I have used online translators and, where they have made mistakes, or created clumsiness of expression, or revealed obscure idiomatic expressions or used unfamiliar new political jargon, I have tried to render these in the best possible English language. I have also provided extensive footnotes where additional information may possibly be of benefit to the reader.

The authenticity and credibility of Qi Benyu's Memoir makes the provision of such material of great assistance, particularly in persuading those within our own left who are not yet convinced that China is a country where the restoration of capitalism has regrettably succeeded.

My Party, the Communist Party of Australia (Marxist-Leninist), has attempted to explain contemporary China in our theoretical journal *Australian Communist*, and in the publication *Explaining China: how a socialist country took the capitalist road to social-imperialism*. They are available in the Media and Archives drop-down menu on our website: <https://cpaml.org/>

A further reading on Qi Benyu is the tribute written by Lao Tian, who describes himself as a "scholar in China who uses serious Marxism-Leninism and Mao Zedong Thought to study the historical problems and current social problems after the founding of the People's Republic of China." This tribute has been translated and is available here: [servethepeople: Lao Tian: Teacher Mao Zedong's history graduate student Qi Benyu: I miss Comrade Qi Benyu \(mike-servethepeople.blogspot.com\)](http://servethepeople.com)

Red greetings to all readers of Qi Benyu's Memoirs,

Nick G.

Chairperson, Communist Party of Australia (Marxist-Leninist)

## Part One: My teenage years

### Chapter 1 Acceptance and Enlightenment: From a Weihai Child Observing the "Sea Festival" to a Shanghai Teenager Addicted to Books

I was born in Weihai, Shandong Province, on May 8, 1931. In September of that year, the Events of September 18th took place, and Japan invaded the three eastern provinces of China.

My father's name was Qi Yifeng. He studied a bit of scripture as a child, but after interrupting his studies due to the decline of his family, he worked in a number of small jobs to make ends meet, first buying vegetables from the countryside and selling them in the city, then being asked by my grandfather to work as a janitor at Jinshan Ding High School, then working at a rice shop in Wuhu, then being introduced by my fourth aunt to work as a seaman on a British ship, and finally landing in Shanghai, where he worked as a small clerk in a customs brokerage. My mother's name was Cong Xiumei. She was the youngest daughter of one of my grandfather's best friends. She was less than 17 when she married my father in 1930, and she took charge of everything in the house as soon as she arrived, including taking care of my grandfather, who was already paralysed by a stroke, until his death in 1941. My mother had the traditional virtue of courtesy and meekness of Shandong women.

My grandfather's name was Qi Xinhai. He was the last student (xiuca) of the late Qing Dynasty and the most learned man in our family. He suffered a stroke and was paralysed in 1929 and was nursed in bed. He was the eldest of his three brothers; his second brother died early and his third brother, my 'youngest grandfather', later became the steward of the Chi family's small ancestral hall. Every year I would go with my grandfather's generation to the small ancestral hall of the Qi family to worship at the statue of Qi Jiguang, and from them I heard stories of my ancestor, Qi Jiguang, fighting against the Japanese invader.

My grandfather was my first teacher in life, my first real teacher. My father was working in Shanghai and couldn't take care of me, and my mother had to take care of the household and didn't have much time for me, so my grandfather took it upon himself to educate me culturally. When I was three or four years old, I often turned somersaults on my grandfather's sickbed. He grabbed me, told me stories, told me to recite famous sayings in the "Four Books and Five Classics," and taught me to read. He taught me most of the "San Zi Jing" when I was just over four years old, and also taught me "The Book of Changes" and "The Book of Songs" when I was less than five years old, and also taught me Tang and Song Poetry

I began reading Rousseau, a French thinker and de facto originator of French Revolutionary thought, on his father's lap, and I began to receive enlightenment on my grandfather's sickbed. I didn't understand anything at that time and I still didn't understand what he was explaining. What tempted me at that time was the snacks that were there because I could only eat them if I had memorised the book correctly. Grandfather originally intended to follow the path of the imperial examinations to achieve fame and glory; when the Qing court abolished the imperial examination system in 1905, this path was cut off and he had to work as a bookkeeper in the Qing Hua Silver House in Weihai to earn money and support his family.

One of my most vivid memories from my childhood was when I was playing on the beach and saw a large group of people performing a "sea festival", but I didn't understand what they were doing. When I was about five or six years old, I went to the Yellow Sea with some of my friends to play in the water and saw some old people lighting incense, burning paper, spreading wine and throwing

white steamed buns into the sea, crying as they did so. At that time, white steamed buns were so precious that poor people could not afford to eat them, so why did they throw them into the sea? We kids watched there for quite a while and just couldn't understand it. When I got home, I asked my grandfather about it, and he sighed and said, "Hey, it's been forty years, and there's still a 'sea festival'!" When I asked what a 'sea festival' was, my grandfather told me about the Sino-Japanese War, in which the sailors of Weihai fought against the Japanese and thousands of people died in the sea. After that, every New Year and Qingming, the people of Weihai would go to the sea to pay their respects to the sailors who died in the sea. In the early years of the "sea festival", the beach opposite Liu Gong Island was filled with incense and crowds.

I couldn't understand everything my grandfather told me, but it was a great shock to my young heart and a sowing of patriotism, so to speak. At that time, the Japanese had already invaded the three eastern provinces of China, and the "sea festival" was a sign that the people of Weihai had a foreboding feeling that the Japanese were coming again. The sacrifices to the dead were accusing Japan of the crimes committed against us Chinese in the past, and calling for fighters to resist aggression and defend the sea and territories.

My nickname is Qi Yingke, and my big name is Qi Zhendong. When I entered elementary school in the autumn of 1936, my grandfather gave me the scientific name Qi Benyu (I am in my own generation) according to my family genealogy. Because of the pre-school enlightenment given by my grandfather, I got good grades as soon as I enrolled. I got the first place in the first grade in the joint entrance examination of the whole school, and was awarded by the principal personally. Unexpectedly, in the second year, the things predicted by the "Sea Festival" happened. The Japanese occupied Weihai, the people of Weihai were once again subjected to humiliation by the Japanese, and the school was forced to close. Before classes were suspended, the teacher led us students to swear under the national flag that we would always love our motherland. The headmaster also came to speak, saying that now that the Japanese had come to our land and occupied Weihai, we should not forget our motherland, we should learn from Yue Fei and Qi Jiguang, we should resist to the end, that the land does not distinguish between north and south, and people cannot distinguish between the old and the young, we all have to resist the Japanese. Although I was small, I remember these words of the headmaster particularly well. However, the Kuomintang troops ran away without resistance. So, from a young age I had no good impression of the Nationalist army and felt that they had failed to defend the motherland. Soon after, the Japanese school board sent a different headmaster to re-open the classes. The headmaster changed, but the teachers who taught were all the same as before.

That year, the Grand Patriarch of the Qi clan called a meeting at the Qi clan's Grand Ancestral Hall and asked all the eldest sons of each family to attend. My grandfather, the eldest son, was too paralysed to go, and his eldest son, my only son, my father, was in Shanghai at the time, so my grandfather asked my little grandfather to lead me to the meeting. In the large ancestral hall, I followed my little grandfather's instructions and first knelt with the adults to worship the statue of my ancestor Qi Jiguang, and then listened to the patriarch's speech. The patriarch said, since the Japanese came to our land, we all have to be prepared, the Japanese will find trouble with our Qi family. Our family and the Japanese have been feuding for centuries, and neither side can forget it ..... Don't shame your ancestors. No matter how the Japanese beat you, you can't surrender, you especially can't be a traitor and help the Japanese harm the Chinese. If a person surnamed Qi becomes a traitor, he should no longer be surnamed Qi, and is no longer a member of our Qi family; all members of the Qi family can scold him, beat him and kill him. If you don't dare to kill him, then

tie him up in the ancestral hall and let us deal with him according to the family law. The patriarch also said that if your children can join the army to fight against Japan, go and join the army .....

At that time, as soon as I heard the reference to killing people, I was quite frightened, and after the meeting I came back and learnt from my mother what the patriarch meant. Mum said that the patriarch was right. When I said that he was going to kill people, my mother explained to me that if the patriarch was not harsh, and allowed people to become traitors, they would be committing a great sin, so he had to be harsh. I didn't understand what my mother said, but when I was a bit older, I understood that some bad people had to be killed.

But the Japanese came, not to avenge their personal vendetta against the Qi family, but to make the Chinese slaves for them and to occupy the whole of China. But the patriarch's speech was really useful to the people of the Qi clan. For a few young men listened to it and went to join the army, and it is true that no one surnamed Qi became a traitor in Weihai afterwards. My cousin Gu Yuanzhen (a soldier) also told me that after the liberation of Weihai, when we looked for traitors, we could not find any surnamed Qi.

When the Pacific War broke out in December 1941, the British began to flee Shanghai. By then my grandfather had already died and my father, worried that Britain had declared war with Japan and thinking of his wife and children, sent a sum of money through Qinghua Bank and told us to hurry to Yantai and take a British ship to Shanghai, otherwise it would be too late as British merchant ships to Shanghai were already restricted and could stop sailing at any time. The Qinghua Bank was the largest bank in Weihai at the time, and it was this bank that my grandfather turned to when he abandoned literature to become a businessman after the abolition of the imperial examinations, dealing in gold and silver jewellery. So the bank was responsible enough to inform my mother about my father's remittance and tell her to go to Shanghai. My mother was very happy with my father's decision, and after receiving the money from the bank, she sold what she could and gave away what she could, said goodbye to friends and family, took my two sisters and me by coach to Yantai, and then took a British ship to Shanghai to reunite with my father.

On the long-distance bus ride from Weihai to Yantai, I vomited halfway through the journey because I was carsick. At that time, there were often anti-Japanese guerrillas operating along the route, and the bus was escorted by Japanese soldiers. When I vomited, one of the Japanese soldiers said in hard Chinese that " the child was infected with cholera" and wanted to throw me off the bus. My mother begged and pleaded. The passengers on the bus knew it was not cholera and spoke up for my mother, so I was not thrown off the bus. Otherwise, everything that happened afterwards, including joining the underground, working for the Central Committee and being imprisoned for 18 years, might not have existed.

We arrived in Shanghai in the spring and summer of 1942. When I arrived in Shanghai I was in the fifth grade at Xicheng Primary School. I was influenced by my grandfather, who cared about the world's affairs and loved to read, and when I arrived in Greater Shanghai, I wanted to read more books. I had an elderly aunt who was also in Shanghai and she told me that there was a children's library near Jiaozhou Road where there were many books that students could go and read and borrow. I looked for it and found a small, brightly lit building with a large collection of books. I used to go there after school and not only read there, but also borrowed books from there, literature, history, maps and natural science books, anything I was interested in and thought I could understand, I read it and borrowed it, and I was so engrossed in it that I never tired of it.

## **Chapter Two : Pursuing Truth - From a Young Student Who was Dissatisfied with Reality To an Underground Party Members Who Was Engaged In Revolution**

After the outbreak of the Pacific War, the business of my father's customs brokerage firm was depressed and my father's salary was reduced, making life difficult for the family. In order to save on rent and at the same time improve the living conditions of the family of five, my family moved to Nanshi in 1943 and lived in a private house at No. 67 Penglai Road. It was too far to travel from Nanshi to Xicheng Primary School, so I transferred to Nian Ci Primary School, which was near my home. It was a school set up by a philanthropist in memory of his mother. I finished Grade 6 at Nian Ci Primary School and after graduating, I was enrolled in Poor Students' Scholarship at the "The News" and was assigned to Deyun Secondary School, then called Jianping Secondary School.

In order to supplement the family my parents borrowed money to open a small shop downstairs, by the mother to take care of, selling some tobacco, alcohol, matches and other daily necessities. Small shops do make some money, but trouble comes with it. The youth gang should force "protect you", the protection fee is a surplus of ten draw one, two. If you don't give the money, don't open the shop. The Japanese tax office also has to draw money, although less than the Youth Gang, but it is also about 10 percent of the surplus. These two sums are two or thirty percent. There are fake small agents, wearing a broken badge, to the shop to ask for money not to say, but also often do not give money to take cigarettes, the whole bottle of wine, sometimes a few cigarettes, a few bottles of wine. So, at least half of the small shop's income is gone.

Once, the little spy came again. There was a bottle of good wine. The price was very expensive. My mother was really reluctant to let him take it, so she wanted to hide it, but she was too late. When the little agent saw it, he insisted on taking it away. The little spy became furious and falsely accused my mother of being an intelligence agent for the New Fourth Army and took her to the Japanese gendarmerie. When I came back from school, I heard from the old tanner at my doorstep that the sky had fallen and ran to the gendarmerie. The gendarmerie, also on Penglai Road, was only 700 to 800 metres from my house, so I ran almost to the gendarmerie's entrance in one breath. I was a simple child, and I wanted to find my mother, so I rushed inside regardless. Fortunately, the two Japanese soldiers who were standing guard saw that I was a child and didn't shoot me, so one stayed where he was and the other chased me to the entrance of a building inside and caught me. At that time, there was a meeting of Japanese gendarmerie officers inside the building, and I disturbed their meeting. A Japanese man in glasses, probably the head of the gendarmerie, asked me through his Japanese interpreter what I was doing here. I shouted, "I am a student and my mother has been taken in by you, my mother is a very nice person, why are you taking my mother?" The Japanese man with glasses then talked to the others, but I didn't understand anything. A few minutes later someone brought my mother to me and she was followed by a Chinese guy who said that my mother was an intelligence agent for the New Fourth Army. Although my mother was uneducated, she was not afraid when things happened, she was calm and collected, and she even helped my fourth aunt smuggle short guns to the guerrillas when she was in Weihai. She said, "It's not true, I run a small shop and sell tobacco and wine, and the two people who work for you often take my things and don't pay, so when I asked him for money, he got angry and said I was an intelligence agent for the New Fourth Army and arrested me ". She said, "I am a good citizen, I have a good citizen's card". Those little spies couldn't even tell him what my mother's surname or name was. The Japanese leader in glasses heard my mother's arguments and immediately understood what was going on, so he let my mother go.

I didn't do anything significant when I was a child, and this time accusing the Japanese gendarmerie was the biggest thing my mother had ever done. When my father came home and heard about it from my mother, he was so happy that the next day he bought me a doctor's gold pen and a comic book called "Shen Xiang Saves His Mother" as prizes. I used the pen for many years, but I read the book once and lost it. I was ashamed! I didn't have the skills of Shen Xiang, otherwise I would have punished the Japanese spies. But after that, I hated people who worked for the Japanese even more.

In our Jianping Middle School, there was an educator sent by the Japanese puppets. His surname was Zhou. He was at least an intellectual, but somehow he worked for the Japanese with a clear conscience. When we scolded traitors for "wearing a squeaky leather shoe<sup>1</sup> and selling their ancestors and then selling their mothers", he was beside himself with a sad face. The Germans had lost the war and the Japanese were about to be finished. We students knew a little bit about the situation, but he still lectured on "the Greater East Asia common prosperity" and "anti-Communism is the only way to save the country" in his training classes. We all hated him. One time, when we knew he was coming for another training lesson, we drew a turtle on the blackboard with thirteen stripes on its body, and the turtle was holding a Japanese propaganda flag with the words "Down with traitors" written next to it. The turtle has thirteen stripes, four legs plus a head and a tail, which equals six feet, making it "thirteen pieces and six feet". In Shanghainese, "thirteen pieces and six feet" means to scold someone for being shameless. When the trainer entered the classroom and saw the turtle with "13 pieces and six feet" on the blackboard, his face turned white with anger and he quickly wiped it off himself, adding: "You always call me a traitor, but I am trying to save China by peacefully opposing the Communist Party", "Chairman Wang (Jingwei)<sup>2</sup> is a follower of Sun Yat-sen and is his best student. Chiang Kai-shek oppressed him, and it was Chairman Wang who put forward the slogan of 'peacefully opposing the Communist Party to save China'", "You call me a traitor, I am for the good of the Chinese people, have I ever taught you to be traitors? I have taught you all how to cultivate yourselves and how to save China, I have not taught you to be traitors, have I?!" I didn't know what a communist was then, I only knew that my fourth aunt back home was a communist, I didn't know what exactly she did yet. The disciplinarian did not admit that he was a traitor, but we students did not believe him, did not applaud him, and did not say anything. He said, "Whoever drew it, come out and admit your mistake yourself, and I can forgive your youthful ignorance." He pursued the matter for half a day, and when no one came out to admit their fault, he beat all of us boys four times each; he thought that female students would not do this, so he did not beat them. That was the first time I had been flogged since I was a teenager. We were still not convinced by the slaps, and still none of us paid any attention to him. Many students went home and complained to their parents, and as a result many parents, some with relatives and friends, came to the school and surrounded the headmaster's office. We students couldn't go to class and all came out to see what was going on. Then the headmaster and the headmaster's wife came out and made a gesture to calm things down, but the students' parents said, "No, we must fire this teacher and he must apologise to the students!" The headmaster's wife said she would give each student a packet of snacks as a token of sympathy. The student's parents said, "Who wants your stinky snacks? If I beat your son, can I give you some more stinky snacks?" I didn't tell my mum myself, she was tired running the small shop and I was afraid I would add to her tiredness. The day after the parents'

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<sup>1</sup> At that time, few people had leather shoes. They were taken as an indication of prosperity, so there developed a humorous saying: "Squeaky leather shoes are stinking bourgeois thinking".

<sup>2</sup> Wang Jingwei (May 4, 1883-November 10, 1944) was initially a member of the left wing of the Guomindang (KMT), leading a government in Wuhan in opposition to the right-wing government in Nanjing, but later became increasingly anti-communist, and in 1937, after which he accepted an invitation from the Japanese Empire to form a Japanese-supported collaborationist government in Nanjing.

fracas, the school put up a notice withdrawing the position of the training officer Zhou and not having him in class. That man never came back. This victory against the traitorous teacher was the first time I experienced the power of collective strength.

When the Japanese surrender was announced in August 1945, the people of Shanghai went out onto the road to celebrate, taking leaves or cucumbers and throwing them into the air, hugging each other, tapping each other on the shoulders, jumping, dancing and shouting. Soon after, the Nationalists entered the city and our school reverted to its original name, changing from Jianping Middle School back to Deyun Middle School. The newspapers said that Chiang Kai-shek joined forces with the US, Britain and the Soviet Union to defeat the Japs. People said that Chiang Kai-shek was coming to Shanghai! Within a few days, Chiang Kai-shek really arrived in Shanghai on a plane. All the students of our school went with the headmaster to Happy Valley (now People's Square) to welcome Chiang Kai-shek, following the leader and shouting "Long live Chiang Kai-shek!" "Long live Chiang Kai-shek!" Shortly afterwards, the Guomindang officials came to Shanghai, and they were practiced the "five sons of Dengke"<sup>3</sup>, that is, they used the power of the officials to seize houses, gold, tickets, women and cars in the name of "receiving the enemy's property". They confiscated the property of the traitors, and they also confiscated the property of those who were related to the traitors, without giving receipts. The top figures in the cultural, commercial, educational and other sectors who had some connection with the Japanese were also victimized. The next step was the printing of banknotes by the Guomindang's Central Bank and the scavenging of people's money by exchanging them for counterfeit currency at low prices, with the result that prices in the market rose sharply and the lives of the ordinary people of Shanghai were suddenly in dire straits. There is a folk rhyme that says, "Think of the Central Government, hope for the Central Government, but when the Central Government comes, we will suffer even more; think of Chiang, hope for Chiang, when Chiang comes, it will rise, rise, rise".<sup>4</sup>

We had a surplus in our shop, but the Kuomintang wanted to control the liquor and tobacco business, so we had to change our shop's license or we would not be allowed to operate. In order to get the permit, my family used the only "little yellow fish" (small gold bar) we had saved up to get through, but in the end we couldn't get it. This was tantamount to robbing my parents of their hard-earned money, the money we lived on, before cutting off our family's livelihood. My parents cried over this, and the family was sad for months. Then my new brother and sister, both of whom had childhood pneumonia, died at a very young age when they didn't have money to buy medicine.

What happened to my mother's shop was just a tiny grain of sand in the whole of society, but this tiny grain of sand played a decisive role in transforming my thinking and I understood what the saying, "the officials forced the people to rebel"<sup>5</sup> was all about in history.

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<sup>3</sup> "The five sons of Dengke" is a Chinese idiom that originally referred to a father who taught his five sons to aim high and achieve prosperity. In time, the "five sons" came to represent items that symbolized wealth; and during the return of the Guomindang after the Japanese surrender, those five items, obtained corru gold, wife, children, houses, cars. ptly, were those listed by Qi Benyu. Different sets of "five children" appeared during the Cultural Revolution and Deng's capitalist "reforms", and are today almost the same as those of the Guomindang era, namely, gold, wives, children, houses, and cars.

<sup>4</sup> "Rise" – referring to inflation.

<sup>5</sup> This is a Chinese idiom, the pinyin is "guan bi mín fǎn", meaning that under the cruel exploitation and oppression of the reactionary rulers, the people could not live, and were forced to rise up.

Finally, in late November and early December 1946, a massive suppression of hawkers broke out in Shanghai. In the name of city rectification, the Guomindang Shanghai government arrested thousands of vendors in a few days and confiscated their poor little goods, resulting in a public outcry. 5,000 to 6,000 families of vendors (women, old people and children) and many more vendors whose goods had been confiscated and who had been banned from stalls, surrounded the police station in Huangpu district, demanding the release of the arrested vendors and the return of their confiscated goods. It was a Saturday and I was going to my father's office. When I got to Henan Road, I saw a group of stallholders running towards the Huangpu Police Station and when I enquired, I was told that the stallholders were surrounding the police station. There was a huge crowd of people in the square and thousands of onlookers behind and on the road next to it. In front of the police station there were several rows of police officers clashing violently with the vendors who were storming in. The police beat people with truncheons, used water hoses and fired into the air, while the vendors did not budge. Some people still did not know where to get baskets of broken bricks, pebbles, tomatoes, and stinky chicken eggs, but others threw them at the police station. Those who threw them from far away broke the its glass windows. As soon as I saw the scene, I ran over to help pass the broken bricks to the adults - I was a kid with little strength and couldn't throw the broken bricks far. The policemen would dodge the stones and tomatoes and not many really got beaten up, while the vendors who rushed ahead were arrested, knocked unconscious and injured. Even so, the vendors would not rest or back down. After a few minutes, a large number of police officers from other districts, in their honking police cars, arrived to support them, and they got out of their cars and arrested people, and I ran through the gap in the crowd. The vendors then organised a strike by the city's merchants. The matter was eventually watered down with a speech by the GMD mayor, Wu Guozhen, promising to release people, to return things and to keep the vendors open.

In the winter of 1946, American soldiers abused Shen Chong, a female student at Peking University in Beijing, which led to massive student demonstrations in Ping (Beijing)<sup>6</sup>, Tianjin and Shanghai, and students in Shanghai surrounded the US naval headquarters in Shanghai, shouting the slogans "American troops out of China" and "American soldiers out! ". University professors Cai Shangshi, Ma Yinchu, Chu Tunan and other notables published a "Protest against American military atrocities". On the day of the march, which was New Year's Day 1947, when students were on holiday, I heard the broadcast and went to Nanjing Road to join the citizens to watch the anti-American march. The students shouted slogans and the citizens followed suit by raising their hands, shouting, clapping and jumping, unanimously demanding the expulsion of American troops from China. This was a nationwide people's movement to "oppose the bullying of Chinese people by American soldiers and demand the withdrawal of American troops from China".

By this time, the civil war waged by the Guomindang was already being fought fiercely, and the civil war caused a large number of refugees from the war zone in central Suzhou to flock by boat from across the Yangtze River to Shanghai, Nanjing, Changzhou, Wuxi and Suzhou. The largest number of refugees entered Shanghai, and at one time countless slums appeared in Nanshi, Zhabei and Yangpu, where refugees built many makeshift huts filled with people using wooden planks and cardboard, and later, when there was no room to build huts, many people slept on the roads. That winter Shanghai was particularly cold and suddenly one day a cold snap hit and froze many people to death. I went to school early the next morning and on every other section on Penglai Road and Fuxing Road, saw the corpses of bright-voiced children as well as the corpses of old people. Someone said in

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<sup>6</sup> At that time, Beijing's name was "Beiping" or "northern peace" instead of its current meaning of "northern capital".

the newspaper that 800 children had died that day, that there were 800 child corpses! Zang Kejia, a poet living in Shanghai, witnessed this tragic situation and wrote a poem called "The Zero Degree of Life", with the subtitle "Eight Hundred Children's Corpses". The Communist Party's underground organisation put this poem into a small leaflet and distributed it everywhere, and it was in this leaflet that I saw this poem. This poem is a rallying cry against the civil war. Those children had the right to live on, but their lives reached zero degrees and they froze to death in the streets of Shanghai, unable to close their eyes as they died. After 1947, the price of rice in Shanghai skyrocketed, rising a hundredfold compared to the time of victory in the war, but even so, people often queued up to buy rice, and the poor could not afford to buy it even if they wanted to, so they had to buy some bean curd and corn flour to get by, and only when they had guests would they go to the black market to buy some rice, which was double to five times more expensive than the rationed rice. It was at this time that the underground party in Shanghai launched its anti-civil war and anti-hunger campaign. The Guomindang turned on their propaganda machine saying that the civil war was started by the Communists, but no one believed them. Everyone knew that it was the four or five million American-equipped Guomindang troops, backed by the Americans, who opened their big mouths and tried to eat the Communists.

The tragedy I witnessed with my own eyes touched me greatly, and Zang Kejia's poems inspired me to join the student movement against the civil war and hunger (I have always revered the poet Zang Kejia since then, and I even went to his home in Shandong to commemorate him until the beginning of the 21st century). On the Bund, Nanjing Road and Xizang Road, there were demonstrations by university and high school students, and I ran after them, shouting slogans as they did. At that time, I had not yet joined the underground, but I already knew that it was the underground that was instigating the anti-civil war and anti-hunger movement. The Guomindang police used hoses to pound the students, who refused to back down. The headmaster of Deyun Middle School, where I was from, was a GMD member and he did not allow the students to take part in the march, but we, together with Yu Wenjie and seven or eight other students, went to the Bund to cheer anyway. The agents used a wooden stick with lots of nails on it to beat the students, and when they hit them, they bled, and when they pulled them, they were bloody! It was very gruesome. The students took pictures of it and the people got even more angry when they saw it. The Guomindang ordered the university and secondary schools to dismiss classes early and forbade students to stay together. They thought that once classes were dismissed students would not march, but in fact once classes were dismissed it was easier for students to come out and join the march.

The people knew that fighting against the civil war and hunger was in fact fighting against the Guomindang and the hardships it had inflicted on the people, so they all volunteered to join the movement. Some workers and employees joined the students' march directly, and many shops, large and small, closed their doors to show their support for the movement. At the same time as the movement in Shanghai, there were anti-civil war and anti-hunger movements in Nanjing and Beijing, and in all these major cities, the movements continued and intensified, and the Guomindang deployed large numbers of troops to brutally suppress the demonstrations, resulting in the tragic deaths and injuries of many revolutionary students. Even so, the resistance of the masses could not be suppressed. Moreover, the workers and citizens of Shanghai and Nanjing joined the mass movement in large numbers, and unlike the students, they were not as gentle as the students, they went on strike, surrounded police stations, and many citizens even organised themselves to steal rice.

I graduated from junior high school in the summer of 1947. Although I was highly motivated to oppose Chiang and the United States, I had not yet established a revolutionary outlook on life and

my ideal was still to be a scientist and follow the path of science to save the country. The newspaper said that Huang Yanpei and others had set up a scholarship for poor students, and that any poor student in Shanghai who could get this scholarship would be guaranteed admission to the prestigious schools in Shanghai, such as Pudong Middle School and Hu Xin Middle School. My family was poor, so I applied for this scholarship, and I was lucky enough to get into Pudong High School. But I never thought that this prestigious school would completely change the path I had envisaged for my life.

The Pudong Secondary School was founded by Yang Sisheng, a famous Shanghai worker who went on to become a famous architect on the Shanghai shore in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, and who led the construction of many of the city's most famous buildings. In his later years, he destroyed his family to build a school and donated his life savings of 240,000 gold to establish this secondary school in Pudong, Shanghai. The first headmaster was Huang Yanpei, a member of the old Tongmenghui<sup>7</sup> led by Sun Yat-sen. Cai Yuanpei, the pioneer of the May Fourth Movement, once praised Yang Sisheng as "a great man of his generation", while Hu Shih called him a "great hero" of China, "respectable, lovable, law-abiding and admirable". During its long years of teaching, Pudong High School had produced a large number of talents for society, including Zhang Wentian, Li Yilu, Jiang Jingguo, Zhuang Shiping, Wang Jianchang, Xia Jianbai, Fan Wenlan, Hu Yibin, Yin Fu, Dong Chuncai, Lei Jingtian, Xie Jin, He Tingying, Ye Junjian and many others.

Pudong High School has always been rich in revolutionary traditions, having been a pioneering bastion of the revolution during the May Fourth Movement, the May 30th Movement<sup>8</sup> and the January 29th Movement<sup>9</sup>. During the war, the school building was destroyed by the Japanese and

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<sup>7</sup> The Tongmenghui was a secret society and underground resistance movement founded by Sun Yat-sen, Song Jiaoren, and others in Tokyo, Japan, on 20 August 1905. It was formed from the merger of multiple Chinese revolutionary groups in the late Qing dynasty.

<sup>8</sup> The May 30th Movement refers to the anti-imperialist patriotic movement that broke out on May 30, 1925. In May 1925, workers' strikes occurred in Japanese yarn mills in Shanghai and Qingdao, which were suppressed by Japanese imperialists and Beiyang warlords. On May 15th, the Japanese capitalist of the Seventh Cotton Factory in Shanghai shot and killed the worker Gu Zhenghong and injured more than ten workers. On the 29th, Qingdao workers were massacred by the reactionary government. On May 30, more than two thousand students in Shanghai gave propaganda lectures on various roads in the public concession. More than one hundred were arrested by patrols (police in the concession) and detained in the patrol house in the old Nanjing Road. With great indignation, nearly 10,000 people gathered at the door of the patrol room and demanded the release of the arrested students. The British imperialist patrol shot at the masses, killing and wounding many people. This is the May 30 tragedy that shocked China and foreign countries. In June, the British and Japanese imperialists continued their massacres in Shanghai and other places. These massacres aroused public outrage among the people across the country. A large number of workers, students, and some industrial and commercial people held demonstrations, strikes, school strikes, and city strikes in many cities and counties and towns, forming the climax of a nationwide anti-imperialist patriotic movement.

<sup>9</sup> The January 29 Movement is also known as the January 29 Anti-Japanese National Salvation Movement. On December 9, 1935, thousands of students from Beijing colleges and universities held a demonstration to resist Japan and save the country, opposing North China's autonomy, resisting Japanese imperialism, demanding the preservation of the integrity of China's territory, and setting off a new upsurge of national anti-Japanese and national salvation. On December 12, students in Peking held their fifth demonstration, chanting slogans such as "Aid to Suiyuan in the War of Resistance" and "Unite All Parties". This is a large-scale student patriotic movement led by the Communist Party of China. On January 29, demonstrations occurred in all major Chinese cities, publicly exposing the conspiracy of the Japanese imperialists to invade China and annex North China, attacking the Guomindang government's policy of compromise and surrender, and greatly promoting the awakening of the Chinese people. It cooperated with the Red Army's northward resistance to Japan, and

the school was moved to Dumei Road in Puxi (now known as Donghu Road). After the victory of the war, the Guomindang attached great importance to Pudong High School and sent Huang Xing, a military agent, to control the training work. He had the power to send revolutionary teachers and students to the Special Criminal Court and even the headmaster was afraid of him. The Shanghai Underground Party, on the other hand, made Pudong High School a priority for secondary school work and sent a group of underground members to organise a student movement at the school. It was only after liberation that I realised that the poor scholarship I took was nominally founded by Huang Yanpei and others, and that those who did the actual work were mostly progressive people under the leadership of the Communist Party. The fact that I got in was probably not unrelated to my previous participation in the struggle against hunger and civil war. My English was not good and I was worried that I would not get in. I remember during the interview, a female teacher asked me what I thought of the city's anti-civil war and anti-hunger movement, and I spoke eloquently about it based on my own experiences and insights, and as a result, I received a notice of guaranteed admission to Pudong High School on the fourth or fifth day after I returned home.

In the autumn of 1947 I reported to Pudong High School and was in the same class as Gu Zhigang, who sat behind me in the row. We soon became good friends, and later comrades and brothers, and were committed to each other. Gu Zhigang was a young member of the underground party and was one of the members of the Shanghai underground party who was sent to Pudong High School to organise an underground branch and run the student movement. Other young underground party members with him included Hu Lingsheng, Zhang Ye, He Shihe, Qian Jiaqing, Yao Di, etc. Among them, Hu Lingsheng was the youngest district committee member of the Shanghai Underground Party at that time.

The years 1947-1948 were a period of great change in my thinking in my life. The ups and downs, the peaks and valleys, the good and the bad, the blessings and the disasters of my life ..... are all related to this big change. This big change is inseparable from revolutionary books. When I was a junior high school student at Jianping Middle School, I learned from a teacher that there was a large municipal library on Sima Road (now Fuzhou Road), so I went there to read the Introduction to Zhuzi<sup>10</sup>, "Records of the Historian"<sup>11</sup> and some of the works of Lu Xun, Mao Dun and Guo Moruo, as well as Darwin, Shakespeare and Einstein. But it was the revolutionary books I came across during my secondary school years in Pudong that caused a big change in my thinking

Through Gu Zhigang, a member of the underground, I first read a large number of literary, historical and philosophical works published in progressive bookshops in Shanghai, the liberated areas and

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promoted domestic peace and resistance against Japan. It marked the arrival of a new climax of the Chinese people's anti-Japanese democratic movement. As Comrade Mao Zedong pointed out, the January 29th Movement was a movement to mobilize the entire nation to resist the Japanese War. It prepared the ideas of the War of Resistance, prepared the hearts of the people, and prepared the cadres for the War of Resistance.

<sup>10</sup> The contending of a hundred schools of thought in the Spring and Autumn Period and the Warring States Period was an extremely important golden period in the history of Chinese thought. According to various data records, at least a dozen scholars are active in this era with different ideas; they argue with each other while absorbing the advantages of each other's theories, which constitutes an unprecedentedly active state of academic thinking. This book discusses the doctrines of the pre-Qin scholars and is limited to the six schools of Confucianism, Taoism, Yin-Yangism, Mingism, Legalism, and Mohism discussed by Sima Tan. It sorted out the origins and basic concepts of each school, detailed the doctrine and content of each representative figure, and analysed its practical application value in politics, education, etc

<sup>11</sup> "Records of the Historian", one of the twenty-four histories, was a historical book written by Sima Qian, the historian of the Western Han Dynasty. It records a history of more than 3,000 years from the time of the Yellow Emperor in ancient legends to the four years of Emperor Wu of the Han Dynasty.

Hong Kong, including "Li Youcai Banhua", "Wang Gui and Li Xiangxiang", "Changes in Lijiazhuang", "Popular Philosophy", "The Marriage of Xiao Er Hei", "Introduction to Social Science" and single volumes of some of Lu Xun and Gao Erji's works, and then I read "Red Star Over China"<sup>12</sup> written by the American journalist Snow. The book "Red Star Over China" is a systematic account of the Chinese Communist Party and Mao Zedong's revolutionary ideals, especially the essay "Mao Zedong's Autobiography", which brings Mao's own revolutionary history and political ideas into the open. This book opened the door to my understanding of the Communist Party and Mao Zedong. Many of the things in the book, such as Jinggang Mountain, the Anti-Encirclement and the Long March, were unlike anything I had ever seen or heard of, and were both new and exciting. When I opened the book, it was like opening a box of treasures. I read it day and night for three days, forgetting to eat and sleep, forgetting to do my school work, and reading some chapters more than once or twice. This is a marvellous book that helped build my faith in the Communist Party and Mao Zedong. I now have three editions of "Red Star Over China" in my personal collection and they are my treasured possessions. Many people nowadays are seeking billions of dollars and want to be billionaires. In fact, the truth spoken in this book is worth more than billions! You will be richer than a billionaire if you read it carefully.

I knew from "Red star Over China" that Marx and Engels had written a book called "The Communist Manifesto" and I looked everywhere for it. The first sentence of the book shocked me: "A spectre is wavering around Europe - the spectre of Communism!" The word "wavering" was still very new to me at the time, so I was particularly impressed. After liberation I saw a translation of the Manifesto published by the Moscow Foreign Languages Bureau, which translated the first sentence as "A strange shadow is wandering in Europe - the strange shadow of communism." I don't think it is as good as our own Chinese translation.<sup>13</sup> The first chapter is about the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. When I read it, I thought, "Isn't my father, who works in a customs brokerage, my old aunt, who works in a cigarette factory, and my sister Hua, who works in a food factory, all proletarians? Aren't their bosses all asset holders? The Communist Manifesto says that the proletarians are to unite and use revolutionary means to seize the machines, factories, land and houses of the bourgeoisie and build a communist society in which all people are free to develop. The Communist Manifesto proposes to confiscate the land, factories and railways owned by the bourgeoisie, to seize all the capital of the bourgeoisie step by step and then to organise production according to a plan, and to propose ten specific measures. After reading these measures over and over again, I supported all of them, especially the one about "public and free education for all children". But I think the most important thing was to defeat the Guomindang, because at that time the Guomindang was very authoritarian and corrupt, and I hated it very much. In addition, I felt that what Gu Zhigang and others had told me, that the Chinese revolution should unite the national bourgeoisie, was more appropriate for China. But at that time, I did not quite understand some of the contents of the Communist Manifesto, such as "the free development of each is the condition for the free

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<sup>12</sup> "Red Star Over China" was published in China as "Record of a Westward Journey", and according to current Chinese records, was probably a collaboration between Edgar Snow and his wife Helen Foster Snow. (See [The secret behind the westward long story: The real thing who went to Yan'an was Mrs. Snow--Shi Haihui-Communist Party of China News Network \(people.com.cn\)](#) )

<sup>13</sup> Qi Benyu uses the Chinese characters 踟蹰 which generally translate as "wavering" or "hesitating". I am unsure of the Russian words to which he refers, although the Chinese version of them he uses translates into English as "a strange shadow is wandering around Europe". The more familiar (to me) English translation is that "A spectre is haunting Europe – the spectre of Communism!"

development of all", "the community of women", "British Chartists ", "Proudhon's 'Philosophy of Poverty", and so on, some of which I did not understand until after liberation.

I learned from an old friend who worked at the customs office that there was a progressive bookstore run by the Sino-Soviet Friendship Association at the back of the Xiafei Road cinema in Shanghai. When I found the bookstore, I saw that the shelves were filled with all kinds of Chinese books published by the Soviet Foreign Language Press. The staff at the bookstore were kind and courteous to me, a poor student. Later I became a regular customer there. I could read books there as if I were in a library, and I could read all day if I wanted to, and it didn't matter if I didn't buy any books. Sometimes (on Sundays) I would read all day, have a cup of tea and a borsch for lunch, and not go home until the bookshop closed. What I read most was the Chinese edition of the Times, which contained war reports on the Liberation War and analyses of the world and Chinese situation, and I used to sit in a corner and thirstily pick up the big brick-like book and flip through it. Over time, I read, to varying degrees, "Imperialism", "The State and Revolution", "Marx Engels and Marxism", The History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolshevik)", and Stalin's "Collected Speeches on the Patriotic War" on the bookshelf, although I could not yet understand much of Marx's "Capital". All in all, the bookstore gave me a lot of information about the liberated areas and a preliminary knowledge of Marxism-Leninism, at least I understood many new revolutionary terms, such as "labour", "value", "exploitation" and "imperialism"... I understood them all. The most unexpected gain was that a secondary school student a little older than me secretly gave me a copy of Mao Zedong's On Coalition Government, published in Hong Kong, and mysteriously told me that sometimes there were Kuomintang agents mixed in the bookstore and told me to watch my tail. But I read books in that bookshop one after another for quite a long time without finding anyone watching me, so I was probably too small to be noticed by the agents at that time.

I will never forget the pamphlet "On Coalition Government" and how I felt after reading it at that time. At that time, although the war against J<sup>14</sup>apan had been won, the Guomindang had again dragged the motherland into a civil war. How could the ancient Chinese nation, which had been sinking for more than a hundred years, be revived? I read Sun Yat-sen's "Three People's Principles", Chiang Kai-shek's "China's Destiny" and Liang Shuming's "Theory of Rural Construction", none of which did or could solve China's problems. I never imagined that Mao Zedong, who was far away in a mountain valley in northern Shaanxi, had written such a good pamphlet for us to solve China's problems more than two years ago, especially its "our general programme" and "our specific programme", which pointed out the way to liberate China and build China for the young people who were confused and troubled to seek the path of development of the motherland. The pamphlet makes everything so reasonable and so real. Before I read this booklet, my ambition was to be a scientist in the future and use science to change the poverty and backwardness of my country. Only after that did I realise that in order to achieve this goal, I must first join the New Democratic Revolution and liberate my country from the rule of imperialism, feudalism and the Guomindang reactionaries. I felt that Mao could save China, and I was convinced that I would follow Mao in the future. This pamphlet was later included in the third volume of Mao Zedong's Selected Works, and millions of people have read it. I don't know how others felt after reading it, but the excitement I felt when I read this pamphlet was unimaginable to others.

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<sup>14</sup> Liang Shuming (October 18, 1893-June 23, 1988) was a famous Chinese thinker, philosopher, educator, social activist, patriot, and one of the early representatives of modern Neo-Confucianism, and known as "the last great Confucian in China". As a founder of the China Democratic League, he stayed in Beijing after 1949 as a democratic personage, but his opposition to rural class struggle saw him criticised by Comrade Mao Zedong.

I told my good friend Gu Zhigang how I felt about it. Soon afterwards, Gu Zhigang lent me another copy of Wu Liping's translation of "Anti-Dühring" and asked me to read it. The book was very thick and divided into three parts: Part I: Philosophy; Part II: Political Economy; and Part III: Socialism. The third part, on the development of socialism from the Utopian to the scientific, is very moving and introduces three famous idealistic socialists: Saint-Simon (French), Fourier (French) and Owen (English); all of them were far-sighted and abhorred capitalism, which was "full of evils and disasters", and advocated a new and egalitarian socialist society. I was touched by their great spirit, most of all by Owen, who was the owner of a large textile factory in England. First he headed a factory of more than 500 people and later, a large cotton mill which grew to more than 2,500 people; while other factory owners forced their workers to work 13 or 14 hours a day, he only made them work for 10 and a half hours; he invented and actually founded kindergartens for the children of his workers so that the children could live happily; when the economic crisis broke out and shut down the factories, he still paid his workers; in other factories there was a mass degeneration of workers, but in his factories there were no degenerates, no need for police, no need for criminal courts, no need for poverty relief and no need for charity. Even so, he considered that he had not given his workers "human dignity", saying: "These people are my slaves". Where, he asked, was the huge difference between the wealth created by the labour of those 2,500 people, which half a century ago would have taken 600,000 people to achieve? His answer was that it all went to the business owners. He argued that the fruits of that enormous wealth should have gone to the workers themselves; that this reality of a few getting rich while the masses were enslaved was the most irrational; that the wealth created by the masses should not go to individuals but should serve the common good of the masses. With this in mind, he wanted to use his wealth for the experiment of creating a new communist village and wanted to create new horizons for capitalist society. However, he did not understand class struggle and revolution and that the bourgeoisie, as a class, would never give up its wealth to create his new communist village. So he was finally expelled from the upper class, became penniless and his new communist village ended in failure when he lost all his possessions.

I was not a young man who was easily moved, but Owen's words, especially "These people are my slaves", brought tears to my eyes when I read them. These tears brought about a revolutionary change in my thinking and I fully embraced the doctrine of class and class struggle and scientific socialism as described by Engels in his book. It was a cold night in January 1948, in the attic of my house at No. 67 Penglai Road in Shanghai, and a small fifteen-watt light bulb accompanied me through this masterpiece of communist history. In the small house of less than ten square meters next to the attic, my parents and younger sister were sleeping soundly. On the ground floor of my mother's humble shop, on a cot made of three wooden boards, was my distant aunt, who worked in a cigarette factory. She couldn't go home that day because she was working the night shift, so she slept temporarily in our little shop. She was a widow, in her forties, and had to work every day in a cigarette factory to support her young children. I had been to the factory, which was located in an alleyway on Fuxing Road. The workshop was ramshackle and full of dust, and it was difficult to breathe because of the pungent smell of tobacco and the sour smell of the workers. Her boss sometimes even delayed paying for her work. Could such a boss agree with Owen's idea of a new communist village? Could he work with Owen to build a new communist village? If workers want to be liberated, can they not struggle? Why were the workers so supportive of the Communist Party at that time? At that time, the Communist Party had only a million troops and the Kuomintang had more than five million troops, so there was a great disparity in power. Because the Communist Party told them that they had to rise up in revolution for their own liberation and save themselves! Why do so many people oppose the Communist Party now? Because many communist organisations are

as corrupt as the Guomindang, which forced the people to rise up in revolution. The mirror of history is glittering: "Those who have failed should look to themselves". The Communist Party today should reflect on itself!

When Gu Zhigang, an underground member, saw that I had made great progress in my thinking, he came to mobilize me and discussed with me how to unite the young brothers, first leading them to read revolutionary books and then slowly forming a progressive organization. Soon, a dozen of us met at Bai Junyi's house on Huaihai Road and set up a progressive organisation called the "Wildfire Society", taking the meaning of Bai Junyi's "A wildfire cannot be burnt to the ground, the spring breeze blows and it grows again", to show that we were not afraid of the Guomindang's repeated suppression. As Gu Zhigang and the others were underground, the Wildfire Society was in fact a peripheral organisation of the Communist Party in Pudong High School, and all subsequent progressive activities were actually carried out under the guidance of the Shanghai Underground Party and the Municipal Federation of Schools, as arranged by Gu Zhigang and the others.

At that time, Pudong High School had student autonomy and each class had a class committee where the students governed themselves. I was elected as a member of the class committee because I had previously run a literary student publication with some of my classmates. This was exactly what Gu Zhigang wanted, and he wanted me to be responsible for organising wall newspapers (now generally called wall posters, which were in fact similar to the later big-character posters<sup>15</sup>, only with smaller letters) to promote revolutionary ideas. I asked the class language teacher to name the class poster, and he named it "Alarm Bell", which means "the alarm bell rings forever" and "keep on striving for self-improvement". Everyone agreed. I also asked the art teacher to draw the header and mobilised everyone to write. The first issue was published in March 1948. As suggested by Zhigang, I made the first issue of Alarm Bell take a middle ground, not talking about the Communist Party, and apart from the good essays of the students, only the Selected Poems of Heine compiled by myself and He Shihe, an underground member, and some current commentaries copied from the progressive press were included. I had no idea how much Heine's Selected Poems would be enjoyed by the literary students, some of whom read and copied them at the same time. The Heine poems we had published are in fact extracts, not the whole text. The students also had no idea that Heine was a revolutionary poet, sympathetic to the workers and cursing capitalist exploitation in his poems. Many of the articles that were in the wall newspaper today are nowhere to be found. I looked through my pre-liberation notebooks and found only a few small notes of Heine's poems, which were transcribed at the time, and which read:

From darkened eyes no tears are falling;  
Gnashing our teeth, we sit here calling:  
"Germany, listen, ere we disperse,  
We weave your shroud with a triple curse —  
We weave, we are weaving! We weave!

"A curse to the false god that we prayed to,  
And worshiped in spite of all, and obeyed, too.  
We waited and hoped and suffered in vain;  
He laughed at us, sneering, for all of our pain —  
We weave, we are weaving!

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<sup>15</sup> Big-print posters or *dazibao* were used extensively for debate and criticism during the Cultural Revolution. They were one of the "four freedoms" enshrined in the Constitution in 1975, but taken out by Deng Xiaoping in the wake of the Democracy Wall movement.

"A curse to the king, and a curse to his coffin,  
The rich man's king whom our plight could not soften;  
Who took our last penny by taxes and cheats,  
And let us be shot like the dogs in the streets —  
We weave, we are weaving!

"A curse to the Fatherland, whose face is  
Covered with lies and foul disgraces;  
Where the bud is crushed as it leaves the seed,  
And the worm grows fat on corruption and greed —  
We weave, we are weaving!

"The shuttle flies in the creaking loom;  
And night and day we weave your doom —  
Old Germany, listen, ere we disperse  
We weave your shroud with a triple curse.  
We weave — we are weaving !

.....

I'll thunder!

Because my lightning is

so bright,

in a flash,

it breaks the sky.

So,

you thought I wouldn't thunder.

Dear ones,

you are wrong!

In addition

to lightning, I will thunder!

Don't you believe it?

Come the day

of the revolution

I will be extremely powerful and unstoppable

And evil-doers will be punished.

At that time

the palaces of bureaucratic privilege will be blown to pieces and

the rule of the aristocracy will be destroyed.

The estates and villas of the rich and powerful

will shake just like the earth!

Graft, corruption, prostitution, gambling, hooligans, drug lords.

Everything that is filthy

will be blasted away by my thunder and lightning!

.....

I am the fire, I am the sword!

I am the fire

In the darkness.

Guiding the path of the revolution with my life.

I am the sword.

In times of battle.

With my body I charge into battle.

Take the next step forward!

In 1948, the situation in the civil war was reversed and the national army was no longer viable, while the PLA was in a good position. After recovering Yan'an, Chairman Mao crossed the Yellow River to the east and entered the liberated areas of northern China to continue to command the national liberation war. These items of news were told to everyone through wall newspapers and talks between Wildfire Society activists and students. In May the nationwide "Against American Support for Japan movement"<sup>16</sup> broke out and our Wildfire Society took an active part in it. In February 1948, the United States acquitted the Japanese Emperor and allowed Japan to fly the rising sun flag, and in May it helped Japan to set up the "Maritime Security Agency" as a preliminary to arming Japan. This was the same Japan fascism's iron heel that the Chinese people had just struggled out from under, and before they had time to dry their blood, the US empire had fostered Japanese militarism again. The American action angered the Chinese people who had suffered from the Japanese invasion, and a nationwide "Against American Support for Japan movement" broke out. The students in Beijing and Tianjin first staged demonstrations. The Shanghai Underground Party also keenly grasped this issue and carried out anti-US propaganda among the masses. On the evening of May 4, members of the Wildfire Club and many activists went to Jiaotong University to participate in a campfire commemorating the "May Fourth Movement". One of the contents of this conference was to oppose the United States' support of Japanese militarism. Meng Xianzhang made a special report.

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<sup>16</sup> On May 19, 1948, the United States announced a plan to reduce Japan's war reparations payments and support the Japanese zaibatsu monopolies. This reactionary plan aroused the great anger of the Chinese people who had been ravaged by Japanese aggression for 14 years. The North China Federation of Students immediately held a meeting to discuss the "Against U.S. Support for Japan" movement among Beijing and Tianjin students. On May 30th, more than 3,000 students held the "Oppose the U.S. Supporting Japan Conference" at Peking University. "The National Crisis Rescue Association" called on the people of the whole country to resolutely oppose the conspiracy of U.S. imperialism to revive Japanese militarism in order to prevent the "September 18" incident from happening again, and issued a protest telegram to MacArthur of the United States and a telegram to the American People.

From then on, the "Against US Support for Japan Movement " became the most important topic of the 1948 Shanghai student movement.

The current issue of the Wildfire Society wall paper, as requested by Gu Zhigang, not only had to be expanded in size, but also posted at the school's main entrance. In order to organise this issue, we worked around the clock to prepare it. We found old newspapers and magazines in the school's warehouse reporting on where the Japanese had bombed Shanghai and brutalised the people, cut them out, and burned the edges of the clippings, as Gu had suggested, to create a kind of physical evidence that would remind readers of the painful scenes of the Japanese bombing of Shanghai. I also found photo reports of the August 13th War<sup>17</sup> and the Nanjing Massacre and wrote in big letters next to them, "Japanese militarism is slaughtering Chinese people like crazy, and now the United States is supporting Japan, can we agree to this?"

After this wall poster was posted at the school gate, Gu also called on other secondary school students to see it, causing a greater impact. But it also immediately drew the attention of Huang Xing, the school's disciplinarian and a military agent, who smelled that it was probably a Communist plot. On the third day after the poster was put up, he told the students running with him in the school to take it down, hand it over to the school office, and trace the circumstances behind it. One of the most heated articles in the poster said "American imperialism" instead of "America". Huang Xing then looked into the article and, believing that the author was a communist, he brought me, the editor-in-chief, in for questioning. I knew that the article was written by He Shihe, but I could not betray him. Huang Xing, a military agent, then used a handwriting check to find out that He Shihe had written it, and then brought me in again for questioning: "Is He Shihe a communist?" I replied, "He's a communist? You're joking." I was telling the truth at the time because I really didn't know that He Shihe and Gu Zhigang were members of the underground, and I thought that although the Communists didn't have three heads and six arms, they should be tall, big, tiger-backed people, and He Shihe wasn't as tall as I was, so he couldn't be a Communist! I then added, "He's younger than me, what kind of communist is he!" Huang Xing didn't care, but asked the grade teacher to bring He Shihe in for questioning. He said that his grandfather was a member of the "Tong" generation of the Youth Gang and was very close to Huang Jinrong<sup>18</sup>, and that his father was in charge of the horse racing hall. Huang Xing, on hearing this, immediately stopped asking He Shihe about "American imperialism" and told him to go, when He Shihe said "yes" while trying to pull me along, Huang Xing refused, saying: "Qi Benyu can't go, you go." He Shihe pretended to be righteous and said, "He's been my friend for 20 years! You think he's a communist? What do you know about the Communist Party? You're the only one old enough to be a Communist!" Huang Xing couldn't laugh or cry, but still didn't let me go. He didn't believe I was young enough to make this stuff up, and threatened me,

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<sup>17</sup> The August 13th War refers to the Battle of Shanghai fought between the National Revolutionary Army of the Republic of China and the Imperial Japanese Army at the beginning of the Second Sino-Japanese War. It lasted from August 13, 1937, to November 26, 1937, and was one of the largest and bloodiest battles of the entire war, later described as "Stalingrad on the Yangtze". One of the most famous photos of WW2 shows a burned and terrified baby in Shanghai's South Railway Station following a Japanese Navy aerial attack against civilians on August 28, 1937.

<sup>18</sup> Huang Jinrong (1868-June 20, 1953) was one of Shanghai's "Three Tycoons". After colluding with imperialists, bureaucrats, and politicians to develop feudal gang forces, he became the largest leader of the Shanghai Youth Gang, with disciples of up to more than 1000 people, engaging in manipulation of gambling and other criminal activities. After the victory of the Anti-Japanese War in 1945, the "Rong Society" was established, with forces throughout the country's industrial and commercial, agricultural and mining, and cultural circles. After the founding of the People's Republic of China, he confessed his crimes to the People's Government.

"Who taught you that? Who taught you? If you don't tell me today, you won't leave, because you are the chief editor, and if you don't tell me, you will be sent to the Special Criminal Court."

Gu Zhigang was amazing. When he saw Huang Xing questioning me again, he knew that the situation was not good, so he immediately sent his classmates to inform my mother to come to school. Seeing that Huang Xing had released He Shihe but not me, he mobilized his classmates to surround the school office. When the two sides were at a standstill, my mother arrived at the school, surrounded by classmates, and barged into the school office, first taunting Huang Xing, telling him to "Go fight the Communists if you can, why are you arresting my child?" Then they dragged me away. The head teacher rushed over and told my mother, "It's good that you're here, the school has decided to expel your son from school. Take your son back and don't come to school in the future." Before he could finish, my mother pulled me out of the school office and left without looking back.

The day was 19 May 1948. It was a day that I will hardly forget. My school life at Pudong High School ended on this day. The next day, the school put out a bulletin expelling me from school.

Shortly after I was expelled, the nationwide movement against the US and for Japan grew like a snowball, with more and more people participating. One day in mid-June, the Shanghai underground party organised another demonstration of students from all over the city on the Bund. For my own safety, Gu Zhigang was afraid that I might be caught by the Guomindang and not be released, so he sent someone to tell me not to take part in the march, but only to watch.

One day after this, Gu Zhigang came to talk to me about developing me into a member of the Party. I had already read many revolutionary books and had an understanding of the Communist Party. Although I had the desire to join the Party, I did not expect, nor did I even believe, that Gu Zhigang was a Communist. In my imagination, the underground party members were tall and majestic, and they were also very old, several times older than me. Gu Zhigang was about the same age as me, so far from the underground party member I had imagined. Also, whenever I was in sports, he was in the back with ideas and I was in the front, talking more than him and behaving more bravely than him, and I was expelled from school but he was not. Also, I assembled and listened to my own shortwave radio at that time and used to tell him what I had heard, and he didn't know as much as I did. So, I said, "Are you kidding me, have you read the Communist Manifesto? You started your own communist party, right? The Communist Party is not something that just anyone can organise, it has a programme, an organisation and discipline." He laughed and said, "Yes, we are the ones with a programme, organisation and discipline". I said, "The Communist Party has to have a gun, do you have a gun?" No gun. "How can you be a communist if you don't have a gun? I'd like to have a gun. I've read Chairman Mao's book, guns are important. You don't have a gun, I don't believe you're a communist." Gu Zhigang didn't convince me on the first day and talked to me the next day. I told him, "Do you know Mensheviks, Bolsheviks, Martov? Do you know that Lenin criticised Martov for forming a party at random? The Communist Party has a programme, an organisation and discipline. It is not acceptable to organise a Communist Party haphazardly like Martov did. Gu Zhigang didn't know Martov at that time, so he couldn't say anything. He really had no choice but to tell me the truth. "We are the Communist Party with a program, organized and disciplined. I am the leader of the school's Communist Party group. I have joined the party for more than a year. The "Wildfire Club" is a peripheral organization of the party. The party sees that you have a sense of consciousness and that you have withstood the test and been developed in the struggle to oppose the US helping Japan. Once you join the organization, you will know how great the party is." I was still dubious, and I asked to see his leader. He said that you have to join the organization. "Your good friend He Shihe is also a member of the Communist Party. I can only tell you so much, not more." Later He Shihe came to talk to me and told me what the Communist Party was all about and how it had a history of

development. He also said that the Communist Party had the White Zone and the Soviet Zone, and that the Party organisation in the White Zone was later destroyed, and Chairman Mao called for its restoration. Gu Zhigang was not alone, there was an organisation above him and he could not tell me about it. He was the one who showed me the Communist Manifesto and wrote the phrase "American imperialism" on the wall newspaper, and he fought with me face to face with Huang Xing. I asked him, "Are you really a communist?" He said, "Really." I decided at that time that all communists had guns, so I said, "Can you prove it then? Do you have a gun?" He said, "Can we have a gun? We can't carry guns. Chairman Mao said that we should not just start a riot whenever we liked, and that in general in the White Areas we should use peaceful means and speak of legitimate struggle." He also said that Liu Shaoqi had theories about the Party, and there he talked about the need to carry out legitimate struggle in the White Areas. I listened to what He Shihe said, and after thinking about it for half a day, I thought that this Communist Party of his was true. When He Shihe knew I believed him, he said, "You should trust Gu Zhigang, who is the leader of the group and your development man." I asked him, "Why do you know more than Gu Zhigang while you are a group member and he is the group leader?" He said, "I made mistakes, I was disciplined, I leaked party secrets to a female comrade. You can't just talk after you join the Party, and you'll be punished for leaking Party secrets."

When I agreed to join the Party, Gu was so pleased that he asked me to write a report on my membership in rice soup, reporting my name, experience and whatnot. He later led me to whisper, line by line, "I volunteer to join the Communist Party, obey the leadership of the Party, and never defect from the Party," and so on. When he had finished, he said, "This is the oath." And so, I joined the Party. I asked to see the leaders, but he said I could only see them after I had been approved by the top to take over the relationship. I had been away from Pudong High School for a long time by then and could not live an organised life in Pudong High School, so I had to wait until I started the next term to take over my relationship. My connection was actually made in October 1948 at the Chinese Science Department, and my party years were counted from the time I made the connection, so I joined the party earlier and made the connection later, and my party years were counted from October 1948.

I had not yet been connected to the Party when Gu Zhigang asked me to go to Pudong High School to develop a progressive-minded classmate to join the Party. His name was Qian Baojin and he was so close to me that I treated him like my own brother. I had been expelled from Pudong High School and was more famous than Gu Zhigang. Some of my progressive classmates at Pudong High School recognised me and thought I was a communist. Qian Baojin accepted my development, joined the party in August and was immediately connected with at Pudong High School. After liberation, Qian Baojin worked as a secretary to Huang Chibo, the head of the Shanghai Public Security Bureau, and later in the Political Security Division of the Bureau. During the Cultural Revolution, Xu Jingxian was ready to put him in the leadership of the Public Security Bureau, and when I had a problem in early 1968, he was scrutinised because I had developed him into a member of the Party. Once he was examined, he joined the Party in August, two months before I, the introducer, joined the Party. I returned to Shanghai after my release from prison in 1986 and met him again, and he still visits me now.

In August 1948, after I had developed Qian Baozhan into a member of the Party, Gu Zhigang told me that the organisation had decided to let me apply for the Shanghai Chinese Science Senior High School (known as Zhongli for short, this school was originally located on Anfu Road in the present-day Xuhui District) and go there to start a job. The headmaster, Cao Fengwu, was a national capitalist and was well known in Shanghai. He advocated industry and technology to save the country, and

founded the school while running a textile factory. The school only had one underground member, and it now sent me and another underground member Qu Yunbao into the school. There was no interference from the Nationalist agents, work was safer, the three of us had to strive to spend two semesters, and build it into a red bastion like Shanghai Reservoir High School. I said I was expelled, and had no certificate of completion, so how can I apply for the examination? He said that was easy to do, in a few days He Shihe will arrange it for you. A few days later, He Shihe did come to talk to me about getting a certificate. He said that the underground was trying to get me a secondary school graduation certificate and that I should change my name. I understood this, because all secondary school students in Shanghai had to report their names to the municipal education bureau, and when I checked the records, Qi Benyu had been expelled from Pudong High School, so I couldn't go back to school in Shanghai without changing my name. At that time, I was reading Lu Xun's novel "Li Shui", which was about Dayu's treatment of flooding. It said that Dayu had worked with a group of people dressed in rags, like beggars, but was so dedicated to controlling the floods for the common people that he passed by his home three times without entering. I was so moved by this Da Yu that I said to He Shihe, "Let's change Qi Benyu to Qi Benyu"<sup>19</sup>. I told him that the Qi family was a large family in Shandong, and that there were many people called Qi Ben and so on, so he could just change one word.

A few days later, He Shihe brought me a certificate of completion made of yellow paper with Qi Benyu's name on it, dated 1946, from the National Ninth High School, with the stamp of the National Ninth High School and the seal of the headmaster. I had never heard of a national ninth high school in Shanghai, so I asked a lot of questions, which He Shihe answered, adding that "the underground party in Sichuan told us that when the National Ninth High School was moved from Chongqing to Nanjing, the ship was broken and the archives were lost, so it was impossible to check on it. This certificate was not just issued, it was copied from a certificate of a student I knew from the National Ninth High School, and the stamp was engraved in its likeness, no problem." I was obsessed with truth and falsity at that time, not quite knowing how to do revolutionary work, and sometimes I had to do a bit of faking to the enemy. So, it always felt wrong in my heart. But without this certificate, I couldn't get into school, so I had to make do with what I had! He Shihe also told me to find some old newspapers and magazines and read about Chongqing, in case someone asked me about it, so I could pick up a few words, but he warned me to talk as little as possible about Chongqing, so that I wouldn't slip up and make people suspicious.

I entered the Chinese Academy of Science with a duplicate certificate from the National Ninth High School, and Qi Benyu's name stuck. I thought at that time that the ideal leader for China would be someone like Da Yu, because he really thought of the people and worked for them. I later learnt that Chairman Mao spoke even more highly of Da Yu, saying that he was an even greater saint than Confucius. It seems that my choice at that time was in line with the thinking of Lu Xun and Mao Zedong.

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<sup>19</sup> Lu Xun's story "Li Shui" describes the selfless attempts by Da Yu (Yu the Great) to control floods which wreaked havoc in ancient China. He was also an excellent political leader and established the Xia Dynasty (21st - 17th century BC), the first dynasty in Chinese history. It took him 13 years to control the floods, during which time he passed by his own home three times without entering it. In Lu Xun's story, his neglect of his own interests and perseverance in trying to overcome calamities affecting the people sharply exposed the corruption and capitulation to Japan of the Guomindang reactionaries. The Chinese language has a fairly restricted range of sounds, and there are many words with the same sound, but different meanings, and these are written with different characters. The "yu" of Qi Benyu was originally written with the character 玉, and his suggestion to He Shihe was to change it to the character 禹, so that although it was said the same way, it was in effect a different name.

At the end of September 1948, Gu Zhigang informed me that the next day after class, I would go to the home of Qu Yunbao, an underground member who had gone with me to Zhongli, for a meeting to establish connections. I remember that it was a weekend and I went with Qu Yunbao to his house right after class. The person who came to take over the relationship with me was Zhang Xiaojun, a member of the Youth Committee of Xulong District. Zhang Xiaojun's leader was Zhang Ben, a very capable female comrade. Above Zhang Ben was Liu Xiao, the secretary of the municipal party committee, Pan Hannian and others. During the Cultural Revolution, Zhang Ben worked as a deputy in the State Science Committee and I supported her during the rebellion. After my accident, she and Zhang Xiaojun were both implicated because of me and were censored for a long time.

After Qu Yunbao and I both joined Zhongli, there were three underground members there, and the party group was headed by Liu Borui, who had been at the Zhongli School since the previous term. Many students were willing to listen to all kinds of news about the Communist Party and accepted the Communist Party's new democratic policies. After the liberation of the Northeast in November 1948, the defeat of the Guomindang was revealed and the work of the underground became even better. We organised study groups and student reunions, which were well attended, where we spoke about the Communist Party's programme and policies, the killing of Zhang Lingfu<sup>20</sup> by Li Yu and the liberation of the Northeast by Lin Biao, etc. The students loved to listen and wanted the Communists to win the war. In less than six months, we had grown our ranks and developed comrades such as Shi Kejian and Zhang Huikang into members of the Party, increasing the number of underground members of the school to six by the end of the term, and more than a dozen peripheral members of the Reading Club.

Seeing that we often organised progressive books and various progressive activities for our students, the headmaster, Cao Fengwu, intervened for fear that we would interfere with school teaching. When he heard that I was the leader, he approached me in the headmaster's office one day and politely invited me to his house for afternoon tea after class, which was a very high level of courtesy. I was in the underground and I wanted to use this opportunity to bring him in, so I accepted his invitation.

I took a member of the underground with me to his house after class. When he saw me, he opened up and said, "I know you are not from the National Ninth High School. I was about to explain when he said, "No need to say anything, you are a good young man, intelligent, capable and idealistic. My daughter was also like you. She was in the South Model Girls' High School and the school didn't want her anymore. In fact, you will all be the pillars of our country in the future, but what happens to our country is a matter for us adults, you just have to study hard now. I also know that the current situation of the country is distressing. How can we save the country? The only way is science. I hope you will study mathematics, science and chemistry well and engage in industry in the future. My science high school exists to train industrialists and engineers. I also know that your family is not too well-off. As long as you are willing to study hard, I can waive your tuition fees and send you to university in the future. In the future, this factory will be under your control. You will be able to develop industry for the country, okay?"

When I heard these words from the headmaster, I felt even more that he was a good man and tried even more to win him over. However, I was unsuccessful. I remember we talked about what I whispered to him later, "Didn't you see the Guomindang troops hosing down the students with

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<sup>20</sup> Zhang Lingfu, August 20, 1903-May 16, 1947), was a Guomindang General. He was defeated and killed by PLA troops under the command of Chen Yi at the Battle of Meng Liangxuan. His army of 100,000 soldiers was destroyed.

water and the Guomindang agents beating them with boards nailed with iron spikes? The rise and fall of the country is everyone's responsibility. Can we study properly when the country is so bad?" I even proposed an agreement with him that when the reactionary government was overthrown, we would all help him to develop industry and now he should not oppose our progressive activities, but he rebuffed me flatly: "That won't work, my school is all messed up because of you and the students listen to your propaganda all day long."

This school headmaster and industrialist, who was educated by Chairman Mao and the Communist Party after liberation, became a member of the Municipal Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, and had always been very active in the Communist Party's cause, and did not suffer during the Cultural Revolution. Another of his daughters, Cao Zifang, who was the president of the South Model Students' Autonomous Association after liberation, had come to Beijing in 1951 as a representative of students from the newly liberated areas to attend the National Education Conference and had brought me greetings from her father. I have always held a deep respect for such a progressive man who adhered to science to save the country and who later had a long association with the Communist Party led by Mao Zedong. But I have always believed that Mr Cao and the many others who shared his ideals of scientific salvation, while all worthy of respect, were unable to address the root causes of China's problems. After experiencing the tremendous changes of the last century, I have come to realise more clearly that science can advance the development of the productive forces but cannot solve the problems of political corruption and social progress in the country. When it comes to social development, revolution is more important than science.

## Chapter 3: Welcome to Liberation - From the security guards of the people of Shanghai to the young students of the Central League School

At the beginning of 1949, the higher party organisation suggested that as Nanyang Model High School was a famous school in Shanghai with great social influence, it was necessary to transfer some key members of the underground party in to strengthen the party, and asked Qu Yunbao and I to apply for an entrance exam to enter Nanyang Model. At the same time, since the suburban Zhenru Town Municipal High School was a necessary route for the PLA to enter Shanghai from the railway line, we asked our group leader, Liu Burui, to go to Zhenru High School to open up the work. Thus, our original three-member group at Zhongli ceased to exist, and I therefore only actually studied and worked at Zhongli for one semester. Although we had not yet fully established Zhongli as a red bastion, the groundwork had been laid for the underground to take root in Zhongli, and new members such as Zhang Huikang, who took over the underground work in Zhongli, had grown considerably in the second semester. The new Zhongli Party group did its part to welcome liberation. After liberation, Zhongli was taken into public ownership and renamed Li Ming Secondary School, which became a key secondary school in Shanghai. The current First Secretary of Shanghai, Han Zheng, is a graduate of Liming High School. When Liu Borui entered Zhenru Middle School, he developed my progressive classmate from junior high school, Yu Wenjie, into the Party and a new phase soon opened up there. The party group at Zhenru Middle School did a lot to complement the PLA's march into Shanghai and worked very hard.

At Nanyang Model High School, our leader was still Zhang Xiaojun, a member of the Xu Long District Youth Committee. The district youth committee was led by Qian Qichen<sup>21</sup>, who later became the Foreign Minister. At that time, Nanyang Model High School had already established a party branch, with six party groups for boys and one for girls, all under the leadership of Zhang Xiaojun, the secretary of the party branch was Wang Chunheng, an underground member of the third grade, I was the organising committee member, and the propaganda committee members were Zhang Ye (female) and Hang Tianyu. There was also a party group that did the work of the school community and school leadership, under the direct leadership of Zhang Xiaojun. At this time, I was appointed by Zhang Xiaojun to be in charge of the liaison between the two Party groups in Nanyang Model, and temporarily liaised with the Party groups in the Chinese Science Department and Zhenru Middle School. I stopped doing direct mass work and appeared completely neutral politically. At that time, the Shanghai underground was very strong and it was easy to organise demonstrations. However, the Shanghai underground was instructed by the Central Committee not to launch large-scale demonstrations, but mainly to engage in hidden struggles to ensure the safety of the progressive

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<sup>21</sup> Born in Jiading, Shanghai, Qian Qichen (5 January 1928 – 9 May 2017) joined the Communist Party of China in 1942 at the age of 14, and was engaged in the students' underground movement of the Communist Party in Shanghai, first as member and then as secretary of the underground Party Committee of Middle School Section in Shanghai. Counsellor in the Chinese Embassy in the Soviet Union (April 1972 – April 1974), Ambassador to Guinea (August 1974 – November 1976) and Ambassador to Guinea-Bissau concurrently (September 1974 – October 1975), Director General of Information Department of Ministry of Foreign Affairs (November 1976 – April 1982), Vice Foreign Minister (April 1982 – April 1988), Foreign Minister (April 1988 – March 1998), State Councillor and Foreign Minister concurrently (April 1991 – March 1993), Vice Premier and Foreign Minister concurrently (March 1993 – March 1998), Member of the 12th, 13th, 14th, and 15th Central Committee of the Communist Party of China, Member of Political Bureau of the 14th and 15th Central Committee of the Communist Party of China. During his foreign minister tenure, he made visits to one hundred odd countries.

forces, as Shanghai would soon be liberated and would need a large number of talents after the liberation, so we could not let all our talents be captured and killed by the Guomintang.

After the Spring Festival in 1949, the Huaihai Campaign was over. The next step was the issue of crossing the river. The leaders said that negotiations with the Kuomintang would certainly not succeed, and we had our troops ready to cross the river at any time. Sure enough, the Guomintang refused to sign the peace agreement - Chiang Kai-shek wouldn't allow it, and Li Zongren<sup>22</sup> wouldn't sign the 25 characters. Just after broadcasting that they would not sign, the next day, the PLA crossed the river. As the river was being crossed, the underground party organised the People's Security Force to prepare for the liberation. The badges and armbands of the People's Security Brigade were handed out. The branch secretary and the leader of the party group were the chief and deputy chief. I was one of the squadron leaders of the school's security brigade, responsible for security and order in our school and the surrounding area, with an area of responsibility stretching from Tianping Road to Song Qingling's former residence<sup>23</sup>. We had to prevent secret agent activity, but also robbery, sabotage and hooliganism. The Shanghai underground gave orders to Huang Jinrong not to allow their young brothers from the youth gangs to cause trouble when the PLA entered the city. So, we had no such things as robbery or sabotage there. Zhang Xiaojun also arranged for us to send people to the south of Xulong District to investigate the number and configuration of bunkers set up by the Guomintang army and asked us to draw maps in secret. We did not know how to do military mapping, but we still went to do the survey, and also drew some maps, and investigated the names and addresses of the Guomintang, the Three Youths League and other institutions, and sent them all in. Whether they later became useful or not I do not know.

In May 1949, the Guomintang, on the verge of extinction and struggling to survive, conducted several large-scale raids on progressives. The underground was informed of these raids and was prepared for them. One of the sources was Gu Weiqing, a member of the underground in his third year of high school. Gu Weiqing's father, Gu Yujing, was a key member of the Guomintang Central Committee and had some authority in the Guomintang. He was the head of the Shanghai Education Bureau at the time and his family lived in a high-class flat. He didn't know that we had developed his son into an underground member. Gu Weiqing was at home when he heard the news that the Guomintang was going to make a big arrest and reported it to the underground. Another source of information was Chen Lifu's nephew who was also a member of the underground and often made very useful reports to the underground. According to Guomintang propaganda, Chen Lifu was relatively hardworking and simple, but his mansion was quite luxurious.<sup>24</sup> His nephew was living in

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<sup>22</sup> Li Zongren (1890 –1969), was a prominent Guangxi warlord and Guomintang military commander during the Northern Expedition, Second Sino-Japanese War and Chinese Civil War. He served as vice-president and acting President of the Republic of China under the 1947 Constitution.

<sup>23</sup> Song Qingling (27 January 1893 – 29 May 1981) was the wife of Dr Sun Yat-sen. She was also the sister-in-law of Chiang Kai-shek, but repudiated his reactionary policies. She worked closely with the Communist Party of China. When Comrade Mao Zedong announced the founding of the People's Republic of China on October 1, 1949, she was identified as one of the five vice-Chairpersons of the Central People's Government. In 1952, along with the progressive Israel Epstein, she founded the influential *China Reconstructs* magazine. She applied for membership of the Communist Party in 1957 but was asked to remain formally outside the Party so as to maximise her capacity for united front work. However, on 16 May 1981, less than two weeks before her death, she was admitted to the Communist Party and named Honorary Chairwoman of the People's Republic of China, the only person to ever hold this title.

<sup>24</sup> Chen Lifu (August 21, 1900-February 8, 2001) was one of the important figures in China in the 20th century. He is a politician of the Guomintang and had been in politics for most of his life. Especially as the Minister of Education with a background in the United States, he made important contributions to the development of

the mansion. It's an interesting question: Gu Yuxiu's son, and Chen Lifu's nephew, all had rich and powerful families, but they preferred to go with the Communists. And now, some of the children of the Communist Party who want to become magnates and aristocrats! This is a real bummer!

Whenever there were big arrests, we informed the underground members of the school that they could not sleep at home at night. Some underground members hid in the house of Gu Weiqing, who was a key member of the Guomindang, so no one dared to come and search the house; others hid in the mansion of Chen Lifu and Chen Gofu (now the Rose Apartment on Fuxing West Road) and stayed with Chen Lifu's nephew. Some of the underground members of other schools who were too late to take refuge were arrested and, without trial, tied up in sacks and thrown into the Huangpu River. Among those killed were Mu Hanxiang, an underground member of the Jiaotong University who had dealt with us, and others. The Guomindang drove a tank into the school and told the students to line up, took their files, looked at the photos and searched them one by one to identify them. That was the first time I saw for myself that the reactionaries could drive a tank to suppress unarmed students. Many citizens at the time also witnessed this scene for themselves.

On the night of the liberation, the PLA had already entered the southern suburbs and we were living in an alleyway on Tianping Road for fear that the Guomindang would come and arrest us, but in the early hours of May 25, we heard gunshots outside and someone said, "Is the PLA coming in?" I said that the shots would be louder if they came in. But I was wrong. When the PLA came in and fired a few shots, the Guomindang troops turned around and ran away, scattering like birds and beasts, so there would not be any loud gunfire! Later a member of the Party went out quietly to have a look and came back to say that the PLA had come in, wearing grey uniforms and hats and a sign on their chest saying "Chinese People's Liberation Army". I asked him if he could see clearly, and he said he did. I said, "Then let's get out of here." We went out and the troops were still marching, and they were really the PLA! We greeted them and cheered. They greeted us back, waved their hands and moved on.

We ran back to the school, by then it was dawn, and we gathered the students from the People's Security Force by telephone. Soon, dozens of people came and Zhang Xiaojun arrived at the school immediately. He set the task: to maintain law and order, to publicise the Communist Party's urban policy and its discipline for entering the city, and to cheer the PLA and shout long live the PLA when they passed by. The underground members and I organised the security team according to the original organisational system and went out to welcome the PLA. The students were very active and went out with a small flag and an armband. Qian Qichen was the head of our district youth committee and soon came to make an inspection of the work of the security teams in the schools. He later said: "You have done a good job with the Nanyang Model." There was a girl who welcomed the PLA when she saw them, and at the same time propagandised to the citizens who came out of their homes to watch the PLA, promoting the urban policies of the Communist Party, answering the

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China's education during the war. Chen Lifu established the Guomindang's intelligence agency, the Central Bureau of Investigation and Statistics. After the Nationalist Government moved to Taiwan, he moved to the United States to study Chinese culture and promote the development and international recognition of Chinese medicine. In 1969, Chen Lifu returned to Taiwan to settle. In his later years, he tried his best to promote cross-strait exchanges. He put forward the "Theory of the Unification of Chinese Culture", which enabled him to occupy a rather special position in cross-strait relations. His proposition received positive responses from both sides of the strait, and he was therefore elected as the honorary chairman of the "Council for the Promotion of Cross-Strait Peaceful Reunification". He passed away in Taichung, Taiwan on February 8, 2001, at the age of 101.

questions of the public and making the issues clear. The girl Qian Qichen was referring to was Jiang Baonian, a subordinate of Zhang Ye, a female Chinese Party member.

As many things had to be done by student members after the liberation, a comrade called Li Chang was sent from the liberated areas to run a study course to provide short-term training for student members. I took part in this short-term training, which lasted for a week, and gained a lot from it. Li Chang was a youth leader of the January 29th Movement and was the secretary of the Shanghai Municipal Committee at that time. He gave us a lecture on the youth movement, on urban work and gave us tasks to do.

At that time we were very busy with our daily work and there were a lot of things to do, big and small. Nanshi was the most complicated area and the underground was small. The military representative who took over the police station asked us to send a Party student who lived in Nanshi to help solve some disputes among the people. My family lived in Nanshi, so the organisation asked me to go. The military representative sent a jeep to pick me up. I went to work with the PLA to deal with some people fighting and so on. The people who were causing trouble did not understand the PLA, so I acted as an interpreter<sup>25</sup> and helped to mediate, telling them to listen to the PLA. The problems were solved one by one.

In July 1949, Chairman Mao's "On the People's Democratic Dictatorship" was published. While studying this article, instructions came from above, saying that a large number of cadres were needed for the founding of the country and that the Central Government wanted to send people from various schools in Shanghai to study in Beijing (Beiping officially changed back to Beijing two months later in September 1949), and three people from the Nanyang Model had to go. The Shanghai universities also wanted people to go. Zhang Xiaojun of the Xu Long District Youth Committee decided that Nanyang Model would send me, Qin Qiaozong (a member of the former underground party group) and Jiang Baonian (a female member of the Central Party group). (Qin Qiaozong was later a professor at Hangzhou University and Jiang Baonian was later the president of Shanghai Minjin University).

At that time, we had not yet been released from the school, and had no files. The Nanyang Model Party Branch brought three forms from the district, one for each of us. We filled in the forms, took the letters from the district, went to the city to exchange them, and then went to the East China Bureau (which at that time was at the present-day intersection of Jiangxi Road and Fuzhou Road) to get a letter of introduction to the New Democratic Youth League headquarters in Beijing. The next day the three of us met up with other students from other schools at the East China Bureau, and a dozen of us went along. I was appointed as the leader and led the group to the railway station to find a train to Beijing from the military control committee. When Shanghai was first liberated, Guomindang planes came often and sometimes dropped a few bombs on the railway. The train we were on drove to Nanjing and when we came across the Guomindang planes coming to bomb the railway again, we shunted to a hidden place on the branch line and stopped there. The conductor came to tell everyone that the train would not leave until the evening and that those who wanted to have fun could do so, remembering where the train stopped and making sure to return before dark. We went to the Fuzi Temple and Xuanwu Lake separately and played for less than half a day, before it got dark, so we came back together for fear of missing the train. After dark, it left and we didn't encounter any more plane bombings afterwards.

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<sup>25</sup> The Shanghai dialect, or Huyu, is quite different to modern standard Chinese.

Early in the morning the train pulled up to the Huaihai battlefield. While the Huaihai Campaign has been underway, we listened to the short wave of the Xinhua News Agency every day, hoping that the PLA would win the battle. I knew that many martyrs had died in this great battle. As the train drove past Mingguang, I saw houses and bridges damaged by shelling and many new mounds of earth in the green fields, which I thought were probably the graves of the dead martyrs piled up by the men cleaning up the battlefield. In the past, when the Guomindang ruled, the enemy ran roughshod over us, and we hid everywhere, but now that we were liberated and free, it was the result of the lives of millions of martyrs. Seeing the new graves skimming quickly in front of me, I could not calm down, so I wrote a small, childish poem called "A Tour of the Huaihai Battlefield" in my book to commemorate the martyrs who gave their lives for the establishment of the Republic.

*You are a rolling fire*

*In the snowy, cold wind,*

*From north to south,*

*For the freedom of the Motherland,*

*Expanding the territory.*

*With your fresh blood and your lives,*

*You fought the enemy.*

*You have defeated the enemy,*

*And have yourselves fallen on the liberated land.*

*Turn your torsos*

*Into fresh flowers and the five grains.*

*Leaving no names,*

*Leaving no Will,*

*But leaving behind the light of eternal life,*

*For the people who come after you,*

*Guiding the way forward!*

The train left for Beijing Qianmen Station just after nine o'clock on the morning of the third day. When we got off the train, we went to the Central Committee of the League, which was then at the Royal River Bridge. The reception cadres of the Central Committee told us that the Labour University, the Central League School, was in Liangxiang, Hebei (now part of Beijing), and arranged for a car to take us, with our luggage, to the guest house to rest, and the next day sent a car to take us to the railway station for Liangxiang. The next day we took the train to Liangxiang and met with Han Bin, a cadre from the Central League School who was there to meet us. I was assigned to Class 17 of the Central League School, which was a special class for students from Shanghai and Hangzhou. Students from Beijing and Tianjin were in class 15, and the famous writer Wang Meng was in this class. Other provinces and cities also had their own classes.

The Central League School lasted for less than a year, with three courses: philosophy, economics and party history. In addition, they also studied the principles of state building, urban policy, rural policy

and the history of the workers', youth and women's movement. There were many instructors and many famous ones, including Ai Siqi<sup>26</sup> (philosophy, history of social development), Sun Dingguo<sup>27</sup> (Party history, philosophy), Tian Jiaying<sup>28</sup> (Party history, Mao Zedong Thought), Xue Muqiao<sup>29</sup> (economics), Di Chaobai<sup>30</sup> (economics), Chen Jiakang<sup>31</sup> (international situation), etc. The lectures were mostly delivered in large sessions, with over a thousand people sitting on the floor and the instructor standing on the stage, with a ten-minute break in between. Peng Zhen<sup>32</sup>, Wang Ming<sup>33</sup>,

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<sup>26</sup> Ai Siqi (1910- 1966) Mongolian, a well-known Marxist philosopher, educator and revolutionary. He has served as the director of the Philosophy Teaching and Research Office of the Senior Party School of the Communist Party of China, vice president of the Chinese Philosophical Society, and a member of the Faculty of Philosophy and Social Sciences of the Chinese Academy of Sciences. Ai Siqi set a shining example for Chinese theoreticians of high moral character and excellent academic style. He demanded that his Marxist philosophical research and propaganda work should wholeheartedly serve the cause of proletarian liberation and struggle for the cause of socialism and communism. He was brave enough to uphold the truth and correct mistakes, and never overdid certain shortcomings and individual mistakes in his theoretical work, but was brave enough to accept criticism and to correct them openly in the press. He spoke of learning to obey general orders, as Lu Xun had done. He was always strict with himself as a Communist Party member, resolutely carrying out the orders of the Party Central Committee and striving to fulfil the battle tasks on the theoretical front. He had a noble character, was honest, upright, humble and hardworking. He never bothered about his personal position and did not seek any personal gains for himself. Mao Zedong knew him intimately and once said to Liu Baiyu, "Comrade Ai Siqi is a truly good man." He also said to Shu Qun: "Ai Siqi is a good philosopher, good in the sense that he is honest and loyal and does his studies sincerely." (Quoted in Lu Guoying, *The Road to Wisdom - A Generation of Philosophers*, Ai Siqi, People's Publishing House edition, p. 926)

<sup>27</sup> Sun Dingguo (1910-1964) was one of the administrative leaders of the Central Party School. He was elected a delegate to the Seventh Congress of the Communist Party of China in 1939 and studied at the Yan'an Anti-Japanese University and the Central Party School. On December 19, 1964, at the general meeting of the whole school, Chen Boda called Sun Dingguo a "fake philosopher", a "big hooligan" and a "big liar". Later that evening he committed suicide.

<sup>28</sup> Tian Jiaying (1922-1966), was from Shuangliu, Sichuan. In 1936, he participated in the anti-Japanese salvation work in Chengdu. In the following year, he joined the Chinese National Liberation Vanguard. He entered Shaanbei Public School in 1938 and joined the Communist Party in the same year. In 1946, was hired by Mao Zedong as tutor of his son Mao Anying. In 1948, Tian became the secretary of Mao Zedong on the recommendation of Hu Qiaomu. In 1954 he was appointed Deputy Director of the General Office of the CPC Central Committee, responsible for the work of the Secretary's Office. In the early 1960s, Mao sent Tian to organize an investigation team to investigate in Hunan to understand the situation and problems in implementing the "Regulations on the Work of Rural People's Communes". Tian's report questioned the efficacy and logic behind the Great Leap Forward. In May 1966, Tian was expelled from the Communist Party of China, and on 23 May he committed suicide. The cause of his death has been disputed.

<sup>29</sup> Xue Muqiao (1904 –2005) was a Chinese economist and politician. He was instrumental in introducing and implementing the revisionist economic reforms that transformed China into a capitalist market economy by participating in the development of the ideological concept of a primary stage of socialism.

<sup>30</sup> Di Chaobai (1910 - 1978) was an economist who joined the Chinese Communist Party in 1931. He was a deputy to the First National People's Congress. He is the author of *Addresses on Popular Economics* (written when he was imprisoned by the Guomindang), *Addresses on Economics*, and *On Urban-Rural Relations*.

<sup>31</sup> Chen Jiakang (1913 – 1970) was an alternate delegate to the Seventh Communist Party Congress. After the founding of the People's Republic of China, he served as a member of the Central Committee of the Youth League and after several diplomatic posts, became Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs.

<sup>32</sup> Peng Zhen (1902-97) joined the Chinese Communist Party in 1926. He was later imprisoned for several years by the Nationalists. He fought with the anti-Japanese guerrillas during the 1930s. By 1945, Peng was a member of the Politburo. Six years later, he became the mayor of Beijing, a position he held he was overthrown as a revisionist early in the Cultural Revolution. Peng was rehabilitated by Deng Xiaoping in 1979 and restored to his role as mayor of Beijing. He became chairman of the National People's Congress in 1983, occupying this role until his retirement in 1988.

<sup>33</sup> Wang Ming (1904 - 1974) joined the CCP in 1924 but opposed Chairman Mao's attempts to apply Marxism-Leninism to Chinese conditions. In 1927 he went to Moscow for two years, returning on behalf of a group

Mao Anying<sup>34</sup> and Deng Yingchao<sup>35</sup> also came. Mao Anying interpreted for the Soviet guests and, at their request, gave a brief account of his experiences. Later, when I joined Zhongnanhai and went for a walk in Yingtai, I met him again several times and listened to his stories about what he had seen in the Soviet Union and about the land reform. He was quite modest and everyone liked him.

On 30 September 1949, the students of the League School took the train from Liangxiang to Beijing to attend the Founding Ceremony the following day. On the day of the ceremony, all the students and teachers were led by a guard of honour and entered the square in shifts behind the Young Pioneers holding flowers, waiting for the ceremony to begin. I was chosen as a member of the Guard of Honour because of my tall stature, and every two members of the Guard of Honour shared a large flag and took turns to rest. In ancient times, when the famous general Han Xin joined the peasant rebellion, he was a "banner bearer", so I could be called a "banner bearer". At noon on the day of the ceremony, I saw Chairman Mao for the first time, accompanied by the music of "The East is Red". There were hundreds of thousands of people in Tiananmen Square that day, and many of them, like me, were not able to see Chairman Mao's face from a distance, but they were still happy and excited, shouting and screaming, and jumping upwards on their tiptoes to get a better view. I was a young man of eighteen, and to be able to attend such a ceremony was, without doubt, the blessing of a lifetime. The ceremony began with an artillery salute and the hoisting of the national flag, followed by a speech by Chairman Mao. At that moment, the whole audience suddenly fell silent, no one shouted for fear of missing Chairman Mao's words, and when he announced the founding of the People's Republic of China, the quiet square suddenly burst into thunder! There were tears of joy, shouting and cheering, and some of the girls even cried out. During the parade, everyone shouted "Long Live", so much so that their throats became hoarse. Chairman Mao also shouted "Long live the people". Long live the people! This was a strange sound for the ages! Marx said that revolution is a great festival of the masses, and 1 October 1949 was the greatest festival of the Chinese people.

In 1950, the Central League School had to end its studies early because with the establishment of the Central People's Government and the march of the PLA throughout the whole country, the new republic was in desperate need of talents in all areas and could not wait for the trainees to complete their studies in a step-by-step manner. On the eve of graduation, we all asked to see Chairman Mao.

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known as the "28 Bolsheviks" who sought, unsuccessfully, to seize the Party's leadership. From 1931 to 1937, he again lived in Moscow, returning to China as a representative of the Comintern. Wang Ming opposed Mao's policies on retaining independence within the united front and was criticised for his dogmatism during the Yan'an Rectification Movement in 1942. He was encouraged to take leadership of legal work after Liberation in 1949, but prior to the 8th National Congress of CPC in 1956, he went to Moscow for medical treatment and did not return. He wrote many poisonous attacks on Mao on behalf of the Soviet revisionists during his later life.

<sup>34</sup> Mao Anying (1922 -1950), was the eldest son of Mao Zedong and Yang Kaihui. In 1936, he was sent to Moscow to study and he and his brother Mao Anqing were allowed by Stalin to join the Red Army and fight the invading Germans. Mao Anying graduated from the Frunze Military Academy and the Lenin Military-Political Academy in 1943 and served as an artillery officer for the 1st Belorussian Front in the fight against the Third Reich in Poland, Czechoslovakia, and the final Battle of Berlin. He joined the Chinese People's Volunteers in the war against the US imperialists, but was killed on November 24 when US planes dropped napalm on a building in which he was working.

<sup>35</sup> Deng Yingchao (1904 -1992) was a team leader in the 1919 May 4<sup>th</sup> Movement. There she met Zhou Enlai, whom she would marry in 1925. Deng joined the Communist Youth League of China in 1924 and became a member of the Party in the same year as her marriage to Zhou. She took part in the Long March and carried out important political work both before and after Liberation. She was elected to the Central Committee at the Party's 8<sup>th</sup> National Congress and continued to undertake work for the government after Zhou's death in 1976.

The headmaster of the League School relayed our request to the Central Committee, and it was granted! This showed how much the Central Committee and Chairman Mao wanted the young people! One day in April, we paraded to Huaiyuan Hall in Zhongnanhai and sat down to wait where the CPPCC members were meeting. Suddenly the spotlights turned on and Chairman Mao came out from the podium, beaming, smiling and waving to everyone. I think, at that moment, every participant present felt as honoured as I did to see the leader of hundreds of millions of people at such close quarters. Cao Yan, a female Party member of our class, and others, the teachers and students of the, presented a letter of tribute to Chairman Mao written on red paper. The rest of us were delighted and envious as Chairman Mao shook hands with them one by one.

Shortly after the graduation ceremony, we all sang the song "Young people, with fiery hearts, follow Mao Zedong" and said goodbye to the Central League School, heading off to our combat positions! Several students and I were ordered to report to Zhongnanhai.

## Part Two Working in Zhongnanhai

### Chapter 1 First into Zhongnanhai, as the Secretary of the Secretariat

#### 1.1 Admission and reporting

When I was studying at the Central Labour University (later the Central League School), I was the leader of the party group of three groups in Class 17 and sat on the class branch committee. Han Bin and Chen Bohong were the two deputy class leaders, and they were also the organising and propaganda members of the class branch respectively. On the eve of graduation, the Central Labour University, at the request of the Central Committee, decided to send a few people to work beside Chairman Mao in Zhongnanhai. Han Bin and Chen Bohong recommended me. It was not enough to be recommended, but it was also necessary to look at academic performance and political vetting. The graduation examination was conducted by Feng Ming, the head of the education section of the school, and included several questions on Marxism-Leninism and Mao Zedong Thought, in both written and oral examinations, both of which I did well and got praise from my class. I was 19 years old and had a simple history; I had been tested by the underground party I had joined in Shanghai; my father was a general city clerk, considered working class. I had no problems with my grades and political examination, so the Labour University decided to send me. Shen Dongnian was an underground member of Shanghai Yuying High School, and Zhang Guanchou was an underground member of Shanghai Jinan University (he was actually an underground member at Yucai High School). At that time, the person who came from the central government to pick people was Peng Dazhang, a native of Weihai, Shandong Province, and an old divisional cadre of the Fourth Field Army. He had asked for all three of us and still felt that it was not enough, and hoped that the school would give him a few more people, but the school really couldn't provide them, because at that time many central units came to ask for people, such as the central organs, the Central Military Commission, and the people's government. They all came to ask for people, and the number of students was limited. On 4 May 1950, I reported to Zhongnanhai with Shen Dongnian and Zhang Guanchou [Note 1].

The Central Labour University asked me to bring the files of the other two and my own, with them, to Zhongnanhai. According to the normal way, the files had to be transferred to Zhongnanhai through internal Party channels, but at that time Zhongnanhai was in a hurry to get people, so the Central Labour University made an exception and sealed our files, stamped them with a seal and gave them to us to bring with us. At that time, we did not know that Zhongnanhai had a west gate, so we came to the south gate of Zhongnanhai (Xinhua Gate). As we did not have an access card to Zhongnanhai and did not know the soldiers guarding it, we were kept out of the gate. We gave our names and our reason for coming, and after the guard soldier called and spoke to Tian Jiaying inside, one of the guards led us inside. The Xinhua Gate was for senior officials' cars and was not normally accessible to people, but Tian Jiaying let us in through it anyway. After we had followed the guard for a while, the guard pointed to a road by the river and said, "Just walk along the river and someone will pick you up when you get to the house." At that time, a number of soldiers from Unit 8341 were clearing the mud from Zhongnanhai (it was later said that some small grenades, guns and other weapons and explosives were dug up during the clean-up, but nothing big). There was muddy water everywhere on the road, which made it difficult to walk. We made a big circle and finally walked to the Palace of Qinzheng, where Tian Jiaying's guard came out and waited to pick us up.

As I walked along the river, I saw a lot of fish flopping around in the knee-deep water and the soldiers were just digging in the mud, not caring about the fish. My family was poor and I had grown up by the sea, so I knew that fish were a good thing, and as we walked along, I was very moved by

the sight of them. We were joined that day by a group of university students selected from Yanjing University and Tsinghua University. After we had settled in, I asked them to join me in catching fish in a basin, and everyone came back with a basin full of fish. They asked how they were going to eat it. I taught them to gut the fish and clean it, then asked someone to buy soy sauce and vinegar from a small shop across the street from the dormitory, built a stove with bricks, washed the basin, put water in it and collected leaves that had fallen on the ground to make firewood. The fish that came out of that was delicious! When the country was first founded and supplies were tight, we ate fish for days on end and everyone was happy. Zhongnanhai later raised a lot of fish to improve the food. When Chairman Mao refused to eat meat and suffered from malnutrition during the three years of natural disasters, Premier Zhou had the fish raised by the soldiers in Zhongnanhai cooked and mashed, accompanied by vegetables, for the Chairman to eat. The Chairman first did not eat it, but only agreed to eat it after hearing the Premier say that the fish was raised in Zhongnanhai by the soldiers on their own. Teaching the university students who came with me to cook fish in a basin was a funny thing now, but it was the real beginning of my life in Zhongnanhai. The university students were older than me, but not as experienced in life as I was.

I was 19 years old and I thought I was already an adult, but now I see I was still a complete child. We lived in Zhongnanhai's West 8, which was a collective dormitory, originally a place for palace maids. At first I shared a room with Pang Xianzhi<sup>36</sup>, Yu Yongnian, Zhang Xuehou and Yu Xuejun. Soon, a minister from the All-China Federation of Trade Unions came to live with us, so it became six people in one room. The room was about twenty square metres, with no bunk beds, and was very cramped. I was crammed in the doorway, and as there was no curtain and I was blown by the wind from outside every day, I soon caught a bad cold and was sick for a week. I had never been sick for that long before (I lived in the West 8 for two years and then moved to the now demolished West Building, where two people lived in one room because I had been mentioned for the position of section head).

My initial impression of Pang Xianzhi was not good. At that time, there were a lot of mosquitoes in Zhongnanhai in summer, and although we used DDT, the mosquitoes flew in as soon as people opened the door at night. At that time, mosquito nets were very expensive and people could not afford to buy them. Pang Xianzhi's family owned a pharmacy and was relatively rich, so he was the only one of the six of us who had a mosquito net. At that time, Pang Xianzhi was in charge of the living arrangements, so I said to him, you are in charge of the living arrangements, you either get a mosquito net for all of us, or you can be like us and not use a mosquito net, otherwise it is not fair.

Everyone agreed with me and all talked over each other about him in the dormitory at night before going to bed. One day Tian Jiaying called me up and criticised me, saying, "What are you doing, trying to stage a mass movement in Zhongnanhai?" I couldn't figure out what was going on. Tian Jiaying said that you had mobilized the masses and asked Pang Xianzhi to exert pressure on the leaders to give you mosquito nets. It turned out that Pang Xianzhi had denounced me. He knew that I was in the underground party, had many ideas and could mobilize the masses, so it was not easy to

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<sup>36</sup> Pang Xianzhi, was born in October 1929 in Jiao County, Shandong Province. He graduated from North China People's Revolutionary University in 1950, joined the Party and entered Zhongnanhai. He was responsible for managing Mao Zedong's books, newspapers and magazines, and was an assistant to Mao Zedong's secretary Tian Jiaying. He participated in the compilation of "Selected Works of Mao Zedong" and other important documents. He is touted as an expert on Mao Zedong and Mao Zedong Thought, and co-wrote a biography of Mao that was published by Cambridge University Press in April, 2020. It is described as it "faithfully reflecting the current official Chinese interpretation of Mao's life".

deal with me, so he dared not confront me head-on, so he secretly snitched to Tian Jiaying, saying that I mobilized the masses to rectify him, rebelled against him and forced him to convey to the leaders to give us mosquito nets. I explained to Tian Jiaying that this was not the case and that it was just a joke. Tian Jiaying listened to me and understood. But from then on, I started to be careful about Pang. Pang often took the initiative to snitch to Tian, reporting our situation to Tian, and later became Tian's secretary.

## **1.2 The structure and personnel affiliation of the Central Office at the time**

In 1950, there were three main agencies under the Central General Office: the first was the Political Secretary's Office of the Secretariat of the CPC Central Committee, referred to as the Political Secretary's Office, the director of which was Shi Zhe; the second was the Security Bureau of the CPC Central Committee, which was headed by Ye Zilong; the third was the Hou Lou Research Office, which was under the direct leadership of Yang Shangkun, the director of the Central Office, and was named after the office in the Hou Lou of Zhongnanhai (where Juren Hall is located), without an official name. At that time, the relationship between the Secretariat and the Office of the Central Government and their administrative superiors was rather delicate, as the Secretariat and the Office of the Central Government reported directly to Chairman Mao and received assignments from him, while the Office of the Central Government was responsible for the logistical and administrative aspects of the central organs, including providing logistical support for the Secretariat and the Office of the Central Government. There is a very important historical aspect to this relationship. The Political Secretariat was established around August 1949, and its predecessor was the Office of the Secretariat of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China, which was under the leadership of Ren Bishi. The Secretariat Office was formerly known as the Security Section of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China, which was under the Office of the Secretariat, and was headed by Ye Zilong. Both of them came under the direct leadership of the Chairman. The Central General Office was established after the founding of the country in October 1949, but its history goes back to the Yan'an period, when it was already taking shape and its director was Li Fuchun. Li Fuchun was not particularly capable, but he was very good at uniting people and had a good relationship with almost everyone, and with the Chairman in particular, and he and his wife Cai Chang always supported Chairman Mao [Note 2].

After Li Fuchun left Yan'an for the Northeast in October 1945, Yang Shangkun took over as Director of the General Office of the Central Committee, and when Hu Zongnan attacked Yan'an in 1947, the Central Committee was divided into three: Chairman Mao, Zhou Enlai and Ren Bishi led the Central Front Committee and stayed in northern Shaanxi; Liu Shaoqi, Zhu De and Dong Biwu led the Central Working Committee and moved to the Taihang area; Ye Jianying and Yang Shangkun led the Central Rear Committee and stayed in northwestern Shanxi for the time being. The Central Rear Committee provided intelligence and logistical services to the Central Front Committee led by Chairman Mao, and also provided necessary support to the Central Working Committee led by Liu Shaoqi, Yang Shangkun was the deputy director of the Central Rear Committee at that time.

In May 1948, Chairman Mao led the Central Front Committee to Xibaipo, where he joined the Central Work Committee and the Central Rear Committee, which had already settled there earlier, and the three parts of the Central Organ became one again. At this time, the General Office of the Central Committee under Yang Shangkun was under the Central Working Committee led by Liu Shaoqi, and the confidential and secret rooms were parallel to the Central Office. After the central government entered Beijing in 1949, Yang Shangkun led the Central Security Bureau and the Central Secretariat, which are two units different from the Security Bureau and the Secretarial Office. Among them, the Central Secretariat could not enter Zhongnanhai. Both the Security Bureau and the

Secretarial Office followed Chairman Mao into Zhongnanhai and were still both under the leadership of the Central Secretariat, headed by Ren Bishi, who was still directly responsible to Chairman Mao, as was Ye Zilong. Ren Bishi went to the Soviet Union for medical treatment in November 1949, and in January 1950, the Security Bureau and the Secretarial Office came under the control of Yang Shangkun. However, the Central Government did not explicitly state that the Security Bureau and the Secretarial Office were under the General Office of the Central Government, and Chairman Mao stipulated that the Security Bureau and the Secretarial Office reported directly to him and accepted his assignments in accordance with historical practice, and the General Office of the Central Government cooperated with their work and provided logistical support.

This created a delicate situation in which the Secretariat and the Security Bureau were nominally under the control of the Central General Office, but in practice they operated on an equal footing with the Central General Office. At that time, the Central General Office also had no authority to interfere with the Central Security Bureau, which was under Luo Ruiqing's responsibility. This is fundamentally different from the Central General Office, whose powers were later expanded. The Central General Office had its own Secretariat (which had three different directors) and its own Bureau of Secretarial Affairs (headed by the Long March cadre Li Qizhong).

This Security Bureau was a purely technical body, specialising in sending and receiving telegrams, and the telegrams it received had to be handed over to the Bureau in charge of Ye Zilong to be sent to the Chairman, who approved them and then handed them back to the Bureau to be sent out. From this workflow alone, it can be seen that the status of the Security Bureau was much higher than that of the Central Security Bureau. The key office was filled with old revolutionaries who had joined the revolution early and were all very old in their qualifications. The four major secretaries: Ye Zilong (Secretary to the Chairman), Kang Yimin (Secretary to the Premier), Hu Zhenying (Secretary to Liu Shaoqi) and Pan Kaiwen (Secretary to Zhu De), were all in the Machine Room. Ye Zilong is the Director. Therefore, the Security Bureau was the de facto boss of the three major agencies and did not take the Central Office seriously at all; Ye Zilong did not take Yang Shangkun seriously. Yang Shangkun also hated Ye Zilong with a passion for this reason [Note 3] The members of the Political Secretariat mainly consisted of three parts: firstly, the old Red Army and the old Eighth Route Army veterans, who had a low level of education but a high level of political loyalty; secondly, the newly graduated university students in 1949 and 1950, who had a high level of education but were not as politically loyal as the old Red Army and the old Eighth Route Army veterans; thirdly, a group of young people like me, who had participated in underground party work and had withstood the test of arduous revolutionary struggle. They also had a certain level of education and were considered to be both red and expert. At that time, there was a legend that when the secretary's office was established, Hu Qiaomu felt that the old Red Army and the old Eighth Route Army veterans had a low level of education and suggested that Chairman Mao get a university professor to take up the post, which was rejected by Chairman Mao. If this story is true, then looking back at history, Chairman Mao's consideration was well thought out. To engage in socialism, one must have both the loyalty of the old Red Army and the old Eighth Route Army, and a certain level of knowledge and culture. For quite a long period of time, the Chairman did pay close attention to training young people like me. His systematic discussions on the training of proletarian revolutionary successors before and after the Cultural Revolution (the core of which was "to be both red and expert") reflected his far-sightedness about the proletarian cause.

The work of the Political Secretariat was mainly to deal with Chairman Mao's official business (Chairman Mao therefore called it "my secretary's office", hereinafter referred to as the secretary's office). Liu Shaoqi's affairs were handled exclusively by Wang Guangmei of Liu's office, and the two

of them were in a superior-subordinate working relationship, but also had their husband and wife relationship. Zhu De's affairs were few and far between, and the secretary's office piggybacked on them, not to mention that Zhu De's two political secretaries, Chen Youqun and He Jun, were in the secretary's office. The State Council (then still the Council of State Affairs) was independent, and the Premier's affairs were not under the control of the Secretary's Office. The Secretary's Office and the Security Bureau were the two most important agencies around Chairman Mao, holding most of the central secrets of the CPC Central Committee, and the Chairman always asked that these two agencies remain independent. This is a very important point. The Chairman should have had his special considerations of the real life of the people and the actual situation of society, without a filter in the middle.

At Chairman Mao's request, there was a division of labour between these two departments: all coded telegrams from the Party to the Chairman, and telegrams from the Military Commission and the military regions to the Chairman, were sent to the Chairman through Ye Zilong's Security Bureau, which the Secretary's Office could not read; all letters and coded telegrams from the public to the Chairman were sent to the Chairman through the Secretary's Office, even though some of these letters were very important and confidential, such as letters from some provincial, municipal and local leaders to the Chairman, and even letters from some foreign leaders to the Chairman. Once I got a strange letter, a white slip of paper with a set of numbers written on it: how many cannons, how many machine guns, how many tanks and nothing more, signed in a foreign language and I couldn't read who it was. I wondered how I was going to show this to the Chairman. Fortunately, I had an idea and asked the mailroom: Where did this letter come from? The answer was: It was from the Central Committee. I understood at once that it was from a leader of the Communist Party abroad to the Chairman, and that it must be very important. So, I immediately asked to report it to the Chairman, otherwise it could have been a big mistake. The reports from the provinces and cities to the Central Government were also originally handled by the Secretary's Office. The Central Government Office thought that these reports were sent directly from the Secretary's Office to the Chairman and that the General Office would know nothing about them and that a separate special agency should be set up to handle these reports under the leadership of the General Office. This led to the Rear Building Research Office. It was mainly engaged in compressing and selecting reports from various places, somewhat like the present Policy Research Office, which conducts surveys on the situation within the Party and studies the dynamics of the Party. Although it was under the direct leadership of Yang Shangkun, several of Chairman Mao's important secretaries such as Chen Boda and Tian Jiaying were allowed to intervene. The first director of the secretary's office, Shi Zhe, had a lot to do with Ren Bishi. He was Ren's secretary in the Soviet Union in 1939 (when Ren was the head of the Chinese Communist Party delegation to the Communist International) and returned to China in 1940 with Ren and Zhou Enlai.

There has always been a strong "Moscow faction", also called the "International faction", led by Wang Ming and united around Stalin. Liu Shaoqi and the Premier were in fact members of the "International Faction", and Ren Bishi was no exception. There was also Cai Hesen, who was as close to Chairman Mao as a brother, but unfortunately died early. Guan Xiangying was also an "internationalist". However, in the hard struggle of reality, Guan Xiangying identified himself with Chairman Mao and came out of the "internationalist" camp earlier. When the 34th Red Army was forced to withdraw from Jinggangshan, Guan Xiangying, He Long and Ren Bishi led the 2nd and 6th Red Army Corps together on the Long March. Before he died of illness in Yan'an in 1946, Guan warned Ren Bishi and He Long to follow Chairman Mao and not to oppose him [Note 4]. Under Guan Xiangying's influence, Ren Bishi also rebelled against the "Internationalists" and sincerely turned to Chairman Mao.

When Hu Zongnan attacked Yan'an in 1947, Chairman Mao wanted to stay in northern Shaanxi to fight. Ren Bishi was adamantly opposed to this, as he wanted Chairman Mao to cross the Yellow River to a safe place, as he was the leader of the whole Party and the Party's interests would be too much lost if anything went wrong. He also proposed that he and the Premier stay in northern Shaanxi. He and the Chairman argued so fiercely that the Chairman finally got angry and said, "If you want to cross the river, you do it". Ren Bishi really had no choice and said: "No, if you stay in Shaanbei, I will stay in Shaanbei too. I am the commander of the third detachment and responsible for the work of the Central Organ. Whenever the Chairman leaves, I will leave". Ren Bishi was a staunch supporter of Chairman Mao on matters of principle, and became his most capable comrade and assistant. At that time, Jiang Qing also accompanied Chairman Mao to fight in Shaanxi Province and was the political instructor of the third detachment of the central organ. However, the relationship between Jiang Qing and Ren Bishi was not good, as Ren Bishi was Jiang Qing's leader, but Jiang Qing did not listen to him. Jiang Qing once said that I had eyes on my forehead<sup>37</sup> and she herself did. When the Political Secretariat was set up, Ren Bishi was for a short time secretary of the Central Secretariat and also director, and soon it was Shi Zhe, who had been Ren Bishi's secretary in Moscow, and not Jiang Qing, who had fought with Ren Bishi in northern Shaanxi, who became the official first director of the Secretariat. Another reason why Shi Zhe became the first head of the secretary's office was that his personal talents were valued by the Chairman.

When Chairman Mao visited the Soviet Union in late 1949 and early 1950, Chen Boda and Shi Zhe both accompanied him on the trip. Chen Boda knew how to follow the Soviets' ass and say good things about them, much to the disgust of the Chairman. Chen Boda was such a person that he would fall to whichever side was strong. The Chairman originally had a document for Chen Boda to draft, but when he saw him like this, he wouldn't let him draft it. Shi Zhe's performance and Chen Boda's were completely different. When he stayed in the Soviet Union, Shi Zhe joined the Soviet KGB with the consent of the Central Government (it was a great honour to be a member of the KGB at that time), and when he accompanied the Chairman on his visit, he learnt a lot about the situation through the Soviet KGB channels and reported it to Chairman Mao in time. When the country was first founded, everything had to be studied and learned from Lenin's experience in creating a socialist state, and Chairman Mao had to read a lot of material about the Soviet Union, which required a lot of translations of Russian documents. At that time, there were many English translators, but Russian translators were scarce. White Russians knew both Russian and Chinese, but they were a very complicated group of people, who basically recognised money but not people. Therefore, Shi Zhe became a very important person, and soon after the President returned from his visit to the Soviet Union, he was sent to the Central Bureau for the Compilation and Translation of the Works of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin (the predecessor of the Central Bureau of Compilation and Translation) as its director. He was also the headmaster of the Russian language school (part of the predecessor of the present Beijing Foreign Studies University), and was instrumental in training Russian language talents for the new China. At that time, when the Secretariat wanted to select the best people to study Russian, Peng Dazhang mobilised me to go, but I was reluctant and passed up the opportunity.

In addition to Shi Zhe, [Note 6] the leaders of the secretary's office were Jiang Qing, Tian Jiaying and Peng Dazhang, the deputy directors. Shi Zhe often organised our meetings. Jiang Qing was not in good health at the time and did not manage much in the Secretary's Office, being mainly responsible for Chairman Mao's personal life. Although Tian Jiaying was ranked after Jiang Qing, he was actually mainly responsible for the day-to-day work of the secretary's office. In Jiang Qing's absence, Tian

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<sup>37</sup> Describing someone who is arrogant and pretentious.

Jiaying also took over the personal affairs of the Chairman. I officially started work as a trainee secretary in the secretary's office, under the direct supervision of Tian Jiaying and Peng Dazhang. My first job was to read and extract newspapers for Chairman Mao, and soon to handle letters from the public. These tasks were under the supervision of Deputy Director Peng Dazhang, but Tian Jiaying would also intervene on important matters. At that time, Tian Jiaying was mainly responsible for handling matters directly assigned by the Chairman, such as managing Chairman Mao's books and editing the Selected Works of Mao Zedong.

#### Notes:

Note 1: When Zhang Guanchou was in the Shanghai underground, his father had a friend who was in the Kuomintang military junta. This person asked Zhang Guanchou to join the Juntong<sup>38</sup>, which he did not agree to, but for fear of arousing the suspicion of that agency, he introduced a friend to join. This was something he did not report to the organisation at the time. During the interrogation of the cadres in the 1950s, this was revealed. At that time, He Zai was in charge of the interrogation in Zhongnanhai. He personally went to investigate the arrested member of the Juntong and confirmed that this had happened. Zhang Guanchou said that he was doing this for the purpose of counter-insurgency work. Later He Zai and I sent him back to Shanghai for further examination, but nothing came out of the examination, so he was placed as a general cadre in a district housing authority. After I was censored in 1968, Zhang Guanchou went around saying that I had persecuted him. After the Cultural Revolution, when He Zai became the Vice Minister of the Central Organization Department (together with Li Rui), Zhang Guanchou approached He Zai and asked for a change in his treatment, but He Zai still insisted on his original decision, because it was He Zai who had handled the case and it was true, so he was not rehabilitated.

Note 2: Li Fu-chun had always treated people equally. When he first met me, he called me Old Qi. I said I couldn't be called that, I was a young man, how could I be called Old Qi. He said I was too tall to be called Little Qi, so he had to call me Old Qi. Chairman Mao's 1964 criticism of Li Fuchun's Planning Commission as an independent kingdom did not refer to Li Fuchun, but to something else. During the Cultural Revolution, people involved in the "February Counter-current" often met at Li Fuchun's house, so when the Chairman criticized the "February Counter-current", he criticized Li Fuchun as well. But I knew in my heart that the Chairman knew that Li Fuchun would not oppose him. So I told the people in the Social Sciences Department that they could not oppose Li Fuchun.

Note 3: Ye Zilong did not take Yang Shangkun seriously, and Yang Shangkun finally found an opportunity to take revenge on Ye Zilong in 1962. At that time, Ye Zilong had to be transferred out of the Security Bureau because he had made a mistake. He went to Yang Shangkun, who was already in power, and wanted to become the secretary of the Beijing Municipal Secretariat or the minister of a central ministry. Yang Shangkun said in person, "Listen to the decision of the organization", but behind his back he cursed him for "pissing on his own portrait"<sup>39</sup>, and finally arranged for him to be a deputy director of the Beijing Municipal Light Industry Bureau.

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<sup>38</sup> Juntong, short for the Bureau of Investigation and Statistics of the Military Council, one of the Guomindang's huge secret service agencies.

<sup>39</sup> "Don't piss on your own portrait" was a reprimand directed at the Ming Dynasty writer Xie Wei who claimed his poetry had reached the level of Li Bai's and Di Fu's. He was accused of destroying his own reputation by being overly boastful.

Note 4: Guan Xiangying's support for Chairman Mao was so strong that he influenced Ren Bishi and others to come out of the "Internationalists" and stand firmly on Chairman Mao's side. Chairman Mao was very sad about Guan Xiangying's untimely death in 1946, so much so that 20 years later at a meeting during the Cultural Revolution, I heard Chairman Mao say with my own ears, "If Guan Xiangying were still alive, He Long would not have gone over" (referring his support of Liu Shaoqi).

Note 5: During the Cultural Revolution, some people exposed Ren Bishi as anti-Chairman Mao, but in reality that was only a difference of opinion between Ren Bishi and the Chairman on a non-principle issue, not the same thing as opposition to the Chairman.

Note 6: When Li X, the secretary of Shandong, had problems in 1957, Shi Zhe was transferred to Shandong as the provincial party secretary. This was a promotion and reappointment for him. I feel that Shi Zhe was a serious and responsible person, but it was his killing of a child that really disgusted people. After he was transferred to Shandong, he had a child with a nanny, and he threw the child into "blood drops" (nitrous acid water) and there were no bones left. He probably learnt this from the KGB. The story is said to have been revealed by the nanny who had sex with him. As a mother, that nanny really felt that what Shi Zhe did was inhuman. The material came to the Central Secretariat at the time and I saw it myself. The case was handled by Liu Shaoqi and Shi Zhe was arrested and sentenced. There was no injustice in this case. What redress was there later, and what redress could there be? This matter was not mentioned in Shi Zhe's memoirs, of course.

## Chapter 2: Reading newspapers, making excerpts and managing books for Chairman Mao

1. Reading newspapers and making excerpts for Chairman Mao
2. Managing books for Chairman Mao

### 1. Reading newspapers and making excerpts for Chairman Mao

At the beginning of the founding of the country, all of the industries were waiting to be revived. Newspapers and letters from the public all over the country were important ways for Chairman Mao to understand and grasp the situation in the country. He did not have the time or the need to read them all himself, so he asked Tian Jiaying and Peng Dazhang to read them and pick out the important things and then show them to him. The two of them were too busy to read as many newspapers as they wanted. As soon as we, the new generation, arrived, they assigned us the job of reading the newspapers and summarise the contents and then they send it to the Chairman. So, my first job after joining the secretary's office was to read and extract items from the newspapers for Chairman Mao.

In principle, the summaries of newspaper content for Chairman Mao should be important. But what was important? At that time, there was no standard, and when I asked the old comrades from the old areas, they were all going by their personal feelings. Many of them thought that the front page headlines were the most important, and that the speeches and reports of the provincial party secretaries were the most important. So, what they sent to the Chairman was often what's on the first page of the newspaper. Having spent time in Shanghai, and even read a lot of Chiang Kai-shek's proclamations, so I knew what an official article was. When I first joined Zhongnanhai, of course, I didn't think that the reports of the local leaders were official, I just thought that they were all documents that the Chairman had read, so it would be redundant to pick them out again. In the summer of 1950, the Huaihe River basin was flooded, a disaster not seen for a hundred years. It broke its banks, plunging the northern part of the Huaihe region into a sea of water and tens of millions of people in Anhui and Henan provinces were affected. The Huaihe River basin used to be rich and beautiful with its rivers and lakes, and the poet Qin Guan of the Song Dynasty wrote these lines after ascending to the city of Si Zhou: "The lonely city is surrounded by white water, and the boat is full of people talking in the sunset. A touch of fragrance at the top of the forest is like a painting, knowing that it is a mountain where the Huai flow turns." In 1194, the southern embankment of the Yellow River broke at Yuan Yang County, Henan Province, and the waters of the Yellow River invaded the Huaihe River. Since then, the Huaihe River had lost its original appearance. In the Ming and Qing dynasties, the Huaihe River was subject to frequent flooding, and the feudal regime did not see practical outcomes. I never thought that the Huaihe River would be flooded again just after the founding of New China. At that time, I paid special attention to the reports and letters and calls from the public, so I made a summary of all the relevant information I read and gave it to the leaders, who reported it to Chairman Mao.

When Chairman Mao learned that some people in the affected areas had climbed up trees to avoid the floods and were bitten to death by poisonous snakes, he was so sad that he shed tears and gave instructions on 20 July 1950: "Apart from the present prevention and rescue, we must consider the

root cause of the problem. " In October 1950, the State Council, chaired by Premier Zhou, responded to Chairman Mao's call for a cure for the flooding of the Huai River and began to organise and implement the Huai River control project, which was dedicated in an inscription by Chairman Mao in May 1951: "The Huai River must be harnessed."

From the time I went to school until I joined Zhongnanhai, I always loved to read new books, and I had a wide reading range, so I could easily accept new ideas. That's why I was particularly interested in rural co-operatives, believing that there was no way out of a small-peasant economy. When I was in Shanghai, I also read about the co-operatives and collective farms in the Soviet Union, and although I didn't understand all of it, I knew that after the success of the revolution in the Soviet Union, co-operatives had become a nationwide issue. I thought it had been like that in the Soviet Union, it would be the same in China. Therefore, whenever there was anything about co-operative development in the local newspapers, I considered it important and provided some excerpts for the Chairman to read. At that time, I was mainly responsible for reading and excerpting newspapers from North China, such as Shijiazhuang Daily, Hebei Daily and Shanxi Daily. Some of the old areas were engaged in co-operative work earlier, in 1950, and when I saw a report in the Shanxi Daily about the co-operative work of peasants in Shanxi Province, I sent it to the Chairman. It talked about the polarization that had occurred in the old areas of Shanxi Province after the land reform, when Li Shunda<sup>40</sup> set up a work team, and later a mutual aid group, and then a mutual aid group working towards co-operatisation. This report had black underlining all over it by the Chairman, from which we can see how concerned the Chairman was about the countryside after the success of the revolution, and how much importance he attached to co-operatives and collectivisation. This newspaper should not have been destroyed, for although there were underlines and circles all over the page, the Chairman did not criticise the words. If you can find it, it is a very important and precious historical document. It was during the co-operative movement in the 1950s that Li Shunda became famous throughout the country after becoming a national model worker. There was also the case of Hebei's Shen Jilan's fight for co-operatives<sup>41</sup>, which attracted the attention of the Chairman

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<sup>40</sup> Li Shunda (1915-July 1, 1983), a native of Linxian County, Henan Province, a member of the Communist Party of China, a national model worker, successively served as secretary of the Pingshun County Party Committee of the Communist Party of China, deputy secretary and secretary of the Southeastern Shanxi Prefectural Committee, and successively elected to the Eighth, Ninth and Tenth National Congresses of the CPC and member of the Ninth and Tenth Party Central Committee. In 1946, Xigou Village went through land reform and abolished the feudal land system. Under his leadership, he formulated a five-year economic recovery and development plan, which promoted the development of agricultural production in the village. In 1948, the People's Government of Pingshun County hung a plaque of "Labor Hero" on the lintel of his house. In 1952, Li Shunda organised 26 farmers to set up a primary agricultural production cooperative. This was the first primary agricultural production cooperative in the People's Republic of China. In order to tap the potential of labor, Li Shunda supported Shen Jilan (see below) to organise women in a labor competition with men to fight for equal pay for women for equal work. As a result, women made their own efforts to achieve equal pay for equal work.

<sup>41</sup> Shen Jilan (December 29, 1929-June 28, 2020), national model worker and recipient of the Order of the Republic. She was an advocate of the equal pay system for men and women for equal work, and at her proposal "equal pay for equal work" is enshrined in the Constitution of the People's Republic of China. The People's Daily interviewed Shen Jilan about the fight for collectivisation and equal pay, and on January 25, 1953, quoted her original words "Labor is liberation, struggle creates status". Shen Jilan and Li Shunda were blocked from developing collectivisation by Liu Shaoqi who believed that it could not succeed without tractors and other farm machinery. His line of "mechanisation before collectivisation" was defeated by Chairman Mao, who supported Li and Shen. In 1954, Li Shunda and Shen Jilan were elected as deputies to the First National People's Congress, and Shen Jilan attended all of the 1<sup>st</sup> to the 13<sup>th</sup> Congresses. She initially opposed the "household contract responsibility system" introduced by Deng Xiaoping as part of his "reforms" to take China off the socialist road, but concentrated thereafter on poverty alleviation, pollution prevention and control,

after my report [Note 1]. Newspapers from other regions are handled by other people in the secretarial office, but I sometimes browsed, and wherever new rich peasants appeared in rural areas, and a new situation of polarization appeared, I immediately uploaded relevant reports, and the Chairman would draw circles on such reports.

There were about thirty people in the secretary's office at that time. All of them were trainee secretaries at the beginning, and there were only a few high school students like me, most of them were highly talented students from Yanjing University and Tsinghua University. They were all very learned, such as a small man named Han Ruiding, who graduated from Yanjing University and was proficient in five or six foreign languages, such as German, English, French, Spanish, Italian and a certain Eastern European country, etc. He was like a god in my mind, very impressive, and I called him a little genius. These students like to report on "literature", "novels", "musicians' stories" and so on, which in their eyes are important things. However, the Chairman was not interested in such things at all. For example, this student, surnamed Han, gave the Chairman an extract of the love story of the great Polish musician Chopin and some anecdotes of economists, but the Chairman returned them as they were without even reading them.

I was a secondary school student who produced the most reports circled by the Chairman, and some of them were even approved and forwarded, while the Chairman didn't even read the stuff produced by the highly talented students from prestigious universities. This situation caught the attention of Deputy Director Peng Dazhang. Once Peng Dazhang called us to a meeting and said to the university students, you should learn from Qi Benyu, the reports he sent up always caught the attention of the Chairman, while your stuff was always sent back, how wasteful it was. Peng Dazhang also asked me to teach the university students about my experience, but I was younger than they were, so I couldn't really tell them about my experience. Tian Jiaying began to attach importance to me also from this time, because the things that I sent to the Chairman were all returned through him, and he saw that the Chairman had underlined and circled everything. Once he said to me, "The Chairman has seen and underlined everything you send." And, what's even more strange to them is that not only did the Chairman underline and circle the important things I sent up to him, but some of the celebrity anecdotes that others sent up to the Chairman, he did not read, while some of the anecdotes and anecdotes that I sent up he liked to read. For example, a celebrity from the past, who is now a target of the United Front, wrote an article which was a bit playful. When I saw it, I thought that this celebrity's opinions and ideas had content and the Chairman would care about them, so I sent it up, and it turned out that the Chairman really read it, and circled it after reading it. Tian Jiaying was also surprised, saying how I was so lucky. He really didn't understand the reasoning behind it, and simply didn't suppress anything I sent, and immediately sent it to the Chairman. Some people were of course unconvinced and said, "The Chairman reads everything you send, we send everything that is quite important, how come the Chairman doesn't read it?"

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rural education, health care, rural infrastructure construction and other aspects of the work. The media reported that in May 2008 Shen Jilan donated her life savings of 10,000 yuan to the Wenchuan earthquake disaster area. After Shen Jilan's death, her close friend Guo Fenglian, leader of the original Iron Girls team of the Dazhi Production Brigade, praised her contribution to the advancement of women in China.

In fact, there is nothing complicated about it. I was the sort of person who loved improving myself. I'd seen radios since I was a kid. I found them amazing. When I was in junior high school, I made up a shortwave radio and listened to radio programs that many classmates couldn't hear. My classmates were puzzled, "Qi Benyu (I was not even Qi Benyu at that time)<sup>42</sup>. How do you know so much?" At the beginning, when I saw that the Chairman's comments to us were different, I began to ponder them even more. Once I pondered them, I felt that although Chairman Mao was also a great scholar, knowledgeable about the past and the present, and often wrote poems and lyrics, what he cared most about soon after the founding of the country was how to make the country settled. He must have been concerned with the overall situation of the country, such as the land reform, the fight against bandits and the suppression of counter-revolution; or how to make a good living for the people, such as mutual aid groups and co-operative societies; or issues he was studying, such as the anecdotes about famous people that I sent to him, which carried opinions and ideas, not just amusement. So, the Chairman circled them all, and in some cases dotted and crossed a large area. As time went on, I got a clearer picture of the situation, so it was not surprising that the Chairman read and circled everything I sent him. And the kind of things that had nothing to do with big national decisions, or the life of the ordinary people, or official articles, certainly could not attract Chairman Mao's attention. I still think that if every comrade had taken something like Chopin's love story as a big deal, or if they had been like the secretaries of some leaders today, who only have the leaders in mind but not the masses, and had not been able to report to Chairman Mao in a timely manner the real situation of the lives of the masses throughout the country, and the positive and progressive ideas of social change that emerged among them, then there would not have been the control of the floods in the Huaihe River back then, nor would the spread of co-operatives throughout the country have taken place. The radical social progress and fundamental changes in the socio-economic and political system that took place in just a few years at the beginning of the founding of the country would have been even less likely. That would not have been right!

When the Xinhua News Agency found out that the Chairman often reads newspaper summaries, they said that they had a better and more comprehensive picture of the situation and that they should be the ones to produce the newspaper summaries for the Chairman. The first time I heard this, I said, "That's good, it's best if you can do it. We don't have enough manpower, so if you can do it, we will send it to the Chairman for you. After this, the Xinhua News Agency's Internal Reference was born, and the work of reading newspapers in the secretary's office came to a halt. The Xinhua News Agency, formerly known as the Red Xinhua News Agency, was founded in Ruijin in 1931, and on the day it was established, it started a mimeographed tabloid called Reference News, which was dedicated to extracting news from the Kuomintang Central News Agency telegrams and some foreign news for the reference of the top leaders of the Central Government. After entering the city, Reference News became even stronger, with Lin Ke as the Chairman's English secretary and head of the Reference News editorial team [Note 2]. The Internal reference News was a top-level reference work for the highest levels of the Central Government, even higher than Reference News, and was later refined to a magazine of about 100 pages each, and became a very regular fixed style of internal reader around 1955. Once the Internal Reference was born, it was no longer a newspaper digest for the Chairman alone, like the ones we had previously produced in the secretary's office. During the Cultural Revolution, the Chairman was very interested in the mimeographed tabloids of

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<sup>42</sup> As per an earlier note: The Chinese language has a fairly restricted range of sounds, and there are many words with the same sound, but different meanings, and these are written with different characters. The "yu" of Qi Benyu was originally written with the character 玉, and his suggestion to He Shihe was to change it to the character 禹, so that although it was said the same way, it was in effect a different name.

the Red Guards and asked a "team" of people to collect them for him. This is a matter of great historical interest.

## **2.2 Managing books for Chairman Mao**

The newspapers I had prepared were read by Chairman Mao, and Tian Jiaying began to take me seriously. One day, Tian Jiaying approached me and said, "You seem to know more about theoretical issues than others, so why don't you manage Chairman Mao's books?" It meant being a book-boy for Chairman Mao, taking to him the books the Chairman wanted to read, and sorting out and reshelving those he returned, then going to the library to borrow more... I couldn't disobey Tian Jiaying when he was the leader and had given the word. The management of Chairman Mao's books would have been a very important and remarkable thing. But I didn't take it seriously at the time, and I felt slighted by it. I thought, "It's not bad to be in charge of Chairman Mao's books, it's just like being in charge of the imperial library." My predecessor in this job was Shi Jingtang, and before Shi Jingtang was Cai Mo. In the 1950s and 1960s, Cai Mo was the secretary-general of the Marxist-Leninist Institute, and the Director, Chen Boda, was usually not there, so Cai Mo was actually in charge of the Director's affairs [Note 3]. This showed that not everyone could be in charge of Chairman Mao's books, but I still didn't like the job at first. In fact, at that time I had no idea what work was important and what was not.

Chairman Mao's books from Yan'an began to slowly accumulate in Zhongnanhai, with only a few boxes at to begin with, and only five small bookcases by the early 1950s, which took up less than one wall, with some important books usually locked up in boxes. I was so interested in all the books that I went through every single one of them, reading almost all the books that the Chairman had read, and for the first time I really knew that Chairman Mao was the most well-read person in the Party. No other leader in the Party was as serious a reader as Chairman Mao. The first volume of *Capital*, which Chairman Mao had read, was all dense with comments from the first chapter onwards. Some were highlights of *Capital*, which were restated; some were the Chairman's own views, such as what to know about commodities; and some were comments he had made. Not only did the Chairman read *Capital*, but Jiang Qing also followed suit. Jiang Qing had also annotated on it; Jiang Qing's writing was a bit similar to the Chairman's, but I could tell the difference. The Chairman's criticism was already dense, and with the addition of Jiang Qing's writing, that book was full of comments, and there were no more blanks. This is a testimony to the fact that the Chairman's relationship with Jiang Qing was very good. The second and third volumes were commented on less by the Chairman. It should be said that Chairman Mao read the first volume of *Capital* carefully, while the second and third volumes were skimmed.

Not only Marx's *Capital*, but also Engels' *Anti-Dühring* on scientific socialism and Stalin's *On the Economic Problems of Socialism in the USSR*, among other books, were densely annotated. These have been published. The Chairman not only read the two Soviet books on political economy, but also asked Deng Liqun, Chen Boda and Tian Jiaying to come together to discuss them. After the discussion, the Chairman gave many instructions. These instructions have now been collated by Deng Liqun, and there are five major books. Some people who slandered Chairman Mao said that he did not read scientific books and did not understand natural science. In fact, none of the members of the Central Committee, with the exception of a few scientists like Qian Xuesen, read as many books on natural science as Chairman Mao did. Now some people say that he did not read economics, which is nonsense. Could he have come up with so many things without reading economics? Have the people who criticised him read economics? Have they written a book on socialist economics? The Central Literature Publishing House should photocopy the entirety of Chairman Mao's annotations on *Capital* to refute those who say that the Chairman did not read *Capital*. There is also

the book *Left-wing Communism: An Infantile Disease*, which Peng Dehuai said in his own account that the Chairman had commented all over and then gave it to Peng Dehuai to read. Where did this book go afterwards? Kang Sheng, who had also read the book, said, "The book was probably given to Peng Dehuai and could not be found."

Some people who slandered Chairman Mao said that he did not read scientific books and did not understand natural science. In fact, none of the members of the Central Committee, with the exception of a few scientists like Qian Xuesen, read as many books on natural science as Chairman Mao did. (During the Cultural Revolution) Chen Boda often shouted a slogan as soon as he finished his speeches: "The infinite flame of Mao Zedong Thought will shine forever." Chairman Mao then criticized him, saying, "Who told you to sing my praises all the time? This sentence of yours does not make sense. According to Einstein's theory, there is no such thing as an infinite flame of light in the world, and since this universe is originally infinite, how can you exceed it? Infinite, without borders, how can a tiny human being on our planet, speaking a word, speaking a thought, be infinite? How can you surpass the universe?" "Light is also bounded, not boundless, and according to Einstein's theory, light is curved motion, and if it bends, it cannot be infinite. How can my Thought be infinite when not even light can be infinite, when my Chairman Mao's Thoughts will be replaced by some other better theory after many years? Nothing can shine forever, the sun will eventually be destroyed, many billions of years from now there will be no more sun, how can it shine forever?" I read later that Einstein really said that, that light really moves in a curve, and Chairman Mao told us about Einstein's theory in a very layman's way, so that we knew that light is not infinite. Also, after the explosion of the hydrogen bomb, Chairman Mao explained to us that Einstein's formula of mass-energy reciprocity and talked about Einstein's theory in a very popular way. He talked about the reciprocal variation of mass and motion, and how a heavier mass makes a slower motion, while a lighter mass makes a faster motion. When Chairman Mao told us about that formula, the Premier was still there, and the Premier also understood it and could add to it. That is why I said that members of the Central Committee, including Liu Shaoqi, could not read to the extent that Chairman Mao did. I have never heard Liu Shaoqi talk about natural science. Of course, the Premier knew a lot about natural science, at least more than I did.

Chairman Mao read a very wide range of books, that is, the four classical masterpieces – household names in China – "Dream of the Red Chamber", "Water Margin", "Three Kingdoms" and "Journey to the West". His annotations on them, now published, can be read as a classical literature commentary. He also had some foreign literature in his collection at that time, like a collection of commentaries on Belinsky's writings, a collection of Gorky's novels, and a collection of Hawthorne's novels [This is followed by a mention of a copy of *The Book of Mao Teng*, which is said to be an old edition of the novel. I don't know about this book, is it Hawthorne's? Or is it someone else's? Or is it Chinese?]. Whether he had read Tolstoy or *The Resurrection*, I don't know, but he must have read Chernyshevsky's *What Is to Be Done?* He also read *Jane Eyre* by the English writer Bronte, the Arabic folk tale *One Thousand and One Nights*, Greek Mythology and Aesop's Fables, because he wrote to his daughter about the stories in these books, so how could he tell her about them if he hadn't read them? Some people have picked on Chairman Mao for not reading foreign literature. What is this if not foreign literature? He was not a foreign literature major, he had to command the war and lead the construction, one's energy is always limited, and it was not easy to read so much Western and Russian literature at that time.

Some people say that Chairman Mao did not read Marx and Lenin, but finished all the 24 histories and all the ancient books. This is nonsense, as evidenced by the books he read at that time alone. He always read much more than his critics. There is no doubt about that. For example, if you're into

Western literature, have you read Marx and Lenin? Have you studied the four great Chinese classics like he did? Have you read Einstein? If Chairman Mao was only an expert in one area, and could only be engaged in one area, granted that he could read so widely, then he was an all-rounder - was there anyone who came close to him in the leadership of the Party? No! And Chairman Mao did not read books for the sake of reading books, but read books to solve problems. He combined reading books with revolution and construction, absorbing theoretical nutrients from reading books, forming ideas in practice, and then creating theories to solve China's specific problems. For example, the theory of the New Democratic Revolution is about how to carry out a democratic revolution in a colonial and semi-colonial country. This was something that Marx and Lenin had not taught. The Soviet revolution was an urban insurrection, but what about a rural insurrection? How could a revolution be carried out in places where the working class lacked power? Chairman Mao solved these problems. To this day, Venezuela in Latin America still thinks that Chairman Mao's theory of the New Democratic Revolution suits their situation! I think that with this theory of revolution alone, Chairman Mao has turned a new page in human history. Once I asked Lin Ke, "Where does the Chairman find so much time to read books?" Lin Ke said, "Apart from meetings, writing and discussing issues with members of the Central Committee, the Chairman spends his days reading books. Meals are simple, finished in a few minutes; he usually speaks very little, unless he is with the masses; he doesn't talk to us much, and only sometimes talks to us during breaks; he is friendly with the waiters, but doesn't talk much either; and he speaks very little even to Jiang Qing." Lin Ke added: "The President took a long time every time he went to the toilet; he was reading a book while going to the toilet." I did something then that was not quite in order, but I don't regret it now. I copied down a lot of the books that Chairman Mao had read and the instructions he had made. I first went and bought the same books, for example, the collection of Li Bai that Chairman Mao read, was threadbare, so I went and bought them; some of them, the version that the Chairman read I just couldn't find, so I looked for similar versions. Then, I read them all according to the way Chairman Mao read them, and when Chairman Mao drew a circle, I followed suit. I had a thick pile of books that I had copied in this way. There was a book, Dialectical and Historical Materialism, by the Soviets, which Chairman Mao criticized a lot. I had to search several used bookstores to find the same book, and when I got it back, I copied his criticisms from Chairman Mao's copy. I also copied down Chairman Mao's book as I read it, and I found a copy of Li Da's "Outline of Philosophy" and a copy of Erskine's "Selected Philosophies". I also copied down Chairman Mao's comments on books such as Liaozhai, Journey to the West and Gong Ding'an's Notes. Chairman Mao said that Liang Shuming's "Theory of Rural Construction" was an empty dream. I did not get the same edition, so I found a similar edition and copied down the Chairman's criticism page by page. After I was released from prison in 1986, some of these books were returned to me, while others were not. Those that were not returned such as Dialectical Materialism and Historical Materialism, which are no longer available, were probably taken by readers, while Liaozhai, Journey to the West and Theory of Rural Construction are still available.

Chairman Mao also liked to buy books. Some of the books he wanted to buy were given to him by Jiang Qing's guards, some were delivered by bookstores, and some were ordered by Tian Jiaying or others for me to buy. I had to buy two copies of whatever I was told to buy, one for myself at my own expense to read and use to copy the Chairman's comments. Keeping books for Chairman Mao was a big job. It wasn't just about keeping the books clean and tidy, but also about sorting, repairing and restoring them. I didn't understand any of this at the time. There was a set of "Notes on a Westward Journey"<sup>43</sup> by Snow, published in Shanghai before the liberation, which was so richly

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<sup>43</sup> This was the Chinese title of the book published as "Red Star Over China" in the West.

illustrated that Chairman Mao had read it many times, as had Jiang Qing and Tian Jiaying. The Chairman once said, "The guard soldiers can read all my books." So, when the security guards came to borrow the books, I gave them to them, registered their names, and lent them out. But the guards generally did not know how to take care of the books, and when they lost pages, it was good if they could put them back without losing them. The book "Notes on a Westward Journey" was already read by many people, and the guards and their families also read it, but they did not take good care of it, so it fell apart and pages fell out. I thought that since the book was so widely read, it had to be stapled with something strong. The staples didn't go through, so I thought that some books were bound with wire (I didn't think they were stapled with machines), so I thought I would use a thin wire to staple it in place. I went outside and bought an awl and wire that old ladies used to make their shoes, made two holes and nailed them with the wire. I didn't check after I nailed it, but I didn't know that the words inside were also nailed, so I used the kraft paper removed from the kraft envelope to stick on the outside and wrote the words "Notes on a Westward Journey". Although the words were not very elegant, I was quite proud of it. I was surprised when Tian Jiaying came back and said, "How can you do that?" I said, "The book is torn." He said, "You can't staple it like that even if it's torn! When there is moisture in a wire staple, it will rust in a few days; when the paper is rubbed by this wire, it will break more easily, and the pages will fall out more easily. How can you do that? You need to find a calligrapher who writes well and in a regular manner. Look at this book, it's covered with wire and paste, it won't turn over, and the words are stuck together, how can you read it?" I looked at what I had done and saw that it was an inferior product. I blushed immediately and said, "I'm sorry for the mess." Tian Jiaying said, "If you don't understand, come ask me first! This is Chairman Mao's book, we must all take care of it!" He then went to find a woman surnamed Hong who knew how to do needlework and instructed her to buy silk thread and smooth out the holes I had poked with an awl, then thin out the thick book, tie part of it with a needle and then part of it again, twist a very small buckle around the edge with silk thread, and then apply a layer of glue ..... afterwards. When it was all done, he got a calligrapher, Chen Bingzhen, to write the words "Notes on a Westward Journey" on the book and on the spine before putting it on the bookshelf.

When I was managing Chairman Mao's books, it was on the eve of the War to Resist United States Aggression and Aid Korea. On one occasion, Chairman Mao's guards came over and asked Tian Jiaying to send over maps of North Korea immediately. But at that very moment, Tian Jiaying went out, drinking in some unknown place. I was in the same office as him, and I was someone he trusted, so I usually helped him out when he went out drinking. At that time, I had such little knowledge to know that Chairman Mao wanted military maps for commanding the war, so I sent over the office map of Korea together with a small map with the North-South Korean demarcation line and the distribution of the American troops. The latter map I got off a book from the United States that analysed the current situation in Korea. When the Chairman got the map, he said he didn't want this kind of map, he wanted a military map. When he asked, he knew that Tian Jiaying was not there and that someone under Tian Jiaying was looking for it, so he left that small map and asked the guard to return the big map. The guard came back and said that the Chairman wanted a military map, not this one. I knew the military map was inside the General Staff of the Military Commission, but the military map was confidential, my rank was too low, no one knew me, and calling there didn't work. At that time, there was no mobile phone, so I was as anxious as an ant on a hot pot. I thought that some old cadres should know where Tian Jiaying was, so I immediately went to find them. Sure enough, they called and found Tian Jiaying. I told Tian Jiaying, "Chairman Mao wants a military map of North Korea, but I can't find it, and I've been criticised for sending one. What should I do? Hurry back!" He said, "Aiya, it's too late for me to go back. I'll call the Military Commission right now and ask them to send it to me. When it's delivered, you send it to the Chairman right away."

The military commission was at Di'anmen at the time, and in a little over half an hour, the map was delivered, on a motorbike. As soon as I got it, I rushed to give it to Chairman Mao's guard. After a while, I guess the guard had delivered it, but I was not sure, so I called and asked, "Is it right this time? If not, I'll go and change it again!" The guard said, "Right, the chairman is looking at it." When Tian Jiaying came back, he called again and asked the people at the Military Commission if they had any maps with a smaller scale, especially the map of Dandong, and if they did, to send them too. Tian Jiaying was really clever. Sure enough, someone from the Chairman asked for more detailed maps of North Korea and Dandong, the kind that showed even the small villages in detail. Tian Jiaying immediately sent them to the Chairman, and he was delighted. The military maps like that at the time were all mapped by the Japanese in the first place. This incident prompted the secretary's office to immediately strengthen the management of Chairman Mao's books by transferring in a large number of maps, from as near as Japan, and from as far as the Pacific, and many others as well. The fact that I used wire to nail the books showed Tian Jiaying that although I loved to read, I might not be a good book manager. The fact that I made a mistake in sending military maps also made Tian Jiaying feel bad. Soon, he gave the job of managing Chairman Mao's books to Pang Xianzhi. Pang Xianzhi came from the East China Revolutionary University in Qingdao. After he took over the job, he knew that reading the books himself was secondary to keeping the books in order and under good control, so he learned a lesson from me and took the initiative to make friends with Sister Hong and asked her to fix any damaged books. However, Pang's knowledge of history was limited and in order to make up for this, Tian Jiaying simply hired Chen Bingchen, an old secretary of the General Office of the Military Commission and a calligrapher, to help him with his knowledge of history and classical books. Chen Bingchen was a descendant of the famous scholar Chen Jieqi from Shandong, who was very knowledgeable and through his hands the Chairman acquired many good books, including some important theoretical books published by the Soviet Union. At that time, there were not many publishing houses. As soon as important new books were published, they would be bought immediately. Later, when there were more publishing houses, important theoretical books published by various publishing houses would take the initiative to send them. By the time of the "Eight Simas Incident"<sup>44</sup> in Zhongnanhai from 1957 to 1958, There were two rooms of books, and later it developed into a few rooms.

Some people now say that it was Tian Jiaying who created Chairman Mao's library. This is not true, for it was not planned by Tian Jiaying, but was a natural process of accumulation under the impetus of Chairman Mao's love of reading, and was the result of a concerted effort. In terms of the number of books purchased, Pang Xianzhi specifically purchased the most. Of course, Tian Jiaying, as the person in charge at that time, made a great contribution, which cannot be denied. After Pang Xianzhi, there was a man surnamed Xu who also managed the Chairman's books. This was a dedicated person who later wrote a book on Chairman Mao's reading.

Although I lost such an honorable job as managing Chairman Mao's books, I was still in the secretary's office. As a common saying goes, "the moon is first to be found near the water tower"<sup>45</sup>, so I could still know the general situation of Chairman Mao's reading from Tian Jiaying, Chen

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<sup>44</sup> Sima was a general in ancient China. The "Two Kings and Eight Simas" referred to a factional struggle during the Tang Dynasty. The incident that occurred in 1957-1958 in the "anti-rightist" struggle in the Secretary's Office of the Central Office happened to involve eight cadres at the branch level, and the leaders who supported the eight were exactly two, (including Qi Benyu). Mao Zedong likened them to the "two kings, eight Simas", saying: "I can't imagine that there has been a new 'eight Sima incident' around me." See Chapter 8 for a detailed outline of the incident.

<sup>45</sup> This is a Chinese metaphor referring to being the first to obtain some benefit or convenience because of being close to certain people.

Bingchen, Pang Xianzhi and others, continue to learn from them, and continue to follow the track of Chairman Mao's reading to understand his spiritual world, philosophical thinking, people's sentiment and far-sightedness on the future direction of national development, which played a great role in my future life. Therefore, I have always been proud of my experience of managing Chairman Mao's books, and I have often called myself "Chairman Mao's book boy" because of this experience.

Although I lost the glorious job of managing Chairman Mao's books, people are still in the secretary's office. As the saying goes, "Near the water floor first get the month", I can also know from Tian Jiaying, Chen Bingchen, Yu Prophet and others chairman of the general situation of reading, continue to steal the art of teachers, continue to follow Chairman Mao's reading trajectory to understand Chairman Mao's spiritual world, philosophical thinking, people's feelings and the future direction of national development, which has played a great role in my future life. Therefore, I have always been proud of my experience of managing Chairman Mao's books, and often because of this experience as "Chairman Mao's book boy".

Notes.

Note 1: Li Shunda, *A summary of Shen Jilan's deeds in the co-operative movement* (Supplement)

Note 2: Some people said that Mao Zedong did not know anything about international affairs, had never been abroad and was a bumpkin. Lin Ke told me that the Chairman knew more about foreign countries than not only him, but also the director of their Xinhua News Agency's Reference News department. Lin Ke said, "I don't even read this Reference News carefully, it is sent to the Chairman, who goes through it topic by topic, he doesn't read all of it, but he reads all the important ones." He said that no one in China, except those in the professional sector, read Reference News like Chairman Mao did. That Reference News was a big book, and Lin Ke said, "If you don't believe me, you can go to my place and read it, I have all the Reference News that the Chairman read, and it's circled and underlined." He knew a lot about even Latin American countries, like Venezuela or Cuba. Cuba, with a population of a few million, had fought the United States several times; he knew the population and size of Venezuela. He could speak at length about all of them, and he spoke very clearly. Among the members of the Central Committee, except for Wang Jiaxiang, who knew a little more than he did, there was no one else who knew more about foreign countries.

Note 3: During the Cultural Revolution, Cai Mo was driven to death by Chen Boda because Cai Mo used to run to Tian Jiaying and did not listen to Chen Boda very much, so he had the masses struggle against him he committed suicide. When Chairman Mao found out, he said, "Such sorrow, how did you die?" At the time of the Lushan meeting [which Lushan meeting?] Chairman Mao criticized Chen Bo-da: "You drove Cai Mo to death and you want to expel people from the Party, you are no better than others, you are also very leftist."

## Chapter 3: Proofreading and sending and receiving for the editing of the Selected Works of Mao Zedong

1. On the establishment of the project to edit the Selected Works of Mao Zedong
2. The specific editing process of the Selected Works of Mao Zedong
3. The revision of On Contradiction
4. The touching story behind the manuscript of On Protracted War
5. My participation in the editing and proofreading of the Selected Works of Mao Zedong had a special impact on my life

### 1 On the establishment of the project to edit the Selected Works of Mao Zedong

Soon after I lost the job of managing Chairman Mao's books, Tian Jiaying asked me to take part in editing the Selected Works of Mao Zedong, specifically to do proofreading and sending and receiving drafts.

During his first visit to the Soviet Union from late December 1949 to February 1950, Chairman Mao discussed with Stalin the publication of his own anthology, and soon after his return to China, he intended to have his secretary's office begin to compile and edit the Selected Works of Mao Zedong, but later, when the War against US aggression and Aid Korea broke out, Chairman Mao had no time to worry about it, and the work was temporarily put on hold because it was impossible for Chairman Mao's writings to be edited without his own participation.

After the third campaign of the War to Resist US Aggression and Aid Korea, the U.S.-led "United Nations Army" was driven south of the "38th parallel" by the Volunteers, so the situation was more favourable to us and Chairman Mao had time to do other things. In late February and early March 1951, Chairman Mao decided to formally launch the editing of the Selected Works of Mao Zedong.

I couldn't understand why Stalin had to give his consent to the editing of the Selected Works of Mao Zedong when it was our own business. Tian Jiaying told me, "This is a very important matter. The editing of the Selected Works of Mao Zedong involves not only China alone, but also the whole international communist movement. In the international communist movement, not just anyone can produce an anthology, only a mentor-level figure can do so. Whoever puts out an anthology, if they don't have Stalin's approval, there will be a lot of problems." He spoke generally about the contradictions and differences that had actually existed between China and the Soviet Union, and between the Chinese Communist Party and the Communist International. He also said that this editing of the Selected Works of Mao Zedong was not only agreed to by Stalin, but was initiated by Stalin. At that time Chairman Mao said, "Because we have been in the war for a long time, we lack research on theory, especially the several philosophical works of mine, which were written in outline and given as lecture notes to everyone at that time, without any rigorous theoretical refinement, and I hope to get help from Comrade Stalin. We are short of theoretical cadres, are you sending a

theoretical cadre to help us?" Stalin readily agreed, and sent Eugene<sup>46</sup> to Beijing to help publish the Selected Works of Mao Zedong.

Eugene was a theoretician who edited the Soviet "Concise Philosophical Dictionary". He had translated and presented Stalin with a special edition of On Practice in Russian. Stalin was so impressed by Chairman Mao's philosophical treatise that he instructed it to be published in the December 1950 issue of Bolshevik, and Pravda published a review of it in the same month: "On Mao Zedong's Writings on Practice". Since then, the ordinary Soviet people have known Chairman Mao as a theoretician of a high Marxist-Leninist level. During the actual editing of the Selected Works of Mao Zedong, general articles were not read by Eugene, but philosophical works like On Practice and On Contradiction, which involved the entire philosophical system of Marxism-Leninism, had to be reviewed by Eugene. I listened to his presentation once after he arrived and felt that the man was indeed of a very high standard. He said that he had thought that there was no Marxism-Leninism in China, and when he read Chairman Mao's writings, he was astonished that Chairman Mao was so philosophically advanced and could make the philosophical aspects of Marxism-Leninism so clear, which he had not expected. He thought that all of Chairman Mao's ideas were in line with Marxism-Leninism and were all Marxist-Leninist. But he did not think that Chairman Mao had developed Marxism creatively; he stressed that Chairman Mao only conformed to Marxism.

## **2. The specific editing process of Mao Zedong's Selected Works**

After the official launch of the editing work, Liu Shaoqi was appointed as the head of the "Editorial Committee", but the Central Committee did not set up a special body for the editing and publication of the Selected Works of Mao Zedong. All the people involved in this work were part-time, and all the relevant documents and letters to the Editorial Committee were sent to Tian Jiaying's residence. It was on the corner of Zhongnanhai's Yannian Hall and Jing Gu, a bungalow of a dozen square metres, divided into two rooms, one inside and one outside, and the desk in the outside room was the office of the "Selected Works of Mao Zedong Publication Committee".

Chen Boda, Hu Qiaomu, Jiang Qing, Tian Jiaying and Ye Zilong are collectively known as the five major secretaries of the Chairman. Although Chen Boda and Hu Qiaomu were the secretaries of the Chairman, they both held the post of Vice Minister of the Central Propaganda Department, Chen Boda was also the Director of the Marxist-Leninist Institute and Hu Qiaomu was also the Director of the General Administration of Information. So these two men usually did not come to the secretary's office. After the editing of Mao Zedong's Selected Works was started, among the five secretaries, Ye Zilong did not take part in the work because he was in charge of the secretarial work; Jiang Qing, the administrative secretary, was very tired because she had accompanied Chairman Mao to fight in Shaanxi Province during the Liberation War, and then took care of Chairman Mao's life and assisted him in his work in Xibaipo, and her health was always very poor. In 1952, with the approval of the Central Committee, she went to the Soviet Union again for recuperation, so she did not participate in the editing of the Selected Works of Mao Zedong. The remaining three, Chen Boda, Hu Qiaomu and Tian Jiaying, all took part.

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<sup>46</sup> Pavel Fyodorovich Eugene (1899 - 1968), Soviet philosopher, diplomat. Fellow of the Soviet Academy of Sciences. Member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (1952-1961). Dean of the Red Faculty of Professors (1932-1938). From 1953 to 1959, he served as the Soviet Ambassador to the People's Republic of China.

Tian Jiaying was responsible for the most work on specific things, and it was Tian Jiaying who worked tirelessly in it all day, contributing far more than Chen Boda and Hu Qiaomu. The ranking is Chen Boda, Hu Qiaomu and Tian Jiaying, but in fact the contributions are reversed: Tian Jiaying contributed the most and Chen Boda contributed the least. Tian Jiaying was asked to read general political articles, anti-Japans war slogans and so on. Hu Qiaomu changed more important things, and changed more than Chen Boda. However, Chen Boda put more effort into the essays On Contradiction and On Practice than Hu Qiaomu and Tian Jiaying. Chen Boda revised and raised more questions than both Hu Qiaomu and Tian Jiaying. I remember that there was a line in On Practice where the original Marxist-Leninist work cited by the Chairman was an old translation, but Chen Boda removed the old one and replaced it with a new version of the translation. The manuscripts that Chairman Mao himself had corrected, others were first sent to Hu Qiaomu and Tian Jiaying for printing, while On Practice was sent exclusively to Chen Boda to read, who read it and then gave it to Tian Jiaying for printing. Therefore, Chen Boda was considered an assistant to Chairman Mao in terms of theory.

I still have a copy of the original cataloguing of volumes one to four of the Selected Works of Mao Zedong, which differs considerably from the actual cataloguing that followed. At that time, various versions of pamphlets of Chairman Mao's speeches and articles were produced in each of the liberated regions. After comparing them, the "Editorial Committee" found that the one compiled and printed by the Northeast Bureau was the most complete, so it adopted the Northeast Bureau's version as the basis. The later "Selected Works of Mao Zedong" has the same typesetting method as the Northeastern version, even the font size was similar. This shows that "Selected Works of Mao Zedong" had not completely escaped the influence of the Northeast version. Deng Tuo edited a Shanxi-Hebei-Lu-Yu edition of "Selected Works of Mao Zedong" (Zhang Chunqiao participated in the editing of this edition). Many of the Northeast editions of "Selected Works of Mao Zedong" adopted the Shanxi-Hebei-Lu-Yu edition. Therefore, Deng Tuo made a great contribution to "Selected Works of Mao Zedong".

Once the catalogue was compiled, it was sent to the Chairman and several other key central leaders such as Liu Shaoqi, Zhou Enlai and Zhu De for their perusal, as well as to several secretaries of the Central Secretariat, including Ren Bishi, for their comments on additions and deletions. At first Ren Bishi read the catalogues sent to him, but later, because he was very ill, he basically stopped responding to the documents sent to him, so it can be said that Ren Bishi did not actually participate in this work. The key articles circled on the catalogue were also sent to Eugene for his review.

Each article selected according to the catalogue was first proofread by the People's Publishing House and then published in a clean copy. Tian Jiaying told me that although the proofs were printed, they were not the originals, and we had to go to the archives and proofread them against the originals kept there. For example, "Analysis of the Classes in Chinese Society" and "Report on an Investigation of the Peasant Movement in Hunan" were published in the magazine "Guide" in the 1920s. Tian Jiaying also explained that the paper was so old that it was brittle, so he had to be careful not to break it when he turned it over. I followed Tian Jiaying's instructions and went to the Central Archives to find the relevant articles and proofread them against the original documents. I found that the Northeast Bureau's version was basically the same as the one in the Guide, and that some of the changes in words and punctuation were correct in the Northeast Bureau's version, which were wrong in the original manuscript. This shows that the comrades who edited the Northeast Bureau's version had put in a lot of effort. There are very few manuscripts of the Chairman, such as The Struggle in the Jinggang Mountains, the original of which was hand-engraved and mimeographed, probably by the Central Committee in Shanghai at the time; and the Talk at the

Yan'an Forum on Literature and Art, which also had no manuscript, but was merely a transcript of the proceedings, on which the Chairman made changes. There were many military telegrams written by the Chairman himself, and when I went looking for documents, I saw some of these manuscripts.

When the proofs came out, one copy was given to the Chairman and the others were sent to Kang Sheng, Chen Boda, Hu Qiaomu and Tian Jiaying for proofreading. Hu Qiaomu and Tian Jiaying read the proofs very carefully, and both of them were responsible for the technical processing of the text of the proofs. The results of the technical processing show that Hu Qiaomu's knowledge structure and writing ability were much higher than Tian Jiaying's. Generally speaking, the proofs that Hu Qiaomu and Tian Jiaying read were sent to Chairman Mao for review and correction, and then they were finalised. However, sometimes the Chairman still had to rearrange, re-read and rework them after the changes. Hu Qiaomu and Tian Jiaying wrote some of the explanatory notes and annotations for the articles that were finally selected. However, where professional commentaries were written by experts such as Miao Chuhuang, a party historian, and Fan Wenlan, director of the Institute of Historical Research. Some of the notes which the Chairman was not satisfied with, were rewritten by the Chairman himself, and for the commentary parts, the Chairman also made many changes.

Chen Boda did not read all the proofs, nor did he look at them seriously; he seemed to be interested only in certain special things. He even made some technical changes or wrote a few optional words on the Chairman's rewritten proofs. Chairman Mao's rewritten proofs were treasures of the document, but Chen Boda made them look incongruous by changing a few words, and everyone was uncomfortable with his practice. In addition, the first volume had a "publication note for this book", which was originally drafted by Tian Jiaying. Chen Boda changed some words, had it reprinted, and then sent it to the Chairman, giving the Chairman the impression that he wrote it all. This kind of small action Hu Qiaomu and Tian Jiaying did not engage in. Tian Jiaying used to call Chen Boda teacher, but later on he came to despise Chen Boda, calling him "old bookworm" behind his back, with a sense of irony.

During that period, I went into the office every day and distributed the proofs to Tian Jiaying, Chen Boda and Hu Qiaomu [they were also in the secretary's office at that time, or were they in the Propaganda Department of the CPC?] Then I sat down in a small room with Tian Jiaying and started proofreading. The size of the small room was similar to the small room used by the eunuchs in the past, only 1/4 of the size of a normal office nowadays, with a small table inside, there was not much space left. Usually, I would read and he would correct, and sometimes the other way round, he would read and I would correct. Tian Jiaying smoked and the smell wafted through the small room; I didn't smoke but had to inhale his smoke. So, after one morning alone, I felt fatigued and my brain became so dull that sometimes I couldn't see where I was clearly wrong. When I made mistakes, Tian Jiaying educated me, saying that this proof-reading, the ancients called collating, which meant that one had to catch the mistakes as if they were enemies. Mao Zedong's Selected Works was an anthology of our leader, and not even a single word or punctuation mark should be wrong.

In order not to make mistakes in punctuation, Tian Jiaying told me to read Zhu Ziqing's articles and the document "Regulations of the People's Republic of China on Punctuation" written by Hu Qiaomu, which had not been officially published at that time, to familiarize myself with the usage of punctuation. This familiarity was so great that I became "Qi Punctuation". At that time, I proofread the punctuation marks in the first, second and third volumes of Mao Zedong's Selected Works, which I had finally completed. This was one of the basic skills of writing. In the early 1960s, when Kang Sheng asked me to join his writing team to work with them on the "Nine Commentaries", they proofread the articles and when they read out the punctuation marks, I could even point out which

punctuation mark had been used incorrectly as soon as I heard it. For this reason, they gave me the title of "punctuation expert" and called me "Qi Punctuation".

If there are any changes, the whole piece has to be re-corrected, unlike the current situation where only the parts that have been changed are re-corrected. This is very important, as problems that were not found in the first and second readings will often be found in the next readings. Articles modified by the Chairman had to be re-edited in their entirety. They would not be circulated to everyone until the re-editing was finalised. Therefore, an article of the Chairman, take the Report on the Investigation of the Peasant Movement in Hunan as an example, was read and proofread, proofread and re-read, each proofreading read a dozen times, one, two, three proofreadings so altogether, often read more than thirty times. This way, the final draft of "Selected Works of Mao Zedong" had no typos, no wrong punctuation, unlike the current book, where you can see typos and wrong punctuation.

Given such a high level of excellence, it was only natural that the process of editing the Selected Works of Mao Zedong should produce a large number of rejected clear copies. What happened to these rejects? Except for the samples that had been changed by Chairman Mao himself, which had to be sealed, those that had been changed by others were generally not kept. At that time, paper was very tight, and we often had to use a piece of manuscript paper over and over again; the paper of the Selected Works of Mao Zedong was good, and so as long as it did not contain Chairman Mao's own handwriting, no matter who had changed it (including Chen Boda, Kang Sheng and Tian Jiaying), once it was no longer needed, it was distributed to everyone for use as draft paper.

The editing of the Selected Works of Mao Zedong was fast, with the project officially launched in February/March 1951 and the first volume published and distributed in October of the same year; the second volume was on the shelves of bookshops in April 1952; and the third volume was available to readers in April 1953. I was involved in editing all three volumes from start to finish. (The fourth volume was published in October 1960, and I did not take part in the editing of this volume.

### **3. Amendments to On Contradiction**

On Contradiction was originally the outline of a lecture given by Chairman Mao at the Yan'an Anti-Japanese Military and Political University in 1937, and the transcript of this lecture was later printed for the whole Party to study. When Chairman Mao was preparing this lecture outline, he often discussed it with Ai Siqi. When he edited this text for inclusion in The Selected Works of Mao Zedong, Chairman Mao first dictated the corrections and additions to the original transcript of the lectures, in the presence of Hu Qiaomu, Chen Boda and Tian Jiaying. Tian Jiaying came back and told me that he couldn't even write it down and couldn't understand it even when he listened to it. The Chairman's revised On Contradiction was translated into Russian by Shi Zhe and the others and then handed over to the Soviet Eugene to read. I have compared the original text of On Contradiction with the revised On Contradiction, and a large part of it was added and a large part was deleted, and some of the quotations from Hegel, Marx and Lenin in it were put together by Chen Boda. Chen Boda's main contribution to the Selected Works of Mao Zedong is in this area of philosophical thought.

In Section Five. "The Identity and Struggle of the Aspects of a Contradiction" of On Contradiction, when discussing the relationship between identity and struggle, there is a sentence that reads: "And struggle is inherent in identity; without struggle there is no identity". Chairman Mao's original text reads "Without identity there is no struggle", but Chen Boda changed it to "Without struggle there is no identity". At that time, the political atmosphere was one of emphasis on struggle, and when the

three of them were discussing it, Chen Boda suspected that the Chairman had made a clerical error, so Tian Jiaying underlined the original words in the base text and reversed them, and Hu Qiaomu agreed to the reversal. In this way, in the officially published Selected Works of Mao Zedong, it is "there can be no identity without struggle". I was not qualified to participate in such a discussion, and I cannot say whether Chen Boda's revision was right or wrong. If we can now consult the original documents kept in the Central Archives, we can see that the line above the Chairman's original manuscript was crossed out by Tian Jiaying after listening to Chen Boda's advice.

It is worth mentioning, in passing, that the question of the relationship between the identity and struggle of contradiction involves the philosophical problem of "one dividing into two". During the Cultural Revolution in 1967, when some people were discussing the relationship between the identity and struggle of contradiction, they discussed the question of "one dividing into two", and then whether Chairman Mao's Thought could be divided into two. Some people who said that it was possible to divide it into two were arrested and accused of violating Mao Zedong's Thought, based on the theoretical statement in On Contradiction that "there can be no identity without struggle". Later, the matter was brought to the attention of the Central Cultural Revolution, and I asked Chen Boda, who did not take a position; I also asked Zhang Chunqiao, who said that the theoretical issue was not clear, and it was not good to ask the Chairman about this. I felt that this issue, which involved a large group of people, and said that people were anti-Mao Zedong Thought, would not do to leave unresolved, and that it would not be good if it became a wrong trend. I asked the Chairman for advice, saying that people outside said Chairman Mao's thought is a universal thing, an absolute thing, that cannot be divided into two, whilst many of those who said it can be divided into two had been criticized. Hearing this, the Chairman said, "How can my thoughts not be divided into two? Of course it can be divided into two. All things are divided into two." When Xie Fuzhi learned of this and Chairman Mao's attitude, he launched an investigation and ordered that people could be educated but not arrested, and those who were arrested were released. There were quite a few similar things in the Cultural Revolution that Chairman Mao was unaware of. There were cases where people below could not accurately comprehend Chairman Mao's ideas and strategic plans and messed up, resulting in many deviations; there were cases where some people deliberately misunderstood and wrongly implemented Chairman Mao's instructions, interfering with the Cultural Revolution. After the Cultural Revolution, some people blamed all these deviations on the Chairman, as if the Chairman had told them to do so. The Chairman was also really wronged.

When the Chairman said that his own thoughts could be divided into two, I think that was not just self-effacing, but reflected the spirit of seeking truth from facts and the principle of dialectical and historical materialism that he had always followed. Is there an internal logical consistency between the two propositions: "Everything can be divided into two" and "There can be no identity without struggle"? Or is there a clerical error in the Chairman's original draft? Is Chen Boda's revision correct or not? On these questions, the benevolent can still see the benevolence and the wise can still see the wisdom.

#### **4 The moving story behind the manuscript of On Protracted War**

The manuscript of Chairman Mao's "On Protracted War" is kept in the Central Archives, and no one could retrieve it, not even the Premier. The manuscript was written by the Chairman with a brush, but in some places, Jiang Qing finished transcribing it with a pen and the Chairman then made changes to it. What was this all about? When I asked Jiang Qing about it later, she told me that it was because where the Chairman had originally written it was rather messy, so she retranscribed it in the margins, and the Chairman then made changes with a brush in the place where she had transcribed it. Jiang Qing said, "That was the culmination of many years of research by the Chairman,

and what he predicted in the article was later confirmed". From Jiang Qing, I also learnt that when the Chairman was writing this article, he was prone to temper tantrums and would not allow any interference, and he would curse anyone who tried to influence him.

At that time, the Chairman did not taste what he was eating, sometimes just after taking a bite, he remembered something and immediately put it down to write first. Therefore, the Chairman's meals were often cold and then hot, and hot and then cold again. Jiang Qing also boiled millet porridge so thin that it could be drunk, and also mashed some vegetables and beans to make them very fine, and gave them to the Chairman to eat, but the Chairman swallowed them whole without even looking at them. At that time, when people came to see the Chairman, Jiang Qing blocked the door, and even when some very important people came, she would not let them see the Chairman; they thought the Chairman was sick, so she told them that the Chairman was writing something and would not let anyone disturb him, so they could go to whoever they wanted. Sometimes, when the Chairman encountered a particular problem in the course of writing, he would become very irritable. The weather was often hot and muggy, so when the Chairman became irritable, his whole body became even hotter, so Jiang Qing took a cold towel to wipe his head; his hands were also very hot, so Jiang Qing found some cool stones for him to hold to cool them down. Jiang Qing did not dare to say anything when she saw the Chairman writing a paragraph, so she rushed over to help him transcribe it, because only Jiang Qing could recognise the Chairman's writing, no one else could.

At one point during the Cultural Revolution, Jiang Qing spoke to me, Wang Li, Guan Feng, Wen Yuan and Mu Xin<sup>47</sup> about her early history, and Mu Xin took notes at the time. She said that she had been oppressed and humiliated since she was a child and had developed an instinctively rebellious character. When she went to study Beijing opera at the age of fifteen or sixteen, the famous actors and those who taught her all tried to insult her, and she instinctively resisted. The rich and powerful people wanted to make fun of a beautiful girl like her, and none of them tried to promote her, because she destroyed all of them with her unhesitating resistance. When she met Huang Jing (Yu Qiwei) in Qingdao, he was her introducer to the Party and her first love, for whom she had deep feelings, and after his arrest in 1933, she fled to Shanghai alone to find the Party organisation. However, Zhou Yang<sup>48</sup> had a brother who met her and nakedly offered to have sex with her, and told her, "My brother is Zhou Yang [Note 1]. She scolded Zhou Yang's brother furiously. She didn't expect that Zhou Yang would not connect her to the organisation because of this, and pick on her saying how bad she was. That Liao Masha [Note 2], who was also not a good person, also tried to bully her. She was not yet twenty years old and they all thought she would give in if they pushed her a little, but she grew up in a constant state of resistance and was too stubborn to give in. Only Tang Na<sup>49</sup>,

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<sup>47</sup> Mu Xin (1920-2010), joined the CCP in 1937. He had responsibility for propaganda work and in November 1957, transferred to Guangming Daily and served successively as deputy editor-in-chief, editor-in-chief, and party secretary. He was criticised during the Cultural Revolution and spent eight years in prison. In December 1979, he was transferred to the deputy director of the Bureau of Foreign Languages, and in July 1980 he was concurrently the president and editor-in-chief of People's Pictorial. He retired in April 1984.

<sup>48</sup> Zhou Yang (1907 - 1989) participated in the leadership of the "Chinese Left Wing Literary Movement"; he was secretary of the Party League of the Chinese Left Wing Writers' Union, secretary of the General League of Culture and editor-in-chief of the Monthly Literary Bulletin. After the start of the Cultural Revolution, Zhou Yang was overthrown, and he was called "the head of the 'black line of literature and art' in the seventeen years" since Liberation, and entered the Qincheng Prison. He was released in 1975 and resumed leadership activity in the cultural field.

<sup>49</sup> Tang Na (1914-1988), formerly known as Ma Jiliang, from Suzhou, Jiangsu Province, was a Chinese actor and Jiang Qing's ex-husband. Tang Na may have been an underground member of the Communist Party. After 1949 he worked in Hong Kong before going to the US and then France. After the Cultural Revolution in 1976, he returned to China and was received by the Investigation Department of the CPC Central Committee. In

who was a bit softer, she found to be agreeable, and took up with him. When she found out that she and Tang Na did not get along, she left Shanghai on her own at the outbreak of the war and went to Yan'an, where she finally arrived in 1938 after many twists and turns.

When she first arrived in Yan'an, she was praised as one of the "top ten beauties of Yan'an" and immediately many people, including many senior cadres, wanted to court her. However, she did not see anyone but Chairman Mao, whom she adored. When those bigwigs approached her on the pretext of talking to her, saying she should not get back home late, she rebuked them. At that time, Chairman Mao had a certain status within the Party, but it was not the highest. When Wang Ming arrived in Yan'an, it was Wang Ming who was the iconic figure in the women's circles in Yan'an, and they rose up in a flurry, worshipping Wang Ming far more than they worshipped Chairman Mao. The second time Wang Ming's line was followed even by the Premier, which shows how high Wang Ming's status and popularity was in the Party and in Yan'an as a whole at that time. Even so, Jiang Qing could not look at Wang Ming, and only Chairman Mao was the real hero in her heart. Chairman Mao was a tolerant and generous person. She said she was fortunate to marry Chairman Mao, but anyone else would not have been able to make it work.

Her marriage to the Chairman, which was rightful and honorable, also attracted the discontent of many "big sisters". Ye Zilong told me that in Yan'an, those big sisters in the Party, including Kang Keqing, did not like Jiang Qing and isolated her, saying that Jiang Qing was a demon who had torn the Chairman and He Zizhen apart, and that they all sympathised with He Zizhen. He Zizhen was a well-liked person, a flower in Yongxin<sup>50</sup>, and they both fought side by side, so everyone thought she and the Chairman were a good match. But how many people really knew about the relationship between the two of them? Ye Zilong said that He Zizhen and the Chairman had a quarrel and raised a bench and smashed it against the Chairman's head, and if the guards had not stopped them, there is no telling what would have happened. In fact, Jiang Qing did not steal He Zizhen's husband, she only married the Chairman after he had divorced her, but those big sisters thought that the Chairman's divorce was just talk and could not be taken seriously. Worse still, many of them, including Kang Keqing<sup>51</sup>, called her a whore (Song Qingling also did so later). During the Cultural Revolution, the vitriol and abuse of these people was constantly used as evidence to elevate others and to belittle and smear Jiang Qing.

Jiang Qing also said that Kang Sheng treated her with respect as a junior in Yan'an, so she always called him "Kang Lao"<sup>52</sup> later. The Premier also took good care of her and did not oppose her marriage to the Chairman. In addition, He Long also supported Jiang Qing's marriage to the Chairman at that time. There was also Li Fuchun, who listened to Chairman Mao very well. He was also protective of Jiang Qing, he got all the facts about Jiang Qing's entry into the Party and

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September 1985, the Ministry of National Security arranged for him to return home, and he said he was planning to write a memoir. However, on August 23, 1988, he died of lung cancer in Paris.

<sup>50</sup> Yongxin County, in Jiangxi Province, was an important part of the Jinggangshan Revolutionary Base, and an important area during the creation of the Central Soviet Area.

<sup>51</sup> Kang Keqing (1911–1992) was a leader of the People's Republic of China, and the wife of PLA Marshall Zhu De until his death in 1976. Kang was born to a poor Hakka fishing family. In order to make ends meet, her parents sold five daughters in succession to other families as brides, including Kang when she was 40 days old. She joined the Red Army at the age of 14 and was one of the few women to complete the Long March. She married Zhu De in 1930 and led a group of female volunteers in the Red Army. Kang served as vice chairman of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC), chairman of the All-China Women's Federation, and president of Soong Ching-ling Foundation.

<sup>52</sup> "Lao" means "old" and is often put before an elder's name to show respect and affection. Placed after a surname, it shows a heightened degree of veneration.

supported her marriage to the Chairman. Later on, when Jiang Qing had any difficulties, he always went to Li Fuchun. At that time, there were rumours that Jiang Qing was having an affair with someone at the Party School. When Jiang Qing heard this, she went to Li Fuchun and cried that there was no such thing. When Li Fuchun heard Jiang Qing's complaint, he immediately looked for someone to help him understand the situation. The truth was that a man at the party school had a crush on Jiang Qing, but Jiang Qing didn't know about it and hadn't had any dealings with him. Li Fuchun found the man again and reprimanded him, telling him, "Don't talk nonsense. Don't start rumours. If you do so again, you will have to take responsibility before the Party" (Li Fuchun's exact words). When Li Fuchun said this on behalf of the Central Organization Department, the people below him did not dare to talk nonsense.

As a woman who had been oppressed and humiliated since she was a child, Jiang Qing came to take care of the Chairman at his most difficult time and did so very well. The deep affection and like-mindedness of revolutionaries that she and the Chairman reflected is something that I am afraid future generations will find difficult to appreciate. As Jiang Qing said, what Chairman Mao predicted in his "On the Protracted War" happened; the Japanese were driven back after eight years of resistance. In March 1947, when Hu Zongnan led 200,000 elite Nationalist troops into Yan'an, the Chairman led the Central Committee to fight in northern Shaanxi, and Jiang Qing stayed with Chairman Mao in the three detachments of the Central Committee. At that time, Ren Bishi was the commander of the 3 detachments, Lu Dingyi<sup>53</sup> was the political commissar and Jiang Qing was the political instructor. Jiang Qing was responsible for the life of the Chairman and managed his guards and secret service. However, those people around the Chairman, like Ye Zilong, Li Yinqiao<sup>54</sup> and so on, did not take Jiang Qing seriously and did not listen to her. According to Jiang Qing, she criticised Li Yinqiao, who was not convinced and complained to the Chairman, who could only reconcile the situation and ask Li Yinqiao to respect Jiang Qing because she was the leader. At that time, Wang Dongxing<sup>55</sup> had a small detachment that was dedicated to protecting the Chairman's security militarily. Wang Dongxing was the only one who treated Jiang Qing with respect and obedience. But she paid a heavy price for this obedience: it was Wang Dongxing who was involved in the coup of Hua Guofeng and Ye Jianying in 1976, which led to the arrest of Jiang Qing and others.

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<sup>53</sup> Lu Dingyi (1906 – 1996) joined the Communist Party of China in 1925, while he was studying electrical engineering at the Nanyang Public School. After graduation, he fully joined revolutionary activities, being mainly involved in the Communist Youth League, writing articles for its newspaper Chinese Youth (later renamed Proletarian Youth and then Leninist Youth). In 1927 he took part at both the 5th CPC National Congress and the CYL Congress, being elected a member of the CYL Central Committee working with its Propaganda Department. He participated in the Long March as an editor of the Red Star newspaper. He also worked with the Propaganda Department of the Eighth Route Army, and was a member of the CPC Propaganda Department starting from 1934. In 1942 he was promoted to chief editor of the Liberation Daily. During the Cultural revolution he was criticised as a member of a revisionist cultural group headed by Peng Zhen. Dismissed from his posts, he was rehabilitated by Deng Xiaoping and supported the capitalist "reforms" introduced by Deng.

<sup>54</sup> Li Yinqiao (1927-2009), served as the chief guard of Chairman Mao Zedong. In 1982 he was transferred to the Ministry of Public Security. In his later years he wrote a memoir, *Fifty Years at the Side of Chairman Mao*.

<sup>55</sup> Wang Dongxing (1916-2015), joined the Red Army of the Workers and Peasants of China in June 1932 and became a member of the Communist Party of China. He held important leadership positions in the party. From November 1965 to December 1978, Wang Dongxing served as Director of the General Office of the Central Committee of the CPC. From October 1971 to February 1975, he was a member of the Office of the Central Military Commission of the CPC. From February 1975 to February 1980, he was a member of the Central Military Commission of the CPC Standing Committee. On September 9, 1976, Comrade Mao Zedong passed away and Wang Dongxing took part in the arrest of Jiang Qing et al. Wang Dongxing passed away in Beijing at the age of 100.

During the Cultural Revolution, Jiang Qing had me arrested and I was furious. If I were to speak in terms of personal grudges, I could have cursed Jiang Qing out as much as Jin Jingmei<sup>56</sup> [Note 3] did. But I could not do so. Not to mention anything else, just because she joined the Chinese revolution at the most difficult time of the revolution and took care of the Chairman as well as she did at the most difficult time of the Chairman, I could not blame her for anything.

### **5. Participating in the editing of Mao Zedong's Anthology has had a special impact on my life**

Proofreading for the Selected Works of Mao Zedong had a great impact on my subsequent growth and on my whole life. In terms of working relationships, Tian Jiaying and I deepened our mutual affection and built up a mutual understanding with Chen Boda. But these were still insignificant; what was important and crucial was that this period was a time for me to learn about culture and to learn to write, even more than a spending a few years at university. One learns and one knows. You don't have to know syntax to like those individual sentences written by Chairman Mao, and if you like them, you can easily learn them. Anyone who had to read all three volumes of the Selected Works of Mao Zedong at that time three, five or ten times to see if he could write an article was guaranteed to do so. So, after I finished proofreading Mao Zedong's Selected Works, Volumes I, II and III, the words I couldn't write I learned how to, and the grammar I couldn't write I knew how to. Since then, it has been much easier for me to write. I can say that the fact that I was able to write articles with a bit of flair later on was due to this period of proofreading the Selected Works of Mao Zedong.

What is more important and crucial is that in the process, I learned what Chairman Mao's views were on things that mattered, what his views and attitudes were towards workers and peasants, and what his views and attitudes were towards intellectuals. If a person always recites the poems of Du Fu, he may embrace the ideology of Du Fu, and if he always recites the poems of Li Bai, he may develop the romanticism of Li Bai. Chairman Mao spoke highly of Du Fu, and I also liked his poetry, and I always recited Chairman Mao's stuff, and I was so attentive that I knew Chairman Mao's major writings by heart, and his ideas entered my bloodstream. An important reason why Chairman Mao liked Tian Jiaying was that Tian Jiaying had put his heart and soul into the Chairman's writings, and the texts he compiled were in the Chairman's own style. For example, the phrase "Modesty makes one progress, pride makes one lag behind" were not the original words of the Chairman, but were put together by Tian Jiaying according to the Chairman's words, imitating the Chairman's language, in the style of the Chairman. After proofreading the three volumes of Selected Works of Mao Zedong, Volumes 1 to 3, my comprehension of Chairman Mao's thought had improved by leaps and bounds, and when I wrote, I would consciously and naturally blend in some of Chairman Mao's thought and bring in a bit of his style. When I sent in my reports at that time, he read them and liked them, and when he liked them, he annotated them, so I am afraid there was some sense in that. I used to love reading the Chairman's books, and before I joined the underground, I first read Chairman Mao's "On Coalition Government" and became convinced to follow him in his revolution.

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<sup>56</sup> Jin Jingmei (1930- 2020), joined the PLA in 1949 and the Communist Party of China in 1957, and served as a member of the Arts and Crafts Corps of the Central and Southern Military Region Ordnance School. He was the author of the novel "Song of Ouyanghai" which was very popular in China. On May 1, 1967, Mao Zedong received Jin Jingmei and others at the Tiananmen Tower. Mao Zedong said, "Jin Jingmei, you are our great writer." On May 23, 1967, Qi Benyu announced that the national literary and artistic office was under the responsibility of Jin Jingmei. Just a few months after his promotion to the post of director, Jin Jingmei was jailed in Qincheng, allegedly for offending Jiang Qing and was brutally persecuted. He was held until May 1975, when he was released.

It was Tian Jiaying who asked me to take part in this work, so I have always regarded him as my benefactor.

Note:

Note 1: Introduction to Zhou Yang.

Note 2: Introduction to Liao Mosha.

Note 3: Introduction of Jin Jingmei and his remarks on behalf of Jiang Qing.

(Appendix).

## Chapter Four: Handling letters and visits from the masses for Chairman Mao

1. Chairman Mao solves the problem of unemployment at the beginning of the founding of the People's Republic of China: one or two people eat the food of three people
2. Chairman Mao is concerned about the suffering of the masses and opposes the use of a bureaucratic attitude towards the masses' letters
3. Chairman Mao has learned from letters from the masses that there is a problem of corruption and deterioration of cadres and has maintained a high degree of vigilance
4. Chairman Mao attaches great importance to the letters and friendship of democrats
5. Some of my own insights in handling letters from the public for Chairman Mao

Letters from the masses are also one of the ways in which the Chairman keeps abreast of the public and political situation and the overall state of society throughout the country. When we first entered Beijing, there were no letters from the public, but soon there were, just not many, and the secretary's office arranged for one or two people to deal with them exclusively. Then came a dramatic increase, and what one or two people could handle became too much for a dozen people. Just when the Selected Works of Mao Zedong was almost finished, Tian Jiaying talked to me, saying that the letters from the public had piled up and the correspondence team was short of manpower, so you should be transferred to the correspondence team as the leader, and you should hand over your work to Pang Xianzhi, and Pang Xianzhi should take over the review and proofreading work. I obeyed the arrangement of the organization and had no conditions to put forward.

### **1. Chairman Mao solves the problem of unemployment at the beginning of the founding of the People's Republic of China: one or two people eat the food of three people**

Shortly after liberation, urban employment became the biggest problem. In the large and medium-sized cities of the Jiangnan region, such as Shanghai, Nanjing and Suzhou, there were large numbers of general city employees and workers who were unemployed, causing them great hardship, with Shanghai being the worst, and workers committing suicide by hanging. This was because these areas were relatively developed before liberation, with many factories and prosperous commerce. After liberation, many capitalists fled, and it was common for factories and shops to close. And the remnants of the Guomindang were still sabotaging and causing trouble everywhere. The United States and several Western countries, with their embargoes and blockades against us, had shrunk the import and export trade in those cities as well, adding to the unemployment problem. The old liberated areas generally did not have this problem, as all the young adults there had joined the army and gone to the front, and there was not enough labour to go around. Beijing was fine, having been peacefully liberated relatively early, with few industries and not many workers.

Many unemployed citizens and workers who were desperate wrote to Chairman Mao to reflect on the hardships of their lives caused by unemployment, and some of them even asked directly for a job. A woman worker in Shanghai, surnamed Zhou, wrote to say how happy she was after the Liberation, but the factory had closed down, she was unemployed, she had no money to buy rice and no food for her children, so she had to sell herself. She wrote about everything. She said she really didn't want to, but there was nothing she could do. I was so upset when I read this letter that I immediately forwarded it to the Chairman. The Chairman approved the letter and underlined the words "prostitution", which were very unpleasant to read. I could feel that the Chairman also had a heavy heart when he saw those words. The Chairman instructed the Shanghai Municipal Committee to solve the woman's difficulties and to study the problem of unemployment. But frankly, the

Shanghai Municipal Committee could not come up with any good solutions at that time because there were too many things like this.

The problem for the peasants at the time was mainly one of food collection. There was still a war going on, and as the army moved forward, food had to keep up, and the task of collecting military food was very heavy everywhere. The south of the country has traditionally been a major grain-producing area, and yields were high, so a little more levy on an acre of land could solve the problem of feeding many troops. So, at that time, this problem mainly occurred in the south, and the north did not have this problem. A farmer in Qingpu, Shanghai, wrote to complain that the requisition was so heavy that he had no food for himself. I forwarded the letter up and the Chairman read it and gave instructions that this was not acceptable and charged me with checking immediately whether it was true. To check the letter, I called a secretary of the East China Bureau, who took the call and immediately went to verify it, and within two days, called me back to say that the situation was true and they were working on it. After hearing the report from the secretary's office, the Chairman said that this was a serious problem and instructed the East China Bureau to resolve it at its discretion. The issue was later resolved and Huang Yanpei wrote to the Chairman about it. These democrats also had many relatives and friends in the countryside, and they all knew the situation before and after the problem was solved. [Note 1].

One day I got a strange letter, a white slip of paper with a set of numbers on it: how many cannons, how many machine guns, how many tanks, and nothing else, signed in a foreign language, and I couldn't understand who it was. Fortunately, I had an idea and asked the mailroom: Where did this letter come from? The answer was: It came from the Central Committee. I understood at once that it was written to the Chairman by the leader of a Communist Party abroad and that it must be very important. So, I immediately asked to report it to the Chairman, otherwise it could have been a big mistake. At that time, in accordance with the division of labour between the Secretariat and the Office of the Secretary, letters from fraternal party leaders like Ho Chi Minh to the President that were not coded telegrams were forwarded to the President by the Office of the Secretary rather than by the Office of the Secretary.

I was most touched by the letters from the masses reflecting unemployment and hardships in life, because my father was working in a customs brokerage in Shanghai at the time. His boss fled, the brokerage closed down and he lost his job, and my family was in deep water, with only two meals in three days and my sister screaming with hunger. At that time, the organisation stipulated that any letter from us, including letters from home, had to be read by Tian Jiaying first. After reading my parents' letters to me and knowing my family's difficulties, he took 50 yuan out of his own salary (equivalent to 300 yuan now, which was about three months' allowance for me at that time. (We were on a supply system at the time) and he asked me to send it home. I didn't want it, but he insisted on giving it. He was afraid I would forget and asked me to tell him when I sent it. The family was very happy to receive the money and I always felt for Tian Jiaying (I was not active in the criticism of Tian Jiaying at the beginning of the Cultural Revolution, but I sympathised with him and was accused of exhibiting "petty bourgeois warmth". This was a later story).

At that time, everyone believed that Chairman Mao and the Communist Party had a solution for every problem. So, the more we worked overtime, the more letters we dealt with and the more problems we solved, the more letters came from the public, and the speed at which we dealt with them always failed to catch up with the increase in the number of letters. Then the letters pile up like a small mountain. This is not a bad thing, it means that the masses are trusting Chairman Mao and the Communist Party more and more - when they are disappointed with you, they don't write to you anymore. I thought, "It's not good enough to send them one by one, and it's not good enough to solve them one by one, so I should send a report to Chairman Mao to make the seriousness of the

problem clear. How many letters have come from various places? What problems do they reflect? What are the most important problems? Not one letter reflected a particular problem, but there were so many, and no solution anywhere! All this had to be made known to the Chairman. So I took the letters from unemployed workers, I took the letters from farmers, I took the letters from everyone else, I put them together, I laid out the main problems, I got the statistics right and I wrote a special report on the unemployment of citizens and workers [roughly when?] Tian Jiaying read it and said, "It's well written, let's send it up, this one letter is worth hundreds of letters, the Chairman won't have to read hundreds of letters." Tian Jiaying sent it on without changing any words, using the title "Report from the Secretariat of the General Office of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China". When you write a report to the Chairman under this title, it is usually a year-end report, not a special report. The special report I drafted on unemployment was, I'm afraid, a precedent for the Central Office since the founding of the country.

After the report was sent to me, I was expecting the Chairman to read it every minute, and I was dreaming about it at night. As luck would have it, the next day the Chairman approved it. It was sent to me in the afternoon, so I guess the Chairman read and approved it in the evening. The report was written in large letters and the Chairman wrote the approval on the report, densely packed, to the effect that: Premier Zhou, the unemployment problem is so serious that it must be solved seriously, not done one-by-one, and this letter should be issued immediately to all members of the Central Politburo, and an immediate meeting should be held to discuss the solution of this problem, and those unemployed workers who are currently without food should be given immediate relief. We are victorious and the people must not be made to suffer.

In fact, the Premier had more information than anyone else at that time, and more than the Chairman, but, for some reason, he never reported to the Chairman. After the Chairman gave his approval, the Premier immediately informed the whole country, drafted documents, found people to investigate and held meetings throughout the country. As soon as the Central Government saw that it was going to take the matter seriously, all places reflected the situation honestly. As I had drafted the report to the Chairman, the Premier asked me to attend the meetings and to sit in on the various panels. In the groups, the situation I heard reflected at the meetings was even worse than what was written in the letters from the masses. But at that time the state did not have much money, the relief money was limited, and many of the factories were not producing, so it was difficult to solve the problem. The meeting came up with several solutions, one of which was to say that no matter what, we should place these workers in factories, whether private factories or public enterprises, and place them there, not allowing them to be outside, to ensure stability, even if one person's job is done by two people. This discussion plan was reported to the Chairman by Premier Zhou, who was very much in favour of it and appreciated it. The words that came out of the Chairman's mouth were: three for two, so that every worker would have a share of the wage. Workers still had to go to work on time, and study if they didn't have work, today you work and I study, tomorrow I work and you study; or work in the morning or study in the afternoon, taking turns. In the factory, the uneducated would learn culture, the unskilled would learn technology, the old workers could teach technology, and the educated staff could teach the workers to read and write.

Some people questioned this approach, saying that how could wages be paid for two people's meals for three people? Chairman Mao said that a worker should be paid as much as he deserved, and that he should be paid even for half a day's work, and that the wages of existing workers should not be taken out and distributed to the unemployed workers, but that state expenditure should be reduced and savings should be practiced, and that the state's office expenses should be cut in half, and that some projects could not be stopped first, and some things to be done should be done slowly, and that all means should be exhausted to save what could be saved. The military also had to be saved.

The military expenditure was huge, and there was a massive reduction in military expenditure and routine savings. The Chairman gave the order and the whole country followed it. To what extent is it economical? We had a jeep, but we didn't drive it very often to save on fuel costs. Tian Jiaying sometimes had to take a bus to do his work, so we didn't have a car to sit in. The envelopes used by the General Office of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China were folded with newspaper, and after reading the newspaper, two layers were folded into an envelope, and the scrapped office paper, half of which could still be used, was torn off and pasted on the envelope, with a stamp below. Don't look at the inconspicuous envelopes and office papers, the whole country would work together and save a lot of money. Once other large expenditures are squeezed, the savings would be incredible. The same went for the army. The Military Commission reported to the Chairman on how much money was saved, and, he even praised them. All over the country, from the central to local levels, from government agencies to the PLA, came support for the unemployed workers. Two months after the conference, the programmes were all implemented and the problems were solved, and many of the unemployed people had jobs again. My father also found a job in a pharmaceutical factory. (Of course, when the economic situation improved later on, the fact that "two people's food is eaten by three" led to a certain degree of people not fully employed. This was another problem that had to be solved in a new way according to the new situation).

Through this incident, I learned first-hand what it means to be a great leader. Chairman Mao's greatness and wisdom were not blown out of proportion, as some people said. The problem was there, and so many members of the Central Committee, including the Premier, Liu Shaoqi and Commander-in-Chief Zhu<sup>57</sup>, all sympathised with the workers, how come none of them took the initiative to think of a solution? In the end, it was only when we, the junior secretaries, brought the situation to the attention of the Chairman, who gave instructions, that they took it seriously and tried to find a solution? And it was really solved?! Moreover, the chairman also specifically instructed that even the Guomindang's retained personnel must be given food and not to starve to death. (The chairman once again put forward this slogan during the three-years of difficulty. So, the masses in many places used this slogan as a weapon at that time. They used it to fight against local bureaucracy and oppose cadres who don't know how to correct their mistakes after exaggerating). In 2008, when the global economic crisis occurred, Germany also emerged from the crisis in Western countries by reducing the working hours of the working population and through the method of "two people's food eaten by three people". Did the Germans learn from Chairman Mao's inventions back then?

## **2. Chairman Mao is concerned about the suffering of the masses and opposes the use of a bureaucratic attitude towards the masses' letters**

In 1951, peasants from several places in Jiangsu and Jiangxi wrote to us about the problem of

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<sup>57</sup> Zhu De (1886 – 1976) was a Chinese general, military strategist, and revolutionary. After a short time as a regional warlord, in 1922 Zhu went to Berlin, where he met Zhou Enlai. He was expelled from Germany for his role in a number of student protests. Around this time, he joined the Chinese Communist Party. 1927, and Zhu merged his army into the Red Army, consolidating and expanding the Soviet areas of control. During this time Mao and Zhu became so closely associated that to the local villagers they were known collectively as "Zhu Mao". Zhu took part in the Long March and served as commander-in-chief of the Eighth Route Army during the Second Sino-Japanese War. Zhu remained a prominent political figure until his death in 1976. As the chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress from 1975 to 1976, Zhu was the head of state of the People's Republic of China.

schistosomiasis, saying that we had been given land and turned over<sup>58</sup>, but the schistosomiasis<sup>59</sup> was still killing us. Some of the letters were accompanied by pictures of bellies. When the Chairman saw the letters we submitted, he immediately gave instructions to collect details of the situation and consider solving it together. After receiving the Chairman's instructions, the local governments immediately reported on the local situation, and those materials were more specific and comprehensive than those reflected in the letters from the masses. After reading the reports, the Chairman instructed the Ministry of Health to organise the best experts to go down to investigate and find a solution to the problem, and urged us to call the Ministry frequently to enquire about the progress.

Schistosomiasis harmed the peasants' health as everyone knew, but no one had ever paid attention to it and solved it. Chairman Mao mobilised the people and health experts to work together for several years and finally solved the problem. I heard Lin Ke say that in 1958, when Chairman Mao was informed of the news, he was so happy that he danced like a child and stayed awake all night. At that time, he was by the Chairman's side. It was on that day that the Chairman wrote his famous poem "Farewell the God of Plague".

### **Farewell the God of Plague**

(July 1, 1958)

I

So many green streams and blue hills, but to what avail ?  
This tiny creature left even Hua To powerless!  
Hundreds of villages choked with weeds, men wasted away;  
Thousands of homes deserted, ghosts chanted mournfully.  
Motionless, by earth I travel eighty thousand li a day,  
Surveying the sky I see a myriad Milky Ways from afar.  
Should the Cowherd ask tidings of the God of Plague,  
Say the same griefs flow down the stream of time.

II

The spring wind blows amid profuse willow wands,  
Six hundred million in this land all equal Yao and Shun.  
Crimson rain swirls in waves under our will,  
Green mountains turn to bridges at our wish.  
Gleaming mattocks fall on the Five Ridges heaven-high;  
Mighty arms move to rock the earth round the Triple River.  
We ask the God of Plague: "Where are you bound ?"  
Paper barges aflame and candle-light illuminate the sky.

Chairman Mao added a note saying: When I read in the Renmin Ribao of June 30, 1958 that schistosomiasis had been wiped out in Yujiang County, thoughts thronged my mind and I could not

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<sup>58</sup> The Chinese term "fanshen", literally "turning over one's body" was used to describe the land redistribution that occurred prior to and after Liberation.

<sup>59</sup> A disease carried by water snails that affected millions of peasants and could lead to death. See Joshua Horne's *Away With All Pests: An English Surgeon in China* for an account of the struggle for its elimination.

sleep. In the warm morning breeze next day, as sunlight falls on my window, I look towards the distant southern sky and in my happiness pen the following lines.

This is in line with what Linke told me about the situation. I also heard later from the Premier that the Chairman had allowed bonuses to be given to all the doctors and specialists who went to the countryside to thank them for the good work they had done for the rural people.

At the end of April 1951, the Secretary's Office put together a summary of the various letters from the masses in the first three months of that year and typed a report to Chairman Mao on the handling of the letters from the masses. The Chairman quickly gave his endorsement of the report. This approval is now available on the Party History News website and in Chairman Mao's manuscript, the full text of which is reproduced as follows [I checked this. This report is not an annual report, but a comprehensive special report. It was also typed in the name of the "Secretariat of the Central Office", but it was not a thematic report on unemployment, and the endorsement was different. I wonder if there is any causal link or other connection with that report by Qi Lao?]:

“The Central Bureau, and forwarded to the Sub-Bureaus, Provincial, District, Municipal, Prefectural and County Committees; the Party Groups of the People's Governments of the major administrative regions, provincial and urban areas, prefectures and counties, and to the Party Groups of the departments of the Central People's Government.

“The correspondence of the people must be taken seriously, the letters of the people must be dealt with appropriately, the legitimate demands of the people must be met, and the matter must be seen as a way for the Communist Party and the People's Government to strengthen their ties with the people and not to adopt a bureaucratic attitude of careless disregard. If there are many letters from the people and it is difficult for me to deal with them, a special organ or a special person of appropriate size should be established to deal with them. If there are not many letters coming in and I or the Secretary can handle them, do not set up another special person. The following report on the work of handling letters from the people to me, from the Office of the Secretary, is sent to you for your information, and I believe that the views in this report are correct.”

This directive was made on 16 May 1951, and fifteen years later, the famous May 16 Circular of the CPC Central Committee on the Cultural Revolution, which marked the beginning of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, was adopted at the enlarged meeting of the Central Political Bureau. There is a logical connection between this instruction and the May 16 Circular, which is related to the issue of the mass line and the corruption and deterioration of Party cadres. This is an afterthought.

Chairman Mao was always strict with Party cadres, regardless of rank or proximity, and there was no exception for those he trusted most. In August 1951, a secretary of the Shijingshan Power Plant in Beijing complained that workers were living in hardship because their wages had not been adjusted and prices had risen. I took over the handling of that letter and gave it to Tian Jiaying after I had sorted it out, but for some reason he did not hand it over to the Chairman, probably because there were so many such letters at that time that he was not surprised by them and therefore did not pay much attention to them. It so happened that shortly afterwards Lin Lao [Lin Boqu?] went to Shijingshan and saw the actual difficulties of the workers, and heard from the workers that they had written to Chairman Mao to complain about the situation. When Lin came back, he went to the Chairman to talk about the letter [Meng Fanhua's version of the manuscript says that the secretary of the factory, by some unknown means, actually conveyed the workers' difficulties and the letter to the Chairman to the Chairman verbally, and perhaps some people from Zhongnanhai had stayed in the Shijingshan Military Management Committee and passed on the message through their

comrades. The Chairman heard that the workers had sent him a letter and asked about it, and once he checked, there was indeed one. Tian Jiaying hurriedly took it and sent it to him. When the Chairman saw that a letter had come but was not given to him, he became very angry and criticised Tian Jiaying, saying, "Your job is to convey to me the situation of the workers and peasants, and you have suppressed such an important letter reflecting the workers' hardship for so long without sending it to me. The plight of the workers is the biggest problem of the Party. What is our Party for? It is to solve problems for the people, how can we take it lightly? Do you want to do it? If you do not want to do it, please report it, and I will find someone else..." This criticism from the Chairman should be said to be very harsh, and Tian Jiaying could not eat at that time. I was not present, and Tian Jiaying did not tell me about it. I heard him tell others a few things and knew that the Chairman had criticized him severely. Peng Dazhang comforted him by saying that the letter was under my control and I had not done my duty. Tian Jiaying later drank sullenly and whined, complaining that he had so much to do and was so busy, and that the Chairman was inconsiderate enough to criticise him for such a trivial matter! At that time, Tian Jiaying trusted me, and in his wine he did not know what he had whined about, and asked me about it when he sobered up. I comforted him and said, "Why are you whining? The President criticised you, but he did so with love and care, and we are all responsible for this incident. He said, "Yes, yes, yes!" Tian Jiaying was so talented that when he sobered up, he spoke very reasonably, and things were better between us. Later he also wrote a review to the Chairman, saying things like "The Chairman's criticism was a great boost to our work". Later, Chairman Mao wrote a letter to the branch secretary, praising him for his concern for the workers and telling him that the Central Government would immediately find a solution to the problem, and that the problem should be solved for the workers in Beijing as a whole, and for the workers in the whole country. Later on, Peng Zhen and the others got together and raised the wages of the workers at Shijingshan Iron and Steel Works. When we went back down to listen to the feedback, both the branch secretary and the workers were very satisfied.

### **3. Chairman Mao has learned from letters from the masses that there is a problem of corruption and deterioration of cadres and has maintained a high degree of vigilance**

The unemployment of urban workers and the too heavy expropriation of peasants were all major problems affecting the stability of the country, all of which were solved under the personal instructions of Chairman Mao. But the problems reflected in the letters from the masses were far more than that; they were all sorts of things and everything. There were letters from the masses exposing which cadres in their area were corrupt, gorging themselves on food and drink, and oppressing the masses; there were also letters from the masses reporting that a cadre had asked the masses to build a house for him without paying for the work, and that other cadres had forcibly occupied the land of the masses. In addition, there were also letters and even visits from family members of senior cadres within the military, reflecting on what had happened to them.

On one occasion, the wives of eight or nine senior army generals, and I don't know how they got together, demanded to see the Chairman, complaining that after their husbands had gone into the city they had lived corrupt and degenerate lives, and that they were not used to this. They said their husbands wanted to find young and beautiful girls with whom to make new friendships. They said the generals had become "Chen Shimei"<sup>60</sup>, "Niu Jinxing"<sup>61</sup> and "Liu Zongmin"<sup>62</sup>; and related which

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<sup>60</sup> Chen Shimei was a character in a Ming Dynasty novel. He was the villain of ingratitude, abandoning his wife and abandoning his son, and became synonymous with a heartless person to later generations.

<sup>61</sup> Niu Jinxing was a military strategist in the army of Li Zicheng which overthrew the Ming Dynasty. After Li Zicheng entered Beijing, he was appointed Prime Minister and used the position to gain personal power, appointing all his friends and relatives as officials.

<sup>62</sup> Liu Zongmin was the main general of Li Zicheng's army.

head of the ministry had divorced and married a young bride; which head of the ministry had secretly had several concubines; which senior cadres were dissatisfied with the low rank they had been assigned to, did not study, did not seek advancement, drank all day, cursed and swore, and threw pots and bowls; and which senior cadres wanted their subordinates to get them money, so they could enjoy themselves and move into nice, big houses. And so on and so forth. There were even references to the situation of members of the Standing Committee of the Central Committee and the Politburo. In short, many senior Party and military chiefs had long forgotten the Chairman's warnings about "the two imperatives"<sup>63</sup>, "going to the city to take an exam"<sup>64</sup>, "not being Li Zicheng"<sup>65</sup> and "not being Liu Zongmin". The warning of "not being Liu Zongmin" has been forgotten.

These wives were all old revolutionaries and veterans, and I call them elder sisters, but in fact they were only 40 or 50 years old at that time, not really old. They all appealed to the Chairman, which meant that the situation in each family was quite formidable. They had drawn up a list in advance and I asked them to give it to me, but they refused and insisted on seeing Chairman Mao in person! I reported to Yang Shangkun and asked him to meet these elder sisters. Yang Shangkun was so smooth and sophisticated that he knew that he dared not offend any of the elder sisters, for to offend them would be to offend their husbands. If he didn't report back, he was deceiving the Chairman. If he did, and the Chairman criticized the generals and chiefs, he would still be offending them, and he would still be offending the elder sisters. Anyway, whatever he did, he would still be offending someone, he simply did not see any way out. The elder sisters thought I was the mailroom messenger, so I carefully, patiently and painstakingly made it clear to them that I was specifically responsible for receiving visits, and that it was OK to tell me anything, and I would report back. I went in and out many times and kept going in to report, but they still kept failing to see the leaders of the Central Office, let alone expect Chairman Mao to know they were coming. Finally, they came to their senses and said, "If we can't come and see the Chairman, we can't come for nothing, it's not a good idea to keep running around like this. We don't want to make things difficult for you. If you can't see Chairman Mao, you can bring a pen and write it down for us. I said, "Yes, yes!". They took their time in telling me things that they did not want to tell me. I took note of them carefully, word by word. When they were finished, they urged me, "Little comrade, you must not tell anyone about this, and you must not show the letter to anyone. We see you as a good cadre of Chairman Mao." I said, "Okay, okay, I'll go and sort it out, type it up, and make sure I report it to Chairman Mao in time. I really went to sort it out carefully. I couldn't be too specific in my report to the Chairman, it was all general stuff, but the names of people were written. The Chairman read my report very carefully, underlined one name and then another, and then approved a long paragraph, and finally said that he would ask Liu and Zhou to read it and ask Comrade Luo Ronghuan<sup>66</sup> to handle it, and

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<sup>63</sup> The "two imperatives" were put forward by Comrade Mao Zedong at the Second Plenary Session of the Seventh Central Committee of the Party, asking the Party to keep a clear head in the face of victory and to withstand the test of power after seizing national power. He said; "The comrades must be taught to remain modest, prudent and free from arrogance and rashness in their style of work. The comrades must be taught to preserve the style of plain living and hard struggle".

<sup>64</sup> When Mao left Xibaipo for Beijing, he stepped into the jeep and excitedly said to Zhou Enlai, "Today we're going to Beijing for the civil service exam. We can't be like Li Zicheng!" He was referring to the tests that the Party would be subjected to as it began the task of governing China.

<sup>65</sup> Li Zicheng had led a peasant rebellion that invaded Beijing and, in 1644, toppled the Ming Dynasty. Even though he overran Beijing, the would-be emperor failed to keep power because he and his colleagues alienated the masses by adopting an aristocratic lifestyle. His rule lasted less than a year.

<sup>66</sup> Luo Ronghuan (1902 –1963) was a Chinese communist military leader. He joined the Chinese Communist Youth League in April 1927 and the Chinese Communist Party later that year. During the Long March he served as the security chief for the Chinese Red Army. After World War II, Luo served as the political commissar of Lin

report the results to him afterwards. I don't know how Luo Ronghuan handled the matter, because this treatment did not go through our secretary's office, it was Luo Ronghuan who reported directly to the Chairman. But since I wrote the report, I was very concerned about it. I noticed that I could no longer see the names of some people in the newspapers, and when I attended the National Day reception, I could not see these people either. I guess Luo Ronghuan handled the matter very seriously. Luo Ronghuan was a very decent person [Note 2] (This was soon after he entered the city. When Gao Gang<sup>67</sup> was involved in 1954, and it was later said how corrupt Gao Gang was, I associated it with these big sisters who complained. There is more than one Gao Gang in the party, there are too many "Gao Gang" and they are all similar to Gao Gang).

Even if some of these problems do not seem to be a big deal, they are in fact serious, because they are directly related to the lives of the people, the deterioration of cadres and the image of the Party. Where such issues involved senior cadres, we did not include them in comprehensive reports, but made them thematic reports. The Chairman paid special attention to such reports, sometimes instructing the regional secretaries to investigate, and sometimes letting the relevant departments of the Central Government investigate directly, like the problems of senior military cadres reported by the elder sisters, which were resolved by asking Luo Ronghuan to hold a special meeting. In some cases, they even asked Lao Dong (Dong Biwu) to look into the matter personally. I felt from these instructions from the Chairman that the Chairman had been very vigilant about the specialization of cadres since then. As so many problems of all kinds and sizes had gone wrong, at the end of 1951, Chairman Mao decided to launch a three-antis campaign: anti-corruption, anti-waste and anti-bureaucracy. During the campaign, the chairman wanted to execute two people, Liu Qingshan and Zhang Zishan<sup>68</sup>. I remember that some people in the North China Bureau said that these two cadres had done a great deal of work, so they should not be killed, or at most one of them should be killed; some said that their money was useless and was still there, so they should just hand it back; others said that they had been revolutionary all their lives, that they had crossed the snowy mountains and the grasslands, that they had not died on the Long March, that the revolution had succeeded, if they were executed by their own people, and that killing them would bitterly disappoint the veteran cadres. Even Huang Jing [Note 3] and some other big cadres spoke positively about the two men, saying that Chairman Mao himself had said during the Yan'an rectification that none of them would be killed, hoping that Chairman Mao would leave people under the knife, and not kill them. It seems that only Liu Lantao, Bo Yibo and a few others were the main advocates of the executions, and

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Biao in Northeast China during the Chinese civil war. After the formation of the People's Republic of China in 1949 he became Chief of Staff of the People's Liberation Army. He was made a marshal in 1955. He served as a Vice Chair of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress. Luo was the member of the 7th CPC Central Committee and 8th CPC Politburo. When Luo died in 1963, both Mao and Lin Biao attended his funeral.

<sup>67</sup> Gao Gang (1905–1954) was a Communist Party leader during the Chinese Civil War and the early years of the People's Republic of China. In 1945 Gao joined the Politburo, and was transferred along with Lin Biao to northeast China, becoming head of the local Party, state and military apparatus. By 1947 Gao was the most important cadre in the region. However, he was later accused of trying to set up an independent kingdom, and of having illicit relations with the Soviet Union. In the summer of 1953, along with his key ally, Rao Shushi, he attempted to displace Liu Shaoqi and Zhou Enlai from their key posts in government to increase his own personal standing within the Party. He was prevented from doing so and suicided the following year.

<sup>68</sup> The case of Liu Qingshan and Zhang Zishan was a case of serious embezzlement and theft of state assets by leading Party cadres, which was uncovered during the "Three Anti-corruptions" campaign in the early years of the founding of the country. In November 1951, the Third Congress of the CPC in Hebei Province exposed the crimes of Liu and Zhang. On 10 February 1952, the People's Government of Hebei Province held a public trial and the People's Court of Hebei Province requested the approval of the Supreme People's Court to sentence Liu Qingshan and Zhang Zishan to death.

supported the Chairman. I heard Li Yinqiao say that Chairman Mao did not sleep well all night, tossing and turning, thinking about whether to kill or not to kill, and finally making up his mind to do so. Chairman Mao even said, "Alas! They are a final contribution to the revolution!" In doing so, the Chairman had no choice but to do as Cao Cao did in the Three Kingdoms, that is, to get his food supervisor Wang Hou to lend his head<sup>69</sup>. Of course, Cao Cao killed the innocent Wang Hou, whereas Chairman Mao killed Liu Qingshan and Zhang Zishan because there was overwhelming evidence that they were corrupt. The two were completely different in nature. [Note 4]

All of those special report documents involving senior cadres at that time should not be lost even now. They were approved by the Chairman, so who dare lose them? Unless they were deliberately destroyed! If these reports and the Chairman's approval could be made public, it would enable the people to know more about the process and seriousness of the corruption and deterioration of Party cadres, especially senior cadres, after the founding of the country, and it would also enable more people to know and understand more about why Chairman Mao himself launched the Cultural Revolution later. However, the published manuscripts of the Chairman since the founding of the state are completely devoid of the relevant instructions from the Chairman, not to mention the annexes to the original reports.

#### **4. Chairman Mao attaches great importance to the letters and friendship of democrats**

There is a category of letters from prominent democrats which, in a broad sense, also belong to the masses but are not ordinary mass letters; those are far less numerous but are very difficult to deal with. I encountered this type of letter as soon as I started working on it. Xiong Shili, a philosopher and Buddhist scholar, sent Chairman Mao a letter and a copy of his own book, *The New Theory of Vaisnava*. Tian Jiaying explained to me to extract the main points of the letter and the book and present them to Chairman Mao. *The New Theory of Vaisnava* is about Buddhism. I was only 19 years old in 1950. I had read a lot of Marx and Lenin, but I didn't know anything about Buddhist philosophy, didn't understand Buddhism and didn't know the difference between Buddhist philosophy and Buddhism. I only knew of Amitabha Buddha, had only strolled through a temple and seen the Four Heavenly Kings standing two on each side of the temple entrance, and seen the statue of the Tathagata Buddha. I didn't understand anything else and hadn't read the Buddhist scriptures. The sutras have many terms and proper nouns, for example, what does it mean to be "as I have heard"?<sup>70</sup> I don't know. I have memorised the Heart Sutra and still don't know what it says. I wanted to find a monk to ask, but there was no temple nearby. I couldn't read *The New Theory of Vaisnava*, or know how to summarise it. I couldn't ask anyone else to get it because of the confidentiality regulations, so I had to go ahead and get it and study it. I dove into the library of the Zhongnanhai

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<sup>69</sup> It was said that Cao Cao had 170,000 soldiers, and the daily cost of food was huge, and as the counties were in drought, they couldn't afford it. There was even talk of human flesh being mixed in with the military rations. Cao Cao summonsed Wang Hou, his chief food officer, and said "I want to borrow something from you to placate the hearts of the people. You must not be stingy." Wang was shocked and said: "I am certainly not guilty!" Cao said: "I also know that you are innocent, but if I don't kill you, we will lose the army. After you die, your wife will be supported, so don't worry about it." Cao then slashed him with a knife, and hung his head and high pole, and said: "Wang Hou was stealing official food, and I must follow the military law." So, the grievances began to be resolved.

<sup>70</sup> This is a four-word idiom comprising the four things asked by the disciple Ananda before the Buddha approaches Nirvana. This sentence means: "Ananda, I hear what the Buddha said." It means that the content of the sutra is that Ananda personally heard what the Buddha said, and it is true and infallible if he hears it from him. The four characters "As I have heard" were regarded as extremely precious in the spread of Buddhism.

authorities, looking for a dictionary, but after half a day of searching, I couldn't solve the problem, because dictionaries mainly address one word at a time, and to understand them, one has to study them systematically; I looked for philosophical books for reference, but after a long time of trying, I was still confused about many issues. When I couldn't find any reference books on Buddhism in the library of the Zhongnanhai authorities, I went to the Beijing Library outside the north gate of Zhongnanhai and finally found a set of books providing a plain knowledge of Buddhism in the vernacular. The Heart Sutra in the vernacular, the Great Compassion Sutra in the vernacular, and the Avatamsaka Sutra in the vernacular, so I started with that. Later, I also found Xiong Shili's own popular lecture on "Vairocana" and read it again and again. It took me two weeks to get a good idea of the gist of the old gentleman's letter and book. It was far from a complete understanding, but I knew which words and phrases were his central and concise meaning. [Buddhist philosophy is different from Buddhism. The collation by Meng Fanhua and others does not make any distinction, so I have done a bit of work here, which may not be entirely appropriate. I am not sure if the phrase "plain knowledge in the vernacular" in Meng Fanhua's manuscript is a fixed one, but I have changed it to "plain interpretation in the vernacular" and will revert to it if it is not appropriate. In addition, the original material for the "popular speech" seems to say that it was Xiong Shili's own. Meng Fanhua's manuscript does not give such an account. I have blended the material before and after together, and it does not conflict with each other. I would like to ask Qi Lao to take note of these elements for approval].

I then wrote a summary of a few hundred words and gave it to Tian Jiaying, who then sent it to Chairman Mao. After reading it, Chairman Mao underlined some of the tracts on it, went through Xiong Shili's book, made some marks in important places, and then replied to Xiong Shili's letter. I worked overtime for two whole weeks to complete this seemingly simple task, and the Chairman relied on the summary I had come up with to write back to the old scholar. Knowing this gave me a great sense of achievement and nourished my heart.

There are many similar cases, such as the letters from Zhang Shizhao, Liu Yazhi, Fu Dingyi, Huang Yanpei, Chen Shutong, Lai Jinxi and Jin Xixhou, whose classically elegant words were often interspersed with out-of-the-ordinary allusions, which I had to understand before I could summarise. The Chairman's poetry and writings, history and philosophical skills were all inexplicable and profound. Therefore, although each of these democrats was full of knowledge, they did not dare to write letters to the Chairman by hand, and they were mostly painstaking in their writing. This was good, but it made it difficult for us, the later generation. However, for me, it was an opportunity to learn and I cherished it. I slowly formed the habit of reading at night and often went to the Zhongnanhai Office Library and the Beijing Library to read at night. The Beijing Library had a lot of books and a good environment, so after dinner, I went there first, and after it closed, I went back to Zhongnanhai and continued my night reading at the Office library. Huang Yanpei was a man I knew when I was a student in Shanghai. He ran many schools and often waived tuition fees for poor children. Therefore, I had a very good impression of him and as soon as I saw his letter to the Chairman, I sent it up. However, in handling Zhang Shizhao's letter, I made a mistake in taking it for granted.

When I was studying in Shanghai, I had read many of Lu Xun's articles and books, and I also read several episodes of The Complete Works of Lu Xun. I knew that Lu Xun and Zhang Shizhao "had fought a lawsuit" and he had scolded Zhang Shizhao very severely. For example, in "From the Beard to the Teeth", Lu Xun wrote: "It is Zhang Shizhao again, and I have been shaking my head at this name for a long time .....". The Beiyang warlords suppressed the student movement and created the "March 18 tragedy" [Note 5], when Zhang Shizhao was the chief of education. He couldn't order the

shooting, but the students had been petitioning for days, so how could he not care? So, I thought he was responsible. Lu Xun's fame, revolutionary nature and combativeness were well known to everyone, and I had known for a long time about Chairman Mao's praise and recognition of Lu Xun. At that time, I had already read Chairman Mao's New Democracy and knew that Chairman Mao was taking Lu Xun's direction and establishing it as the direction of a new national culture. I did not like Zhang Shizhao, and I did not know much about his relationship with Chairman Mao, and Lu Xun had scolded him so much. I believed in Lu Xun and trusted him not to talk nonsense. I took it for granted that Zhang Shizhao was a reactionary and not qualified to write to Chairman Mao. He was just expressing his views on the current situation and on the reformation of the country, but he wrote in ancient Chinese, with awkward words and phrases, and the polite words of greeting were so odd that I could not understand them. The letter was suppressed, and when Zhang Shizhao saw that the Chairman had not replied to his letter, he went to the Premier to ask for a comment. The Premier asked Tian Jiaying about it. Originally, of all the letters that came in, the ones from Beijing were the most important, because there were many democrats and celebrities in Beijing, and their letters could not be neglected. I had read a little, and I had read Lu Xun, and I saw that Lu Xun had a problem with Zhang Shizhao, who wrote the letter, so I withheld his letter. Tian Jiaying came to me and asked me if I had a letter from Zhang Shizhao. I told him with a straight face, "Yes, I did, but I suppressed it. He's a reactionary." When Tian Jiaying heard this, he said, "Good man, how can you suppress Zhang Shizhao's letter?" Tian Jiaying seriously criticised me and, together with Peng Dazhang, called a meeting with several people, saying that Zhang Shizhao was not a minor person like you, he was an elder, and an elder of Chairman Mao, and that if Chairman remained silent after he had written to him, and ignored him, it would involve the issue of Chairman Mao's prestige. Tian Jiaying even said that he would give me disciplinary action. That was the first time I had been criticised since I had arrived at Zhongnanhai. After some time, the disciplinary action was not implemented, so I went to ask Tian Jiaying. He smiled and said, "Criticism is criticism, you have a reason for this, it is justifiable". Then he whispered to me that he had also made the same mistake, and had also been detained and criticised by the Chairman. "If you don't know what you're doing, don't worry about it. Next time, ask us if you don't understand anything, don't make up your own mind." That was the end of the story.

Only afterwards did I learn that Chairman Mao and Zhang Shizhao had a very close and personal relationship, with its origins dating back to around the 1920s. At that time, when Chairman Mao was still a young man, Zhang Shizhao first read Chairman Mao's articles and was astonished by his literary talent, ambition, power and eloquence in discussing the world, saying, "Great, Hunan is going to have an emperor", and personally received Chairman Mao and Cai Hesen<sup>71</sup>. This is what Premier Zhou told me. Zhang Shizhao was a democrat who was firmly opposed to the feudal-imperial system. He did not mean that Chairman Mao was going to be an emperor, but it was just a metaphor to praise Chairman Mao's eloquence and the fact that China's revolution would be an extraordinary new phenomenon in his hands. Later, Zhang Shizhao gave Chairman Mao several tens of thousands of dollars, which he used partly for the students who went to France for work and

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<sup>71</sup> Cai Hesen (1895 –1931) was an early leader of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), and a friend and comrade of Mao Zedong. Cai was born in Shanghai but grew up in Shuangfeng County in Hunan Province of China. He helped Mao organize the Changsha New People's Study Society. In 1919 he went to France on the Work-Study program, and his letters of advocacy were important in convincing Mao of the Bolshevik revolutionary approach. On his return to China, he was an important leader and organizer for the young Communist Party, spent several years in Moscow, and returned to China again in 1931. While organizing revolutionary activity in Hong Kong, he was arrested and given over to Canton authorities, who executed him in August, 1931. Cai Hesen's sister married Li Fuchun.

study, and partly for the establishment and development of the Party's organisation. Chairman Mao praised Zhang Shizhao for his sincerity for democracy was very determined. As the two men had this relationship, they kept in touch with each other. When Zhang Shizhao wrote to Chairman Mao, Chairman Mao wrote back. When I suppressed his letter, I naturally "caused a great deal of trouble".

When it comes to their friendship, there is an incident about the Chairman giving Zhang Shizhao a chicken. It was one day in 1955 when Chairman Mao asked his guard to buy two chickens for Zhang Shizhao after dinner. It was dark, the shops were closed and the vendors had closed their stalls, so the guard had to go and get help to buy the chickens. When Zhang Shizhao received the chicken, he thanked them repeatedly. The story was so strange that people passed it around, but they didn't know the reason for it. When someone asked Tian Jiaying about it, he couldn't figure it out either, but said that it was common for the Chairman to give some gifts to the elderly. In 1967, I asked Kang Sheng about this and he gave me a surprising answer. Kang Sheng did not give me a positive answer, but simply told me to go through the Romance of the Three Kingdoms and read the story of Cao Cao and Qiao Xuan. I followed the diagram and found the allusion. It turns out that Cao Cao was in his twenties, fashionably unpromising and obscure, and once went to see Qiao Xuan, who, however, appreciated him and said, "Now that the world is about to be at war, who else but you can stabilise it?" In Qiao Xuan's eyes, Cao Cao was "the man of destiny". From then on, Cao Cao cited Qiao Xuan as his confidant and he became a friend for years. When Qiao Xuan was dying, he asked Cao Cao to take care of his family and asked him to bring a chicken to his grave when he passed by his hometown in the future, otherwise he would have a stomach ache if "the carriage went three steps past". Cao Cao did as he was told. When Chairman Mao first met Zhang Shizhao, he was also a young man in his twenties, and he probably felt the same way as Cao Cao did when he met Qiao Xuan, when he was able to gain Zhang Shizhao's admiration. By giving Zhang Shizhao a chicken, I presume he was signalling that they had a mutual understanding and appreciation of each other similar to that between Cao Cao and Qiao Xuan. Two chickens have passed on to future generations two great stories that have been told almost two thousand years apart, and Chairman Mao's jokes and humour are of great style and elegance.

The Chairman did not only treat Zhang Shizhao with respect, he also treated many other democrats and celebrities with respect. Some celebrities like Qi Baishi, Ye Gongchuo, Zhang Boju and Chen Hunding would paint a picture, such as a long-lived deer, and present it to Chairman Mao. Chairman Mao knew that paintings cost money, and although they did not paint for him for money, he had to give them something. At that time, Chairman Mao did not have any writing fees yet, so he wanted to buy some gifts with his allowance. When Yang Shangkun found out about it, he said that the people who painted for the Chairman, were actually doing so for the Communist Party, and this money was reimbursed by the General Office from the office expenses, not with the Chairman's allowance, which was also insufficient. What kind of gifts should they buy? The Chairman was very economical and said not to buy any flowers and plants, but to buy ham, one ham for each person, and some sweets, which had to be soft, as they were old, and then to buy some good cakes [the material used the expression "later Yang Shangkun found out", so in the end, did the Chairman use his own allowance first and then switch to office expenses when "Yang Shangkun found out later"? Or did Yang Shangkun know about it from the beginning and not use the chairman's allowance at all?] Who delivered the goods after they were bought? Tian Jiaying said that university students were still children and it was not appropriate to send gifts on behalf of Chairman Mao. At that time, the oldest member of the group was Yu Yonglian, who was in his thirties, chubby and a bit older, but he had ringworm on his neck and did not look good. The rest of them were small, thin and not very good looking. I suggested to Tian Jiaying that Yu Yonglian should put on new clothes and lift the collar up to cover his neck, which would look good. But Tian Jiaying decided to let me go after looking at it for

half a day. Although I was just in my early twenties, I had a darker face and looked almost thirty, so I was quite old. Later, Peng Dachang asked us for two cars (at that time, only directors and deputy directors were eligible for cars). I then followed the list and went door-to-door to deliver all the gifts on behalf of the Chairman. To this day, there are still so many people who say that the Chairman began to hate intellectuals after he was treated badly by Hu Shih when he was a librarian at Peking University, and that he had never valued intellectuals after the founding of the country. So what does it mean that the Chairman had such a solid friendship with these great intellectuals and celebrities?

### **5. Some of my own insights in handling letters from the public for Chairman Mao**

What I have listed above are some of the important things that I have directly experienced in dealing with letters from the masses for Chairman Mao, but in fact other comrades have had different and important experiences, and if they were all put together, it might be a monograph. Even if I had experienced them myself, the above are only some of the things that can be easily categorised, and there are many that are not. For example, a celebratory telegram is, broadly speaking, a kind of letter from the public. At the beginning of the country, the masses were so enthusiastic that they sent telegrams of congratulations and tributes to the Central Government and Chairman Mao on any event or festival, with great enthusiasm but little substance. Those telegrams were so numerous that they sometimes filled the room and annoyed the leaders of the secretary's office. When the country was first opened, paper was very tight in the central office, and we all had to use waste paper and even the margins of old newspapers, but the telegraphic paper was of a different quality and could not be reused. So, we all had a headache too. And it was expensive to send telegrams back then... how much did it cost to send so many telegrams! After the secretary's office relayed the situation to Chairman Mao, he hit the nail on the head: the local leaders must have arranged for the masses to send them or sent them in the name of the masses. He then had the General Office of the Central Government issue a document banning this practice. This was not to discourage the enthusiasm of the masses, but to adapt to local conditions, to be sympathetic to the masses, to love the masses, and to care for the work of our comrades in the secretarial office and not to let us spend our time on unnecessary matters.

There was another kind of letter that seemed very ordinary, but it was not sent directly to the Chairman through the secretary's office, but through the machine room, which no one could read. At that time, when some of the letters approved by the Chairman came to me, I knew that the Chairman had another channel of communication when I saw that the letters were not sent up by our secretary's office. Later, I learnt that when the Chairman visited various places in order to get a fuller picture of the situation, he would often find some people on the spot to write to him directly. They included peasants, primary school teachers, intellectuals, performers, and people from all walks of life. They reflected a wide range of situations, all involving the lives of the masses and issues of pressing concern to them. There was a Yue Opera actress, Hong Xiannu<sup>72</sup>, who was able to write to the Chairman directly. Once she went abroad to perform and learnt that prices there were high and the prices of cigarettes and alcohol had risen along with them, so she wrote to the Chairman to inform him of the situation. The Chairman later asked at a Central Committee meeting why the prices of cigarettes and alcohol had risen. The participants in the meeting were all at a loss as to what to do with the Chairman's question, and none of them knew how the Chairman knew. Such a

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<sup>72</sup> Hong Xiannu (1925- 2013), or "Red Line Girl" was the stage name of a Cantonese Opera star. She made her stage debut in 1939 and continued to perform on stage and in films after Liberation. After the start of the Cultural Revolution, she was locked up in the "bullpen" and lost the opportunity to appear on stage. She was set free in 1970, and in 1971, she served as the deputy director of the Guangdong Provincial Bureau of Culture. In 1973, she starred in the revolutionary opera movie "Shajiang". She continued her cultural work until 2004.

letter was sent to the xx mailbox in Beijing with the words " to xx ". Chairman Mao later explained that once we saw such a letter, no one was allowed to open it but had to give it to Xu Yefu<sup>73</sup>, who would give it to Chairman Mao himself to open and read. Ye Zilong was in charge of the Security Bureau, and the letter that went through the Security Bureau to the Chairman had the highest level of confidentiality. But such a letter was even higher. The people who wrote such letters were later known as the Chairman's "Correspondence Secretaries", and Li Rui<sup>74</sup> was one of them. It was because of Li Rui's good advice on the construction of the Three Gorges of the Yangtze River that the Chairman asked him to be his correspondence secretary. The Chairman used a number of such Correspondence Secretaries, but none of them was really the Chairman's Secretary in the true sense of the word.

I wrote all the annual reports of the secretary's office in 1950, 1951 and 1953. This was because Tian Jiaying saw that my concrete achievements in handling letters from the masses were better, that I wrote with substance and feeling, and that I was also assisting him in the editing of Mao Zedong's Selected Works at that time, so he knew me best and trusted me (I was also elected as a model worker in the xxxx Central and Direct Agencies for regularly reflecting important situations to the Central Government). But by 1954, things had changed. On one occasion, Meng Fanshu, Yang Shangkun's secretary, told me over dinner that the report from the secretary's office should be written to the General Office, which would then forward it to the Chairman. I reported this to Tian Jiaying, who said that this would be difficult, as the Chairman said that the report was to be given to him directly. However, Tian Jiaying was afraid of offending Yang Shangkun, so he said to me, "Then we should not write a written report in the future, but use an oral report to the Chairman".

The practice and experience of the Secretariat in handling letters and visits for Chairman Mao during this period, as well as the importance that Chairman Mao attached to letters and visits from the masses and the relevant instructions, became the basis for the later standardised system of letters and visits for the Party and the State. During my time handling letters from the public for Chairman Mao, I read some of Lenin's teachings on the importance of letters and visits from the public. In Lenin's view, the proletarian party and state organs, to maintain close contact with the people, had to do a good job of dealing with letters and visits from the masses. He demanded that communists should treat letters and visits from the masses as "workers fulfilling their state duties without pay". Lenin himself received many visitors and his reception room was called "the largest reception room in the world". As early as the Central Soviet Union, Chairman Mao wrote "Be Concerned for the Well-being of the Masses, Pay Attention to Methods of Work", suggesting that in order to achieve the central task of the Party, it was necessary to adhere to the mass line, care for the plight of the masses and pay attention to working methods. I had a lot of experience in dealing with letters from the masses for Chairman Mao, and I had a deeper appreciation of Lenin's treatment of the masses'

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<sup>73</sup> Xu Yefu (1916-1974), a native of Anhui, joined the Communist Party of China in April 1927 and joined the Red Army of Chinese Workers and Peasants in April 1930. He served as Mao Zedong's confidential secretary, and as Deputy Director of the Secretariat of the General Office of the CPC Central Committee.

<sup>74</sup> Li Rui (1917–2019) joined the Party in 1937, trekking on foot from his home in Hubei to Yan'an. By 1958, he had become the vice minister of the Ministry of Water Resources, the youngest vice-minister in the People's Republic of China at the time. His vocal opposition to the Three Gorges Dam brought him to the attention of Mao Zedong. Mao, impressed by Li, made Li his personal secretary for industrial affairs. However, Li Rui supported the right-opportunists at the 1959 Lushan Conference, so he was stripped of his party membership and sent to a prison camp, beginning nearly twenty years of political exile. After Mao's death, Li's party membership was restored by the revisionist Deng clique and he regained an influential position in the party. But after only a few years, his support for greater bourgeois liberalism than Deng was prepared to concede, saw him isolated within the Party. He has written five self-serving books on Mao and early Communist Party history.

letters and visits, and in order to commemorate the 85th anniversary of Lenin's birth [the material originally stated the 25th anniversary of Lenin's death, but Lenin died on 21 April 1924, not the 25th anniversary of his death], I wrote a signed article in April 1955 on "How Lenin treated the work of the masses in their letters and visits" and submitted it to the People's Daily, which actually published it on page 3 on 22 April (Lenin's birth date). This was unique among the staff of Zhongnanhai at the time, and everyone was rather surprised to learn about it.

From this period of handling letters from the public for Chairman Mao, I felt that I was connected to him by heart. I don't know if there is such a thing as telepathy, I always believed in materialism. Now I think that the heart has energy too, so maybe there was interaction. After Deng Xiaoping regained power, I was in Qincheng Prison. One day, I suddenly felt that my mother was very ill. I grew up with my mother and had a deep affection for my mother. I had a foreboding that my mother might be very ill and would die. I reported to the Central Committee and asked the Central Committee of the Party to give me permission to meet my mother. They didn't grant permission. At night I dreamed that my mother was dead, and the next day I cried loudly. When I was young, I didn't cry because of difficult things, and I never cried in prison, but I suddenly started crying that day.

When I was released from prison in 1986, I looked at the picture of my mother when she died and it seemed exactly the same as I had dreamed. I was speechless. I had joined the underground at the age of 17 and had been born into a deadly revolution, but my small humanitarian request had been denied! Since then, I've become a bit of a believer in telepathy. I think it might be a kind of fluctuation like a magnetic field, where the waves emanate, and the waves are like a television set, with their own channels, and when two channels have the same frequency they can pick each other up.

My general experience is that Chairman Mao attached great importance to letters from all walks of life, and attached particular importance to letters from workers and peasants reflecting their situation and asking for solutions to their difficulties. I really felt that Chairman Mao was genuinely concerned about the plight of the people, the plight of ordinary people! The reason why I have worshipped Chairman Mao all my life and have not changed even after being imprisoned in Qincheng for 18 years, and still will not change in my old age is because Chairman Mao really cared for the common people. Premier Zhou also cared, but I felt that he was not always as concerned as Chairman Mao. The State Council back then knew more than our secretariats, yet Chairman Mao was informed and solved these problems, all of which happened only after the secretariats reported the problems sent in by the masses. The secretaries of leaders, especially those of the leaders of the Party and the State, are in fact in a very important role. They are not the personal servants of the leaders or leaders, but are the link and bridge between the leaders or leaders and the people. The Chairman had no time or need to read the letters from the people in detail, one by one, as he was so busy. This is why the role and value of the Secretary's Office was so important, and the materials submitted to the Chairman had to reflect the true plight of the people and express their true voice in a timely and accurate manner.

(There are many names and many events in this chapter, and only a few of them are raised above)

#### **Notes:**

Note 1: Introduction to Huang Yanpei and his letter to the Chairman on solving the difficulties of

peasants.

Note 2: Introduction to Luo Rongrong

Note 3: Introduction to Huang Jing

Note 4: Cao Cao borrows Wang Wei's head

Note 5: The March 18 massacre

## Chapter 5: First experience of the thrilling high-level struggle within the party and the military

1. About the "Gao and Rao Anti-Party Group" Case
2. Peng Dehuai and other veteran marshals' criticism of the great general Su Yu
3. How the two high-level struggles have touched my thinking

### 1. About the "Gao and Rao Anti-Party Group" Case

One of Chairman Mao's ideas on governance was very firm, and that was centralised power. He favoured the county system of Qin Shihuang<sup>75</sup> and disapproved of the system of divided feudalism. In 1951, when Chairman Mao responded to the demand of the peasants to co-operate, and advocated rural co-operatives, some central bureaus openly issued documents opposing co-operatives. Such documents did not need to be approved by the central government, they just needed to be filed with the central government. These documents, in the eyes of the people below, were tantamount to central government documents, and they all had to be implemented. This situation, I know, was very offensive to the Chairman. Another observation I made was that Chairman Mao was not very happy with some of the leaders of the Central Government at that time, including some of the practices of Liu Shaoqi and Zhou Enlai. The Central People's Government at that time was mainly composed of cadres of the North China People's Government established in Shijiazhuang in 1948. At the beginning of the founding of the country, when they were engaged in planning, they were inexperienced and planned things poorly, and a lot of problems arose and conflicts often arose. Against such a background of multiple and complex situations, Chairman Mao took a new strategic step by transferring to Beijing in 1952 the five Secretaries of the Central Bureau, namely Gao Gang of the Northeast Bureau, Rao Shushi of the East China Bureau, Deng Zichuan of the Central-South Bureau, Deng Xiaoping of the Southwest Bureau and Xi Zhongxun of the Northwest Bureau, to restructure and establish some of the central and state organs and strengthen the central unified leadership. This is what was later referred to as the "Five Horses Enter Beijing".

Gao Gang was a capable man, and the Northeast under his rule supported the nation in 1949 and 1950, and later supported the resistance to the US and the aid of North Korea. Gao Gang made the economy of the Northeast work quite well, because of its proximity to the Soviet Union, and learned a lot from the Soviet Union, and did a good job in planning. Therefore, when the five horses entered the capital, the Chairman transferred Gao Gang to the central government to take charge of planning, and later it was said that "the five horses entered the capital and one horse took the lead". Gao Gang had a conflict with Liu Shaoqi (what exactly was the conflict? How did it come about? This is a historical point worth discovering by researchers), and the Chairman's transfer of Gao Gang to Beijing did have the additional intention of allowing Gao Gang to balance Liu Shaoqi politically.

At that time, the chairman had been dissatisfied with Liu Shaoqi's authoritarian use of power for a long time, and I heard Jiang Qing say during the Cultural Revolution that its origin lay in the legacy of

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<sup>75</sup> Qin Shi Huang (259 BC – 210 BC) was the founder of the Qin dynasty, and first emperor of a unified China. During his reign, his generals greatly expanded the size of the Chinese state as he enacted major economic and political reforms aimed at the standardization of the diverse practices of the earlier Chinese states. His public works projects included the unification of diverse state walls into a single Great Wall of China and a massive new national road system, as well as the city- mausoleum guarded by the life-sized Terracotta Army near Xi'an.

the Yan'an division. In 1947, when Hu Zongnan attacked Yan'an with a strong military force, the Chairman thought, "If you save people and lose land, you will save people and land, but if you lose people and land, you will lose people and land". He used this reasoning to persuade the central authorities to evacuate Yan'an, while advocating the division of troops, holding on to northern Shaanxi and fighting through Xi'an. Liu Shaoqi was supposed to hold on to northern Shaanxi, but Liu Shaoqi did not know how to fight, so the Chairman held on to northern Shaanxi himself, leaving Liu Shaoqi to represent the Central Committee, leaving Zhu De in command of the army and leading the Central Committee to the relatively safer north of China, where he had Su Yu and Peng Dehuai to defend him on each side. In the words of Kang Lao (Kang Sheng), Chairman Mao "had Liu Bang's hardships" [Note 1]. The Chairman led the Central Committee to fight in northern Shaanxi, with a small number of men against Hu Zongnan's 200,000-strong army, and was so busy that he told Liu Shaoqi not to report on general matters and to ask for instructions only on particularly important matters. Liu Shaoqi left the chairman and exercised independent command of the Party centre, developing the habit of thinking that he is the centre. During the agrarian reform in North China in the same year, Liu Shaoqi issued instructions to the whole country to set fire to villages and burn everything, to move stones<sup>76</sup> and cadres, and to knock down a large number of people. These things went too far to the left, scaring the chickens into flying away and causing the dogs to jump around everywhere. It angered the people very much.

At that time, even Kang Lao was influenced to listen to Liu Shaoqi and followed Liu Shaoqi's baton to engage in leftist stuff in Jinsui. After the Chairman entered Shanxi in 1948, he discovered the problem and wanted to correct it, but Liu Shaoqi had already formed the habit of making decisions and issuing documents on his own without consulting the Chairman, and when the Chairman returned, he did not want the Chairman to interfere anymore. It was in the midst of war, and for the sake of party unity and national victory, the Chairman was not in a position to criticise Liu Shaoqi too much, but only implicitly criticised Yang Shangkun, who had followed Liu Shaoqi closely, expecting Yang Shangkun to remind Liu Shaoqi to pay attention to it. Yang Shangkun did remind Liu Shaoqi, and Liu Shaoqi nodded his head, but the documents were still issued as usual. The situation became more serious later on, when Liu Shaoqi made his own decisions on important matters within the party and the organisation and promoted a person, and had Yang Shangkun issue a document to the whole country. This situation continued until after the liberation. That is to say, until the founding of New China, the Chairman never really took back the organisational and personnel power of the Central Committee. In this way the Chairman and Liu Shaoqi were at odds with each other over their work, and there were already overtones of line, for example, the question of land reform, and the question of co-operatives, which was of a line nature. On such line issues, Gao Gang was supportive of Chairman Mao and Gao Gang's position in the Party at the time was so high that Chairman Mao transferred him to Beijing to balance Liu Shaoqi.

The Premier also had the problem of not reporting and not asking for instructions. For example, as mentioned in the previous chapter, the situation of workers and peasants living in hardship in many places at the beginning of the founding of the country was very serious, and the Premier knew more than anyone else, but he did not report the problem to the Chairman in time and ask him for instructions on how to solve it, but only after the Secretariat had relayed the situation to the Chairman and at the urging of the Chairman, a meeting of the Central Committee was held to discuss the solution. The Chairman also criticised the Premier on some matters, but the Chairman's dissatisfaction with the Premier was different in nature to that of his dissatisfaction with Liu Shaoqi. For example, the Premier was in charge of finance and economics, and there were many problems in finance and economics, prices went up, tickets were issued in excess, and so on. The Premier said, "It is not that we do not consult the Chairman, it is that if we consult the Chairman, we cannot do

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<sup>76</sup> During the land reform, Liu Shaoqi engaged in "moving stones", or "kicking away the old cadres", most of whom were of poor and lower middle peasant class status.

our work; if we have to report on one issue for half a day, we have to report on everything, and then we have to report all day long, so we cannot do anything else, we can only make a decision on the spot." The Premier said this to us because he wanted to gain our understanding and even sympathy. He said a lot, and I understood the Premier, because economic issues are very specific and not easy to explain clearly, and it is not possible to talk about them in just one or two sentences, you have to talk about the causes and consequences. For example, if you want to import something, it is very complicated - where to import it from, using foreign exchange, and so on. It is like a company that has to report on everything first, and when the report is finished, the matter has been delayed. Of course, there are some issues on which the Premier could not get the Chairman's views and evaded them. For example, the new taxation system was introduced, and the taxation of capitalists was reduced while the taxation of state-owned enterprises was increased. This provision did not work with the Chairman, who thought that it should at least be equal, with two exemptions and three halves<sup>77</sup>. The Chairman criticised the Premier for taking care of small matters, but not such big ones. Many people in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the army spoke for the Premier, saying that it was not the Premier's responsibility. Then it was traced to Bo Yibo<sup>78</sup>, and the Bo Yibo error occurred [Note 2].

Gao Gang did not seem to respect the Premier very much. When I entered Zhongnanhai, there were two balls in Zhongnanhai at that time, one at the Chairman's place and the other at the Premier's separate ball in Ziguangge. As soon as Gao Gang arrived, he held a ball in his own home, turning it into three balls in the Central Committee. Those dances were formal, standardised social dances. I was young and used to go to them. I heard Gao Gang's secretary say that Gao Gang told the Premier to go to his place for the dances, directing him as if he were a subordinate. Of course, this was only a slight indication and perhaps doesn't tell us much. Regarding the relationship between Gao Gang and the Premier, Li Liqun, Gao Gang's wife, had a recollection, some of which could be used for reference. Li Liqun said that Gao Gang had never been anti-Premier, but had spoken well of him in front of Chairman Mao. Since Li Liqun said this, it shows that there was an element of incongruity in the relationship between Gao Gang and the Premier at that time, for whatever reason. The Economic Affairs Commission chaired by Gao Gang and the Council of State chaired by the Premier were parallel, Gao Gang was still the first vice-chairman at that time, and Song Qingling and Li Jishen<sup>79</sup>, the vice-chairmen of the democrats, held largely ceremonial positions and could not really

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<sup>77</sup> The policy of "two exemptions and three halves" means that enterprises could enjoy corporate income tax exemption for two years and then pay tax at half the rate for the following three years.

<sup>78</sup> Bo Yibo (1908 –2007) joined the Chinese Communist Party when he was 17. He organised Communist guerrilla movements in northern China from a headquarters in Tianjin in 1928, but he was arrested and imprisoned by Kuomintang police in 1931. In 1936, with the tacit support of the Communist Party, Bo signed an anti-communist confession to secure his release. After his release Bo returned to Shanxi, rejoined the communists, and fought both the Kuomintang and the Japanese Empire in northern China until the Communists completed their unification of mainland China in 1949. During Bo's career he held successive posts as China's inaugural Minister of Finance, a member of the Party's Politburo, Vice-Premier, chairman of State Economic Commission, and vice-chairman of the party's Central Advisory Commission. Bo was purged in 1966, but he was brought back to power by Deng Xiaoping in the late 1970s, after Mao's death. Bo was one of a select group of powerful veterans centred on Deng who were informally known as the "Eight Immortals" for their political longevity and for the vast influence they commanded during the 1980s and 1990s. After returning to power Bo supported following the capitalist road. His son, Bo Xilai, rose leadership in Chongqing where he promoted a "red song" movement and certain leftist policies. However, he was implicated in a scandal and jailed by Xi Jinping. The rest of Bo Yibo's children obtained foreign residency. His daughter became an American citizen and resides in the U.S.

<sup>79</sup> Li Jishen (1885-1959) was Vice President of Whampoa Military Academy and a former senior general of the Kuomintang. He was the main founder and one of the leaders of the Revolutionary Committee of the Chinese Kuomintang. In 1927, he participated in Chiang Kai-shek's anti-communist activities. In 1933, he organized the People's Revolutionary Government of the Republic of China against Chiang Kai-shek in Fujian with Cai Tingkai

make decisions, and the Premier had to report to Gao Gang according to the working procedures. Gao Gang had problems and was criticised by the Central Committee at the Fourth Plenary Session of the Seventh Central Committee, and immediately afterwards there was a "Symposium on Gao Gang" (neither of which was attended by the Chairman).

This symposium was hosted by Premier Zhou, at which Chen Yun and a large group of them exposed Gao Gang for this and that, and Gao Gang attempted to rebut them, but Premier Zhou would not allow him to do so. This also proves that Gao Gang's previous relationship with the Premier was not cordial.

Gao Gang made a clear error of judgment about the Chairman's intention of transferring him to Beijing. He was used to being the king of the Northeast and went to the Central Committee thinking that the Chairman liked him, but in fact the Chairman just relied on him, not like he liked Lin Biao or Su Yu [Note 3]. He was very capable in his work, but he was rotten in his material and moral life. He had too many messy affairs in the Northeast, and he even screwed a Scandinavian woman, without knowing any details about her, whether she was a spy of some country. The Chairman has always abhorred corruption, and those things about him the Chairman would not have been unaware of at all, and would not have liked him if he had known. Liu Shaoqi did not want to engage in co-operatives, he wanted to engage in a period of new democracy and "establish a new democratic social order" [Note 4] as well as issuing documents indiscriminately, all of which the Chairman was indeed dissatisfied with as well. At the end of 1953, the Chairman took people to the south to work on the constitution, so that everyone could think about it and make suggestions to see how the daily work of the central government should be arranged. At this time, Gao Gang misunderstood the Chairman's meaning, and he discussed with Chen Yun<sup>80</sup> and Deng Xiaoping and the others privately about having more vice-chairmen and taking turns to be on duty, first you and then me. This would be tantamount to the truth taking a step towards falsehood. Gang formation and sectarianism were even more serious mistakes than Liu Shaoqi's opposition to co-operative efforts at the time, and the Chairman certainly could not let them go unchecked. No matter who was involved in a sect, the Chairman did not hesitate to crack down on it. This inevitably gave some people the opportunity to take advantage of it. Liu Shaoqi got rid of Gao Gang, obviously taking advantage of the President's unrelenting crackdown on sectarianism. When Chen Yun and Deng Xiaoping went to the President to denounce him, Liu Shaoqi had the opportunity to make a name for himself, saying that Gao Gang was splitting the Party and also collaborating with foreign countries. In this way, the President also had to take Gao Gang down [Note 5]. Gao Gang committed suicide at that time. If he had not committed suicide, perhaps many things would have been clarified quickly, such as the circumstances under which the words "you first, then me" were uttered. Who actually said it? What does it mean? Once the questions are clarified, it may not be a big deal.

Liu Shaoqi's people especially liked to spread around those messy things about Gao Gang's life everywhere, talking about Gao Gang like he was the devil. There were things about Gao Gang that could not be said to have been created out of nothing. But those of Liu Shaoqi were exaggerated too

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and others of the 19th Route Army. When the War of Resistance Against Japan broke out in 1937, he actively responded to the call of the Communist Party of China to resist Japan and opposed the anti-communist policy of the Kuomintang government. After Liberation, he served as Vice Chairman of the Central People's Government of the People's Republic of China, Vice Chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress, and Vice Chairman of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference.

<sup>80</sup> Chen Yun (1905 –1995) worked underground as a union organizer in the late 1920s, participated in the Long March, and served on the Central Committee from 1931 to 1987. He was one of the most influential leaders of the People's Republic of China during the 1980s and 1990s and one of the major architects and important policy makers for the capitalist Reform and Opening up era, alongside Deng Xiaoping.

much in their dissemination. He Zai in our secretary's office went to attend the Central Committee meeting to observe, and came back and told us a lot about Gao Gang's life style problems. Later Liu Shaoqi asked He Zai to write an editorial on the Gao Gang issue, but He Zai didn't have a lot of stuff and couldn't write an editorial, so he asked me to help him. I didn't know the high-level struggle was so complicated, so I helped him. I didn't sleep for several nights, and came up with a topic called "Maintain Party Unity." When I was in junior high school, I had read books such as "Problems of Leninism" written by Stalin, so I wrote many parts of the editorial based on the above language with slight changes. In order to mobilise me to help him write the editorial, He Zai told me a lot more about Gao Gang.

The Gao Gang incident did have a Soviet element. Gao Gang was a frequent supplier of intelligence to the Soviet Union. At a critical moment, the Soviet Union betrayed Gao Gang, stepped on him and gave his material to the Chairman. This seems to be a gift to the Chairman. Gao Gang said that he wanted to establish a federal republic and that if the United States was going to fight over it, so what. That was actually the bottom line. Some people said that he had mentioned it to the Soviet Union and that it would be a big problem if he had mentioned it to the Soviet Union. I think it is reasonable to say that Gao Gang was "in touch with foreign countries" from the viewpoint of party policy, because he was in touch with foreign countries. Only this foreign country was not an imperialist country, but a socialist one, so again there is a historical analysis to be made. The Communist International had just been dissolved and some of its customary practices could not be changed at once. Moreover, as Gao Gang had been in charge of the Northeast for a long time and was a neighbour of the Soviet Union, it was inevitable that he would inform the Soviet Union of certain situations in order to improve relations with it and obtain support. However, it is impossible to say that Gao Gang sold out his country, and he stopped informing the Soviet Union immediately after Chairman Mao's criticism.

Liu Shaoqi and Wang Ming were both pro-Soviet at the time. Was it a conspiracy by Liu Shaoqi's faction to get the Soviet Union to support Liu Shaoqi by stepping on Gao Gang's toes? It is hard to say. But there is no doubt that the "Moscow faction" (the "international faction") played a role. During the war years, Wang Ming was the leader of the "Moscow faction" and was the only one to follow Stalin's lead. Liu Shaoqi, Zhou Enlai and Zhang Wentian<sup>81</sup> were in fact all members of the "Moscow faction". When Wang Ming was pursuing a left-leaning line, Zhou Enlai and Zhang Wentian were strong supporters of Wang Ming. After the Yan'an Rectification, however, Wang Ming's line fell out of favour and Wang Ming and his "Moscow faction" were divided, with Liu Shaoqi becoming a supporter of Chairman Mao, Zhou Enlai coming under criticism, and Guan Xiangying<sup>82</sup> and Ren Bishi

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<sup>81</sup> Zhang Wentian (1900–1976), joined the Chinese Communist Party in 1925 and was sent to study at Sun Yat-sen University in Moscow, from 1926 to 1930. He was a member of the group known as the 28 Bolsheviks, but switched to supporting Mao Zedong during the Long March. He was General Secretary of the Communist Party of China from 1935 to 1943, when the post was abolished. He remained a member of the Politburo, but ranked 12th of 13 in the 7th Politburo and reduced to Alternate Member in the 8th Politburo. He was First Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China from December 1954 to November 1960. At the Lushan Conference in 1959 he supported Peng Dehuai and lost power along with Peng. During the Cultural Revolution he was attacked as an ally of Peng and Liu Shaoqi; he was rehabilitated by Deng Xiaoping after Mao's death.

<sup>82</sup> Guan Xiangying (1902–1946), was an early military leader of the Chinese Communist Party. He joined the Chinese Socialist Youth League in 1924 and joined the Communist Party of China the following year. He was elected as a member of the Central Committee at the Sixth National Congress of the Communist Party of China and became the Secretary of the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Youth League after the Congress. In 1932, he went to the revolutionary base area of Xiang-Exi and became the Chairman of the Xiang-Exi Military Committee and the Political Committee Member of the Third Red Army. In 1937, he became the political member of the 120th Division of the Eighth Route Army and worked with He Long to open up the

turning to Chairman Mao. But Zhou Enlai and Wang Ming had such deep historical ties, how could they have broken up completely? After the Liberation, they were still very close, and Wang Ming was still very powerful in the Party after the Liberation, and many of the "twenty-eight and a half" Bolsheviks who were still in the Party were still supporters of Wang Ming. Wang Ming supported Liu Shaoqi at that time, and Zhou Enlai followed him. It was as if the "Moscow faction" had regrouped again, except that the core of Wang Ming had become the core of Liu Shaoqi now. If Gao Gang was really at odds with the Premier, as rumoured after the incident, and wanted to bring him down, and the Soviet Union betrayed Gao Gang and stomped on him, the Chairman would not be able to protect him even if he wanted to. I am afraid that demoting him and making him a local party secretary was the best the Chairman could do at that time. If Gao Gang had not committed suicide, he would have become a secretary of a local committee and could have made a comeback, but he committed suicide and there was no use in saying anything. Therefore, the Chairman was very sorry and angry about his suicide. However, the Chairman took good care of his widow, Li Liqun, and her children. On the contrary, Premier Zhou was a bit mean to Li Liqun and her children. This also shows that the Chairman and the Premier were very different in their treatment of their erring comrades.

Rao Shushi's<sup>83</sup> problem was not the same as Gao Gang's. Rao Shushi's case was a complete injustice. Even Gao Gang said that it was a big injustice to get Rao Shushi in. Rao Shushi was transferred to the Central Committee to be the Minister of Organization. The original head of the Organization Department was Li Fuchun. After Li Fuchun was transferred to the State Council, it was Vice Minister An Ziwen<sup>84</sup> who presided over the Organization Department. Why did the Chairman not let An Ziwen take over directly as the Minister of Organization? As I said earlier, the problem of Liu Shaoqi and Yang Shangkun, who issued documents in the name of the Central Committee, was not curbed by Chairman Mao's euphemistic criticism, and the violation of organisational principles continued until after Liberation. Later, because of an important document, the Chairman got angry and said that in future important documents could not be issued in the name of the CPC Central Committee without his consent. "I am the chairman of the party and you are issuing articles without my consent." When the words came to this level, it showed that the Chairman could not stand it anymore. This incident was published by Hua Guofeng in 1977 in the fifth volume of Mao Zedong's Selected Works, in which

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Jinsui base. The long and arduous revolutionary struggle made him sick from overwork, and he went to Yan'an to recuperate from the serious illness in 1941. On July 21, 1946, Guan Xiangying died of illness in Yan'an. In 2009, Guan Xiangying was named by the Central Propaganda Department, the Central Organization Department and other 11 departments as one of the "100 heroic and exemplary figures who made outstanding contributions to the founding of New China".

<sup>83</sup> Rao Shushi (1903—1975) joined the Party on 1925. Between 1930 and 1931, Rao was put in jail by Guomindang for more than a year. After that he was released and transferred to Shanghai to work with labor unions. He also studied in the Soviet Union and Travelled to France and the US to do work with overseas Chinese communities. After the establishment of People's Republic of China in 1949, Rao held the position of Chairman of Military and Political Committee of East China besides General Secretary of East China Bureau of CPC. In 1953 Rao was transferred to Beijing and got promotion as Minister of Organization Department of CPC, but was purged together with Gao Gang in 1954. He was jailed in 1955 but released ten years later by Mao who sent him to work on a farm until his death in 1975.

<sup>84</sup> An Ziwen (1909—1980), joined the Chinese Communist Youth League, and in 1927 was inducted into the Communist Party of China. He participated in the Second Sino-Japanese War and the Chinese Civil War. In 1949, An was appointed as head of the Personnel Ministry, and was elected as a CPPCC Standing Committee member. He served as vice minister of the Central Organization Department, and was appointed as the Central Discipline Inspection Commission and deputy secretary. In 1956, at the Eighth CPC National Congress, he was elected as head of the CPC Central Organization Department. In 1966, at the beginning of the Cultural Revolution, he was attacked as one of the 61 Renegades and expelled from his posts. In 1978 under Deng Xiaoping, he was rehabilitated and appointed as vice president of the Central Party School, then latter opted to the Central Committee. On 25 June 1980, he died in Beijing.

the article " Liu Shaoqi and Yang Shangkun criticised for breach of discipline in issuing documents in the name of the central committee without authorisation " is about this incident, which reads as follows:

LIU SHAOQI AND YANG SHANGKUN CRITICISED FOR BREACH OF DISCIPLINE IN ISSUING DOCUMENTS IN THE NAME OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE WITHOUT AUTHORISATION  
May 19, 1953

[Comrade Mao Tsetung's written criticisms of Liu Shao-chi and Yang Shang-kun.]

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From now on, all documents and telegrams sent out in the name of the Central Committee can be dispatched only after I have gone over them, otherwise they are invalid. Please take note.

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(1) Please assume responsibility for checking on the telegrams and documents dispatched in the name of the Central Committee or the Military Commission in the period from August 1 last year (those issued before August 1 have been checked) to May 5 this year to see if there are any which I have not gone over and if so how many (not counting those issued during my absence on tours of inspection or on sick leave), and let me know the results.

(2) On several occasions resolutions adopted at meetings called by the Central Committee, which I had not gone over, were issued without authorisation. This is a mistake and a breach of discipline.

An Ziwen, who was also Liu Shaoqi's old subordinate and beloved general, behaved just like Yang Shangkun during the period when he was presiding over the Organisation Department in his capacity as Vice Minister. Under Liu Shaoqi's instructions, he did not consult the Chairman on many important matters, and even appointed cadres at the provincial level without consulting Chairman Mao. An Ziwen made many other mistakes at that time, such as advocating exploitation and openly supporting the hiring of workers by Party members, saying that if Party members did not take the lead in hiring workers, the masses would not dare to hire workers and production would not develop; he also said that the Communist Party was two-thirds proletarian and semi-proletarian, and our Party should be proletarian and semi-proletarian ..... So, the Chairman did not let him take over the position of Minister of Organisation, and it was transferred to Rao Shushi to take over.

Rao Shushi was a very capable person. He had studied in the Soviet Union, met Stalin, and was one of the "Moscow faction" of the "twenty-eight and a half" Bolsheviks, but later rebelled from Wang Ming's camp. When Rao Shushi became Minister of Organisation, he learned that An Ziwen had drawn up his own list of Politburo members for the 8th Congress - probably at the behest of Liu Shaoqi, without whose approval An Ziwen would not have dared to do so. In fact, Liu Shaoqi had always wanted to intervene in the army, but no one in the army listened to him, so he could not intervene, so he arranged his own people in the Party through the Organisation Department under An Ziwen's control. At that time, there were rumours that the party, political and financial powers were not in the hands of the Chairman: party power was with An Ziwen, political power was with Peng Zhen, and financial power was with Bo Yibo. These were all Liu Shaoqi's people. So the Organisation Department was an important force for Liu Shaoqi at that time. To draw up a list of Politburo members privately was a big deal, a minor organisational (sectarian) activity within the Party. Rao Shushi then pursued the matter and of course it was traced back to Liu Shaoqi, but Liu Shaoqi did not admit it, so An Ziwen suffered on his behalf and was criticised alone. Liu Shaoqi and

Rao Shushi were already at odds during the New Fourth Army period, and once this incident came out, the conflict between them probably deepened. Rao Shushi and Gao Gang had no working relationship before liberation, and even after liberation when they both went to Beijing, there was no working crossover. Liu Shaoqi tied Rao Shushi and Gao Gang together, but in reality it was only because Rao Shushi had exposed An Ziwen's private Politburo list, so that An Ziwen suffered criticism on Liu Shaoqi's behalf. Since An Ziwen was one of Liu Shaoqi's men, to oppose An Ziwen was to oppose Liu Shaoqi. If Gao Gang's opposition to Liu Shaoqi was splitting the party, then Rao Shushi's opposition to An Ziwen was also splitting the party. It was such a logic that exposed Liu Shaoqi's sectarian thinking. Therefore, Liu Shaoqi did not show any mercy to Gao Gang or Rao Shushi.

When Rao Shushi did not fall, it was fine to criticize An Ziwen. When Rao Shushi fell and said that he had criticized An Ziwen for being wrong, An Ziwen steadily sat in the Organisation Department, turning from vice minister to minister, with even higher authority. In other words, Liu Shaoqi's power in the Party was strengthened by the fall of Rao Shushi. The case of Gao and Rao was, in my opinion, Liu Shaoqi's doing. Gao Gang was no longer good, but he was right on the issue of co-operatives and on how to treat the rich peasants. Liu Shaoqi first opposed the establishment of agricultural co-operatives, but later he thought that the transition to socialism through co-operatives was premature and advocated a period of capitalism, that rich peasants could join the Party and hire workers, and that a "new democratic order" should be established. On these issues, Gao Gang and Liu Shaoqi had obvious differences, and the Chairman supported Gao Gang and opposed Liu Shaoqi. At a meeting of the Politburo in June 1953, the Chairman openly criticised Liu Shaoqi without naming him, saying that his idea of "establishing a new democratic order" was an obstacle to the development of the socialist cause and that the expression "moving from new democracy towards socialism" was inappropriate. "Towards" meant that he was always moving, but had not reached or did not want to reach it (these criticisms were also made in the fifth volume of Mao Zedong's Selected Works, published in 1977, in the article "Refute the Right Deviationist Views That Depart from the General Line", but they were removed from the later editions of Chairman Mao's texts since the founding of the state). Under such circumstances, and with Chairman Mao's support for Gao Gang, Liu Shaoqi could not hold on to power unless he got rid of Gao Gang. (Chairman Mao's criticism of Liu Shaoqi's right-leaning ideology was further reflected in the book "The Socialist Climax of Chinese Agriculture", which Chairman Mao himself edited after the Gao Gang affair. This book was actually a criticism of Liu Shaoqi. The Chairman also said at a meeting of the Central Committee that if socialism did not occupy the rural positions, capitalism would certainly do so; that running co-operatives was not only a direction, but also the task at hand. This was in fact directed at a group of people, including Liu Shaoqi himself. (And in 1955 the Chairman's reference to "women with bound feet" was ostensibly a criticism of Deng Zihui<sup>85</sup>, but actually a criticism of Liu Shaoqi).

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<sup>85</sup> Deng Zihui (1896-1972), was one of the main founders and leaders of the Minxi Revolutionary Base and the Soviet Area. After Liberation, he served as Minister of the Rural Work Department of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China, Vice Premier of the State Council, and Vice Chairman of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference. In April 1955, Mao Zedong advocated doubling the original 650,000 rural cooperatives to 1.3 million; Deng Zihui advocated keeping to the original plan, that is, doubling the original 650,000 cooperatives to 1 million. For this reason, Mao Zedong had several meetings with Deng Zihui to discuss this issue. Deng Zihui insisted on his opinion, and Mao Zedong suggested that the central government convene a meeting to resolve it. At the subsequent meeting of the party committee secretaries of the provinces, municipalities, and autonomous regions, Mao Zedong made a report on the "On the Cooperative Transformation of Agriculture" (See Selected Works Vol 5) and pointed out that walking around like a "small-footed woman" made a "right-leaning" error. In October 1955, at the enlarged Sixth Plenary Session of the Seventh Central Committee of the Communist Party of China, Deng Zihui put forward the opinion that "the development of agricultural co-operation should not be too fast, and the requirements should not be too hasty." He was regarded as "right opportunism" and was criticised.

The Chairman believed Liu Shaoqi and the others and thought that Gao Gang and Rao Shushi were really together, so he acted as the "Party's Zhong Kui<sup>86</sup>" and let Liu Shaoqi use him to fight Gao Gang and Rao Shushi. At that time, many people in the Party did not believe that Rao Shushi and Gao Gang were together. Therefore, Chairman Mao even personally intervened in a report at the 1955 Party National Congress to persuade the Party delegates to accept the claim that Rao Shushi was with Gao Gang against the Party. Gao Gang and Rao Shushi were both screwed over by Liu Shaoqi, who was very good at this, so don't think he was a fool. When the Chairman transferred Deng Xiaoping to Beijing, the original intention was also to use him to divide Liu Shaoqi's power base, but Deng Xiaoping and Liu Shaoqi got together and Deng Xiaoping also played a very bad role in the Gao-Rao incident. Looking back at history, Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping were both direct beneficiaries of the Gao-Rao affair, while Chairman Mao was the biggest victim.

## 2. Peng Dehuai and other veteran marshals' criticism of the great general Su Yu

In 1955, Peng Dehuai<sup>87</sup> convened a meeting in the west wing of Zhongnanhai to fight against Su Yu<sup>88</sup>, scolding him with nasty and foul language. It was summer and the windows of the office were open. The distance between my office and the meeting place in the West Building was the width of the road with two cars running parallel plus the pavement, which added up to more than ten meters, and the sound was transmitted diagonally for another few dozen meters. I inquired and knew that the military commission was in session, so I intentionally passed by there during the break to have a look and found that the Chairman was not there, several old marshals were, and Deng Xiaoping was also in attendance. The old marshal was so qualified that he sat in front and leaned against the table, where Peng Dehuai was slapping the table. It later transpired that on that occasion it was a criticism of Liu Bocheng's<sup>89</sup> military dogmatism. Liu Bocheng was the director of the Military Academy and Su

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<sup>86</sup> Zhong Kui, a Taoist god, specialises in fighting ghosts and exorcising evil spirits. The Chinese folk often hanged pictures of Zhongkui to ward off evil spirits and eliminate disasters.

<sup>87</sup> Peng Dehuai (1898 –1974) was born into a poor peasant family, and received several years of primary education before his family's poverty forced him to suspend his education at the age of ten, and to work for several years as a manual laborer. When he was sixteen, Peng became a professional soldier. Over the next ten years Peng served in the armies of several Hunan-based warlord armies, raising himself from the rank of private second class to major. In 1926 Peng's forces joined the Guomindang, and Peng was first introduced to communism. Peng participated in the Northern Expedition, and supported Wang Jingwei's attempt to form a left-leaning Guomindang government based in Wuhan. After Wang was defeated, Peng briefly rejoined Chiang Kai-shek's forces before joining the Communist Party of China, allying himself with Mao Zedong and Zhu De. Peng led the Chinese Peoples' Volunteers in the war against US imperialism in Korea, and served as China's Defense Minister from 1954 to 1959. However, he criticised Mao's Great Leap Forward policies that year at the Lushan Conference and was denounced as the leader of an anti-Party clique. Although Mao gave him some responsibilities in the South-west after 1965, he was struggled against during the Cultural Revolution and died in 1974. The autobiographical notes he wrote during the struggle sessions of the Cultural Revolution were published posthumously as "Memoirs of a Chinese Marshall" and were released by the Foreign Languages Press, Beijing, in English in 1984.

<sup>88</sup> Su Yu (1907 –1984) was considered by Mao Zedong to be among the best commanders of the PLA. In 1926, he joined the Communist Youth League of China, and in 1927 joined the Communist Party of China. He took part of the Northern Expedition and later the Nanchang Uprising. He fought in the Second Sino-Japanese War and in the Chinese Civil War. He commanded the East China Field Army during the Chinese Civil War. One of his most notable accomplishments was the capture of Shanghai. He was the major commander during the Huaihai Campaign (November 1948 to January 1949). In his later years, he published *The Memoirs of Su Yu*.

<sup>89</sup> Liu Bocheng (1892 – 1986) Liu joined the Boy Scouts in 1911 in support of the Revolution led by Sun Yatsen. In the following year, he enrolled in the Chongqing Military Academy and later joined the army. In 1914, he joined Sun Yat-sen's party and gained extensive military experience. As a Guomindang commander, he defeated a force commanded by Zhu De, who would later become one of his closest comrades in the Red Army. In May 1926, Liu joined the CPC and was appointed military commissioner of Chongqing. He studied at

Yu had a part-time job at this academy and was implicated. The reason for Peng Dehuai's criticism of Su Yu was that he had given orders to mobilize several troops to prepare for the liberation of Mazu<sup>90</sup>. In fact, this was something that Su Yu had spoken to Chairman Mao about and he agreed, only that it had not been documented. Peng Dehuai and his men seized on this and said that giving an order to mobilize troops without Chairman Mao's signature and without reporting to the Vice Chairman of the Military Commission and the Minister of National Defense was ambitious, extremely individualistic and a bid to seize power.

Su Yu was a remarkable man. The Battle of Huangqiao was commanded by Su Yu, who later won seven battles and seven victories, which was remarkable. Three of the five main forces of the Guomindang were there to deal with Su Yu, who won the battle as usual. At that time, almost everyone did not do well; Nie Rongzhen<sup>91</sup> lost Zhangjiakou, Li Xiannian<sup>92</sup> made a breakthrough in the Central Plains, and Lin Biao was defeated in Siping in the Northeast. Su Yu was the only one who won the battle, and he did so on the doorstep of the Guomindang. Chen Yi<sup>93</sup> also commanded a battle, the Battle of Lianshui, which ended in defeat, and Chen Yi later stopped commanding. I was in Shanghai at the time and the KMT newspapers publicised Su Yu every day. After he defeated Chen Yi, Chiang Kai-shek bragged that the Communists were nothing, and that he could have wiped them out with this unit. This "number one hero" was still beaten by Su Yu! His troops were equipped with American-style equipment, and they were well trained and not afraid of death. The PLA also lost a lot of men in the battle against the 74th Nationalist Division. Lin Biao later said that he did not dare

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the Frunze Academy in the Soviet Union and in 1930 was appointed commissioner of the Central Military Committee of the CPC. After Liberation, he attained the rank of Field Marshall. Blinded in one eye early in his military career, his health declined during the Cultural Revolution, during which he was criticised but not overthrown. After Mao's death he supported Deng's restoration of capitalism.

<sup>90</sup> The Mazu (Matsu) Islands are located in the eastern sea area of Lianjiang County, Fuzhou City, Fujian Province. They are governed from Taiwan and are the closest part of Taiwanese territory to the PRC.

<sup>91</sup> Nie Rongzhen (1899–1992) was the well-educated son of a wealthy family. In his 20s, Nie applied to study in Belgium, where he met Zhou Enlai. He joined the Communist Party of China in 1923. In the Chinese Civil War he commanded the Northern China Military Region, and with his deputy Xu Xiangqian, his force defeated Fu Zuoyi's forces in Tianjin near Beijing. During the Korean War, Nie took part in high level command decision making, military operations planning, and shared responsibility for war mobilization. Nie was made a Marshal of the PLA in 1955 and later ran the Chinese nuclear weapons program. He was purged during the Cultural Revolution, but was later rehabilitated and became vice chairman of the Central Military Committee, which controlled the nation's armed forces, and also became the vice chairman of the National People's Congress. In 1984 he published *Inside the Red Star: The Memoirs of Marshal Nie Rongzhen*, which was published in English in 1988. He retired in 1987 and died in Beijing.

<sup>92</sup> Li Xiannian (1909–1992) worked as an apprentice carpenter in his teenage years to support his family. He joined the Communist Party in December 1927 and became a soldier in the Chinese Red Army. After the PRC was established, he served as Governor and Party Secretary of his native Hubei Province from 1949 to 1954, and then joined the central leadership in Beijing, serving as Minister of Finance (1954–1970) and Vice Premier (1954–1982). He supported Mao Zedong's designated successor, Hua Guofeng, and was named Vice Chairman of the Party (1977–1982). One of the Eight Elders of the Communist Party, he was considered by some the most leftist among them, both politically and economically. Li played a key role in blocking privatizations and maintaining state control in many sectors of the economy, promoted classical Communist political and cultural values through his patronage of theorists such as Hu Qiaomu and Deng Liqun, and was instrumental in purging liberals Hu Yaobang and Zhao Ziyang.

<sup>93</sup> Chen Yi (1901–1972) was a commander of the New Fourth Army during the Sino-Japanese War (1937-1945), spearheaded the Shandong counter-offensive during the Chinese Civil War, and later commanded the Communist armies that defeated the KMT forces during the Huaihai Campaign and conquered the lower Yangtze region in 1948–49. He served as Mayor of Shanghai from 1949 to 1958 and as Foreign Minister of China from 1958 to 1972. He was made a Marshal of the People's Liberation Army (PLA) in 1955. He was criticized in 1967 during the Cultural Revolution, but never dismissed, although Zhou Enlai performed the duties of foreign minister in his place. Mao Zedong attended Chen's funeral in 1972. This was Mao's last public appearance and his first appearance at anyone's funeral during the Cultural Revolution.

to fight that battle. After the founding of the country, Su Yu should have been named a marshal in terms of battle merit, but Su Yu never competed for credit. Jiang Qing had no respect for anyone, but she admired Su Yu. The movie "Southern Expedition and Northern War" praised Su Yu, and it was Jiang Qing who personally directed it. Chairman Mao was also partial to Su Yu and was happy to see him all day. Li Yinqiao told me that when Su Yu returned to the Central Committee after the Huaihai Campaign, the Chairman rushed out to meet him. It was the first time they had met since Jingtang Mountain and the Chairman was so happy that he wept!

The first thing that Chairman Mao wanted to do was to ask Su Yu to go to North Korea when he chose to fight against the United States. The reason is that the two people who have commanded large-scale battles with modern weapons are Su Yu and Lin Biao, and no one else has any experience. In the Liberation War, it was Lin Biao's Fourth Field and Su Yu's Third Field that captured the most modern American weapons and used them in combat. Both of them knew how to use those long-range weapons to fight a war, and both had organised large regiments of more than several hundred thousand men in size to fight. Su Yu, who had three pieces of shrapnel left in his head and would often get headaches, was in hospital at the time. Despite this, Su Yu was willing to go to Korea, but his subordinates reflected that he could not go, saying that he was often unconscious when he was ill and could not command such an important war. In the end, the Chairman personally wrote to Su Yu and told him to recuperate. Lin Biao did not want to go to Korea to fight with the United States, so he claimed to be ill because it was a hard job and his reputation would be lost if he did not get it right. Peng Dehuai was heroic enough in this regard, so he dared to go, but he was too proud of himself when he returned. When Peng Dehuai fought with Su Yu, Nie Rongzhen and Xu Xiangqian were also very active. At that time, it was said that Su Yu had offended three and a half old marshals, the half being Ye Jianying. The only person that Su Yu listened to was Chairman Mao, and he didn't care what anyone else said. So, Peng Dehuai cursed him and he admitted to everything Peng said, and even censored himself, so that they could not fight anymore. No matter how Peng Dehuai and the others tried to fix him, the chairman still trusted him. Chairman Mao said, "Su Yu cannot be defeated, and I still use Su Yu when fighting a war". Peng Dehuai had made a big mistake politically in punishing Liu Bocheng and Su Yu. How many people were under Liu Bocheng and Su Yu! Could they be pleased with Peng Dehuai? In fact, at that time not only were these people dissatisfied with Peng Dehuai, but there was a general resentment against Peng Dehuai within the Party. In 1957, Peng Dehuai again criticised Su Yu, saying that Su Yu had issued an order to transfer the volunteers back to China on his own. At that time, the decision to transfer the volunteers back to China was made by the Military Commission, but the General Staff could not issue an order, only the Military Commission could do so. Su Yu was the Chief of the General Staff and the General Staff was suspected of overstepping its authority by issuing the order. Peng Dehuai, who was the Executive Vice Premier and Minister of National Defence, seized on this matter of Su Yu and made a fuss about it. Su Yu admitted to overstepping his authority. In fact, that was only a procedural issue, not a substantive one, if already decided by the military commission. Su Yu had great military exploits, and he was a man incomparable in the world. Chairman Mao said that Su Yu was a "giant tree of a general" [Note 7]. Peng Dehuai's approach to such a man was obviously inappropriate, and he was even guilty of arousing public anger. This foreshadowed his "come-down" at the Lushan Conference.

### **3. How the two high-level struggles have touched my thinking**

After I joined the underground, the comradeship I saw within the party as a grassroots member was very good. At that time, our struggle against the Guomindang was very fierce and determined. But our own comrades were all close to each other, we were like a family, like brothers, and whoever had any shortcomings or mistakes, as long as they were not matters of principle and did not harm

the Party organisation, generally did not take them too seriously. There was criticism and self-criticism in meetings, but none of this “you harm me, I harm you”, and there was no struggle to expose even the most badly managed party members. It was simply unheard of for party members to pull the rug out from under each other and for you to scold me and me to scold you. If there were mistakes and shortcomings, a leader would offer a few words of criticism, and under the prevailing conditions, the leader usually could not talk much, but only point to the important issues. Once the leaders spoke, we understood and would pay attention to correcting mistakes. Therefore, I had little appreciation of the intensity of the struggle within the Party at that time. The revelation of what happened to Gao Gang was a great shock to me. The first shock was that I did not expect the struggle at the top of the Party to be conducted in such a shocking manner. Those leaders who were usually very respected were fighting with each other in a way that was unbelievable. I saw with my own eyes Liu Shaoqi and Gao Gang fighting and cursing each other, and Wang Guangmei burst into tears. Inner-Party struggle seems to be a tradition. When it is for the correct line, as in the case of the Yan'an Rectification, it is open and fair, and even if it manifests itself fiercely, it is not a bad thing; when it is for personal power and small organisational interests and turns into engaging in sectarian activities and intrigues, then it damages the very fibre of the Party and its unity, and sometimes the damage is very great. The Gao-Rao Affair undoubtedly did great damage to the Party and to its unity. The beneficiaries of this incident, as I said earlier, were mainly people like Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping. Chairman Mao, on the other hand, was actually the victim. Not only did he directly lose strong supporters of his own line at that time, but he is still suffering from slander spread on behalf of Liu Shaoqi, Deng Xiaoping and Chen Yun.

The second shock was not Gao Gang's splitting the party or passing information to foreign countries, but his corruption. At that time, I did not fully understand and accept his splitting the party and linking up with foreign countries, but I was very disgusted with his corruption. In 1949, the problem of corruption within the Party was as obscure as sunspots, and in 1950, shortly after I came to the Secretariat to deal with letters and visits from the public for Chairman Mao, I heard about the corruption of many Party cadres, including high-ranking military officials. The wives of senior army generals had come to Zhongnanhai to complain about their husbands. When the Gao Gang affair came out, I was reminded of these things, but they were not as serious as Gao Gang's. Even Liu Qingshan and Zhang Zishan, who were killed, were not as serious. As soon as word got down about Gao Gang's corruption, my opinion of the party all changed: how could this happen? Now there are calls for Gao Gang to be vindicated, and I don't care if he is vindicated or not. Because Gao Gang was even more serious than Liu Shaoqi in terms of materialistic preoccupations, his gangsterism was similar to Liu Shaoqi's, and his life style was grossly indiscreet, he would have been a capitalist-roader during the Cultural Revolution on the basis of these points. However, I hope that Rao Shushi will be rehabilitated. He was a senior party cadre who contributed a lot, was strong in party spirit, organised, clean and honest. His was a really big injustice! Not rehabilitating him is not good for restoring the prestige of the Party.

As for Peng Dehuai and his men's criticism of Su Yu, once it happened, I became even more disappointed with some people and some things in the Party. Peng Dehuai was a great war hero and a marshal, and I always admired him. After I went to work in Zhongnanhai, I was in the same courtyard with him. He went to the *xiaozao* canteen for dinner and we went to the *dazao* for dinner<sup>94</sup>, and we would often meet him on the road. The road was very narrow, only a little more than one person wide, and two people had to turn sideways to pass when they met. When we met him on the road, he always stopped and waited sideways to let us pass first. I said, you're the grand marshal, you go first. He said, no, you guys go, you guys go. So I always had a very good impression of him. But I didn't expect him to swear such nasty words at Su Yu. How could a chief whom we

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<sup>94</sup> A *xiaozao* was a small mess hall where higher-grade food is prepared and served to a restricted range of diners. A *dazao* was an ordinary mess hall.

admired curse when soldiers don't even curse? It may have been verbal, but we were uncomfortable when we heard it.

When I was working in the underground, I was under threat of arrest all day long and I was hiding all day. Suddenly, one day, we were liberated, and who liberated us? Su Yu. My hometown of Weihai was also liberated by him. I can say that I joined the revolution with the book "How the Steel Was Tempered" in my arms and Pavel Korchagin in my heart<sup>95</sup>. So, I am a bit of a hero worshipper, and Su Yu has always been a great hero in my mind. I once engraved a badge with the words "A cow and a horse under Su Yu's door" to show my admiration for him, modelled on the lines of Sima Qian's "A cow and a horse work for Tai Shi Gong"<sup>96</sup>. I was upset to see Peng Dehuai cursing the great hero of my heart. I was so surprised and puzzled that I asked He Zai about it. He Zai said, "Hey, these old cadres are all like that, you don't understand, you are a petty bourgeois. But I have been in contact with Chairman Mao for eighteen years, and he has never cursed anyone, and the most unpleasant thing he has ever said is 'fart'". Chairman Mao even managed to put it into a poem, so he really turned it into something magical. Nor did I hear Premier Zhou swear at anything crudely. However, once when I told Kang Sheng that Premier Zhou did not say rude things, Kang Sheng said, "Hey, you don't know". Kang Sheng knew Premier Zhou better, but it is true that Premier Zhou did not say any foul words in his contacts with us.

Once the Gao-Rao incident and the Su Yu disaster happened, I understood a bit more what Chairman Mao had said before he entered the city: "Two imperatives", "enter the city to take the exam", "the long march of ten thousand miles has just begun", "We don't wait to be Li Zicheng", "We can't be Liu Zongmin", etc.

In 1955 I myself also dealt with a case of a senior cadre gone rogue. A famous flower girl from the Xinjiang Reclamation Cultural Troupe who sang Beijing opera, a young girl, came to complain against a very senior general, saying that he had given birth to a child with her and then left them alone, mother and child. When she went to him, he told the people below that he didn't know her and wouldn't see her. Wang Wen and I were the two people who dealt with this matter directly, but the other people who knew about it were Yang Shangkun and his secretary, Meng Fanshu. At that time, I

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<sup>95</sup> How the Steel was Tempered was a highly influential and very popular novel published in the Soviet Union in 1936. Its hero, Pavel Korchagin, was based on the experiences of the author, Nikolai Ostrovsky, as a an impetuous and unruly youth who becomes a model of the new Soviet person, having fought against the Ukrainian and Polish reactionaries as a young Red Army soldier, and against natural disasters and social upheaval in the wake of the Civil War. In his personal life, Ostrovsky was a dedicated Bolshevik who struggled to write as he was crippled and nearly blinded, and wrote much of the book from his bed. He died from these afflictions in the same year as the book's publication.

<sup>96</sup> Sima Qian (c. 145 – c. 86 BC) was a Chinese historian of the early Han dynasty (206 BC – AD 220). He is considered the father of Chinese historiography for his Records of the Grand Historian, a general history of China. Sima Qian's father Sima Tan first conceived of the ambitious project of writing a complete history of China, but had completed only some preparatory sketches at the time of his death. After inheriting his father's position as court historian in the imperial court, Sima Qian was determined to fulfill his father's dying wish of composing and putting together this epic work of history. In 99 BC, he would fall victim to the Li Ling affair for speaking out in defense of the general, who was blamed for an unsuccessful campaign against the Xiongnu. Given the choice of being executed or castrated, he chose the latter in order to finish his historical work. As his position in the imperial court was "Grand Historian" (tàishǐ 太史), later generations would accord him with the honorific title of "Lord Grand Historian" (Tàishǐ Gōng 太史公). The words inscribed by Qi Benyu were those that introduced Sima Qian's *Book of Reporting to Ren'an* which he dedicated to his father, describing himself as his father's work horse and bull. They reflect undying respect for the recipient of the words.

was the section chief and Wang Wen was in my section and was the secretary of the branch. I put Wang Wen specifically in charge of any letters making accusations of this type. After he told me about the little girl's complaint, I felt that the two of us were not at a high enough level and it was inappropriate to hear too much. I then went to Meng Fanshu, Yang Shangkun's first secretary, to report that someone had come to accuse so-and-so and it was not good for us to talk about it, so do you think we should ask Director Yang to come out and meet with her? The first thing you need to do is to ask for permission. But Yang Shangkun said, "You go to talk with her, do not say I will, do not promise that the leaders want to see her, I cannot see her. The first thing you need to do is to write a report and I will report it to the Chairman". However, we spoke with her and reported the situation to him, but he still did not move on it at all, and did not report to the Chairman. At the time the girl complained, she lived in the upper three strips of the flower market outside Chongwenmen, and when she couldn't see the central leadership or get a reply, she came to Zhongnanhai every day, even earlier than we came to work. I knew that the General was wrong, but I couldn't deal with him. The girl was also quite poor, and Yang Shangkun had not told the Chairman about this, so I called Xinjiang myself, looking for the leaders there, and asked them to come to pick up the little girl, and also urged them not to retaliate against her, or allow any further problems, such as she was not to think of suicide, otherwise the responsibility of the investigation will be subject to disciplinary action. Later, a deputy secretary from Xinjiang came to pick up the girl and asked me what was going on. I told him not to ask too many questions, and that if she told him, he was not allowed to spread it, as he would be in trouble if it spread. I also advised the girl to transfer to another unit, find someone to marry and not to mention this again, forget about it and consider it a bad dream. She said, I still have feelings for xxxx and don't want to marry anyone. She also asked me if she could go back home. I said, back home, people would ask you where your children came from, how would you answer them? Let's transfer you to another place. The girl didn't come back later, so maybe the Xinjiang side had taken care of it.

Yang Shangkun recused himself, so Wang Wen and I had to discuss the matter. The general did not admit to this matter. But the young girl told the story with evidence, what scars the general had, she told it all, it could not be a fabrication. I don't even want to talk about it anymore. I really think the general disgraced the party, he did not do as well as an ordinary man, he was not responsible at all, and he was not as good as Nekhlyudov in Tolstoy's *Resurrection*! He knew how to repent at the end, but the General did not. Chairman Mao was the top leader of the Party Central Committee at that time, and it was impossible for him to come out to meet all the people visiting him. I could not report to the Chairman myself about this level of person. And what Yang Shangkun should have reported was not reported. So, Chairman Mao was not aware of it. In my opinion, as far as corruption and deterioration are concerned, the inner-party "Gao Gang" matter was by no means the only one.

The Gao Gang affair, the embarrassment of Su Yu and the disgraceful behaviour of this very senior general, as well as the corrupt and degenerate behaviour of the senior generals as reflected by the elder sisters at the beginning of the founding of the country, all added up and I began to agree with and support Chairman Mao's idea of purifying the Party. So soon afterwards, when the Party's rectification campaign began in 1957, I took an active part in it, giving advice to some leaders in the Secretariat and the Central Office, and became one of the main initiators of the "Eight Sima Incident" in Zhongnanhai. Later on, I also actively participated in the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution launched by Chairman Mao himself with enthusiasm and sincerity. During the Cultural Revolution, the rebels also rebelled against the senior general, but Chairman Mao did not know about what he had done in Xinjiang and wanted to protect him, and he asked me to do so. I was very reluctant. I dared not refuse to do so, so I came out to speak in his favour. I said to the rebels, "The

general fought very bravely in the war, and he is credited with the liberation of the whole country". The general wrote me a letter of thanks for this, written with a brush, and written very sincerely: "I am very grateful to you for helping me in such a difficult time, your words were very good and I will always remember ....." After my accident in 1968, this letter was also confiscated, I guess they burned it. After Deng Xiaoping came to power, this general, became a very big official. He later died and at a very grand funeral and was given high highly evaluated.

When Chairman Mao launched the Cultural Revolution, he also wanted to re-use Su Yu. Su Yu was the only one personally designated by the Chairman to attend the Central Cultural Revolution meetings. However, probably because of the three pieces of shrapnel, Su Yu was not in good health. He called me on several occasions and said, "I have a bad headache and cannot come to the meeting, so be sure to tell me everything and I will come to the meeting when I am well".

How a proletarian party can guard against corruption and deterioration of party cadres, corruption and deterioration of the party itself, abnormal intra-party struggles and intra-military mountain-topism, etc., which damage the party's fibre and party unity after it has gained power, is a problem that the proletarian party has not solved up to now. The Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution launched by Chairman Mao was a positive exploration. But in the end, these problems were not fully solved. The future proletarian party must have the courage and wisdom to find suitable solutions to these problems, otherwise even if a proletarian regime is established, it will inevitably suffer from the subversion of the corrupt elements and the nascent bourgeoisie within the party.

## Chapter 6 Chairman Mao calls on the whole country to help the Party rectify the situation at the Supreme State Council

[Appendix: The original content of Chairman Mao's speech at the Supreme Council of State at the end of February 1957 \(compiled according to Qi Benxuan's personal records\)](#)

In the first few years of the new China, because Chairman Mao did not leave the front line, the process was very solid: the land reform, co-operative transformation, the three major reforms<sup>97</sup>, one step at a time, and by the beginning of 1956 the three major reforms were basically completed, and the dawn of the great socialist cause was seen.

Unexpectedly, at the beginning of 1956, the international situation changed and on 24 February Khrushchev made a secret report on Stalin's mistakes before the closing of the 20th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. Although this report was not communicated to the entire Soviet Communist Party, it was published in full in the New York Times in the USA only half a month later. In the autumn of 1956, the "Polish Incident" and the "Hungarian Incident" occurred in the socialist camps of Eastern Europe, with the "Hungarian Incident" being the more serious social upheaval.

New China was not a paradise, and any international developments would soon reverberate in the country. At that time, the foundation of socialism in China was still very weak. At the beginning of 1957, the "Little Hungary Incident" also occurred in some parts of China, when some students took to the streets, seized radio stations, and shouted slogans such as "Down with Fascism" and "Socialism is not superior"... These are just one side of the story. On the other hand, it must be admitted realistically that only a few years after Liberation, some Party cadres had started to become corrupt and to deteriorate, and even some senior cadres were no exception. The masses were very critical of this, and all sorts of contradictions had accumulated in society, providing a mouthpiece for some people who were anti-communist and anti-socialist. Gao Gang, and earlier Zhang Zishan and Liu Qingshan, were exposed and dealt with, and I wonder how many more were not exposed and dealt with. Moreover, the bureaucratic and subjectivist style of some Party cadres had become quite serious, and the masses had a lot of opinions. As a result, various contradictions had accumulated in society, providing a mouthpiece for some people who were anti-communist and anti-socialist.

Chairman Mao was never afraid of problems and did not avoid them. Faced with such an intricate international and domestic political situation, he, with the fearlessness of a proletarian revolutionary and the foresight of a Marxist theorist, made a very enlightened internal address to the Supreme State Council in two separate sessions on 27 February and 1 March 1957 on the correct understanding and resolution of the social contradictions in a socialist society issue, making systematic and incisive assertions. The speech was intended to give the masses the right to democracy, to let them speak, to support them in giving advice to the Party and its cadres, and to encourage the democratic parties to come forward and help the Communist Party overcome its bureaucratic practices, so as to avoid a situation similar to that of the "Hungary incident" in our

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<sup>97</sup> China's socialist transformation, or the Three Great Socialist Transformations, refers to the socialist transformation of agriculture, handicrafts and capitalist industry and commerce organised by the Communist Party of China at the early stage of the establishment of the People's Republic of China. China's socialist transformation achieved the task of transforming private ownership of the means of production into socialist public ownership, and enriched and developed the Marxist-Leninist theory of scientific socialism.

country. The speech was well received by the community, and the masses and friendly people in the democratic parties responded positively to the call to give advice to the Communist Party in various forms, including writing big-character posters, to help the Communist Party rectify the situation.

When the anti-rightist movement began, and in order to provide theoretical guidance it, this speech by Chairman Mao was published out in the People's Daily on 19 June 1957 under the title "On the correct handling of contradictions amongf the people". However, it was not the original speech; it was revised by Hu Qiaomu, Tian Jiaying and Chen Boda from the document of Chairman Mao's original speech, and it differed greatly from the original speech.

Having listened to all the speeches and taken notes, I knew exactly what the big difference was between the original speeches and the published articles. At that time, after listening to the speeches, the documents of the speeches had to be handed back, and I did not keep the original speeches. However, I was able to record the speech in its entirety using the "Qi's shorthand method" that I had developed when I was working underground in Shanghai. Usually I take notes in normal text at meetings, but this was different. I was so taken by the Chairman's speech at the beginning that I felt I couldn't leave too much out, so I made an exception and activated my own shorthand method. I was very much in favour of this speech, and as my own record was not a document, I did not hand over this record. Later, having seen the handwriting of the outline of Chairman Mao's speech in his own handwriting, I transcribed a copy.

There is an appendix below which is part of what I have compiled from my own transcription of Chairman Mao's handwriting of the outline of his speech and my field shorthand notes, which can be used to compare with the actual published article on "On the Correct Handling of Contradictions Among the People". The comparison will show you what is the Chairman's stuff and what they added later, what was really the Chairman's thinking and what were the opinions of other senior leaders in the Party.

What the Chairman said at that time was that democracy should be carried out across the whole country, that there were no such thing as anti-rightists, no such thing as the six articles<sup>98</sup>, no such thing as fishing, none of that. The anti-rightist faction was added later in the light of the rightist attacks during the Rectification Movement, and it was the Chairman who agreed to take on board different views on this issue and added it. The Chairman sincerely hoped that people would help the Party to rectify the problems. The Chairman said that people would always have different views, even if they were not right, it did not matter and there was nothing to fear. The published article removed all the sharp words. This was not the personal opinion of the Chairman, but the opinion of the whole Party. After the Chairman's speech, there were so many comments in the community, many of which attacked the Party and socialism. Perhaps the Chairman felt that there was something wrong with his speech, and he might have been swayed by various reported materials, so he agreed to make changes, but the changes were not as good as the original ones. Hu Qiaomu made more changes, so much so that Hu Jiwei<sup>99</sup> later revealed that Hu Qiaomu had changed the Chairman's speech indiscriminately. However, as far as I know, Hu Qiaomu's changes were made in

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<sup>98</sup> The "six articles" refers to the Western Han Dynasty book of "A Hundred Officials". The six conditions for the elimination of officials during the transfer from the Qin to the Han Dynasties were based on six questions they had to be asked.

<sup>99</sup> Hu Jiwei, a native of Weiyuan, Sichuan, was born in 1916 and joined the Communist Party of China in 1937. He successively served as the director of the Interview and Communications Department of the "Liberation Daily", the director of the Northwest Frontline Branch of Xinhua News Agency, the deputy editor of the "People's Daily", and later as the "People's Daily" Editor-in-Chief and President. He passed away on September 16, 2012, at the age of 96.

accordance with the changes proposed by the Chairman after consolidating the views of other comrades in the Party, and he did not make the changes himself.

Although more than half a century has passed since Chairman Mao's enlightened speech, it still rings true to me as a listener who was there. Chairman Mao's speech was passionate, funny and humorous, with all sorts of allusions at his fingertips, and he was able to use allusions to make any issue clear. The whole speech was very powerful, high level and inspiring. We were all attentive, fearing that we might miss a single word. This speech, in my opinion, was not only a strong practical guide at the time, but also a great theoretical and practical guide today and for a considerable period of time in the future.

The famous writer and translator Fu Lei was there to listen to the Chairman's original speech, and he was so impressed with his speech that he later wrote a letter home about his excitement at the time. He said that Chairman Mao's "Marxism has reached a state of perfection, and it right at his fingertips, it is expressed in a very natural manner, and invisibly penetrates the hearts of the listeners; the logic of his speech is hidden and not revealed; he really is a master the art; Chairman Mao is broad-minded and free-minded, so of course he has a good grasp of state affairs; Chairman Mao is a person who has truly integrated the philosophies of the past and the present. Part of this letter from Fu Lei is also quoted on page 641 of the biography of Mao Zedong 1949-1976, edited by Pang Xianzhi and Jin Chong and others. Fu Lei was greatly disappointed to see the speech officially published. It was a pity for this translator, who genuinely loved the people and truly supported Chairman Mao, but he did not know that there were such complications at the top of the Central Committee. There were indeed rightist attacks in society, and the Chairman was influenced by people above and below him to balance various forces and opinions, including those of his old comrades and subordinates and their opinions, which is why he agreed to revise his original speech and abandon some otherwise reasonable propositions against his will. If Fu Lei had known and understood these circumstances, he might not have committed suicide.<sup>100</sup>

#### **Appendix: The original content of Chairman Mao's speech at the Supreme Council of State at the end of February 1957 (compiled according to Qi Benyu's personal records)**

##### **On the Correct Handling of Contradictions Among the People**

**Speech by**

**Mao Zedong at the Supreme Council of State on February 27, 1957**

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<sup>100</sup> Fu Lei (1908 - 1966) was a Chinese translator, writer, educator, art critic, and one of the key founders of the China Association for the Promotion of Democracy. Fu Lei studied at the University of Paris in France in his early years. In the early 1950s, Fu Lei retranslated Old Man Gao and John Christoph. He also published new translations of Balzac's Aunt Bess and Uncle Bones, Mérimée's Carman and Goronba, Voltaire's The Honest Man, The Naive Man, and some short literary works. In March 1957, Fu Lei was invited to attend a conference on propaganda work of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China. He then published a series of articles in Wen Wei Po, proposing ideas for improving relations between the party and the people. In 1958 he was labelled a "rightist". In September 1961, the authorities lifted Fu Lei's "rightist" label, and he remained in seclusion for the next four or five years. During this period he translated more of Balzac's works and was accepted as a member of the French Society for Balzac Studies. At the end of August 1966, at the beginning of the Cultural Revolution, Fu Lei was raided by the Red Guards and subjected to four days and three nights of criticism, punished by kneeling, wearing high hats and other forms of abuse, and was searched for so-called "evidence of anti-party crimes". On the morning of 3 September 1966, Zhou Juti, the maid, discovered that Fu Lei and his wife had committed suicide at their residence at No. 5, 284 Jiangsu Road, and that Fu Lei and his wife Zhu Meifu had both hanged themselves.

Comrades.

The topic of my report today is how to correctly deal with contradictions among the people. Because of the problems we are encountering now, the issue of contradictions among the people is an important one, and this issue takes up a lot of our time.

There are many problems.

### **I. The two types of contradictions**

There are two types of problems, two types of contradictions: one between the enemy and us, and one between the people. The truth is that there are two issues, not just one. Today the focus is on the contradictions within - among - the people, and when we talk about them, we have to talk about both issues. The two types of problems are different in nature and have different solutions. In the past there were two slogans: to distinguish between the enemy and ourselves, and to distinguish between right and wrong. Distinguishing between the enemy and ourselves: for many years, we talked mainly about distinguishing between the enemy and ourselves, what is the enemy and what is ourselves. To distinguish between right and wrong is to resolve the internal contradictions of the people, i.e. the question of what is right and wrong within the people, not the question of the enemy and ourselves. Of course, the question of the enemy is also a question of right and wrong, which is a different category of right and wrong in nature. For example, we also have the question of right and wrong with Chiang and the Americans, who is right and who is wrong. It is right and wrong, but of a different nature. The common customary term is generally said to be the question of the enemy and us. Enemy-versus-us conflicts are antagonistic contradictions; internal conflicts within the people are non-antagonistic contradictions.

The People's Daily wrote an article on the historical experience of the dictatorship of the proletariat (at this point, Chairman Mao turned to the photographer and interjected: "You do your job, I will do mine.") The article talks about two kinds of contradictions, but the article is mainly about the international aspect, about the contradiction between the enemy and us, and rarely about the internal problems of the people. There is no subdivision of how the internal problems of the people are to be solved, but only a statement of principle. The article talks about the advantages and disadvantages of the dictatorship of the proletariat and democratic centralism, and the difference between the dictatorship of the proletariat and democracy. What does dictatorship govern? Dictatorship is concerned with dealing with and resolving conflicts between the enemy and us. Suppressing the enemy is not exactly repression. For example, denying them the right to vote, denying them the freedom of propaganda, denying them the freedom to publish newspapers, denying the US imperialists - their masters - the right to publish newspapers in our country, etc. Depriving them of their freedom of expression and not giving them the right to vote are, however, issues that fall within the scope of dictatorship. It is a dictatorship of class over class, catching, killing and controlling through the people. We talk of democracy among the people, not dictatorship, not executions. Dictatorship does not suit among the people; the problems among the people do not fall within the scope of dictatorship. The people cannot dictate their own political affairs. As long as it is the people and not the enemy, dictatorship is not suitable. The people have freedom of speech, of publication, of demonstration and of procession. That is why the Constitution says people's democracy, and people's democracy is a led democracy, not an anarchist democracy, and anarchism is not a demand of the people.

There are big democracies and small democracies. There are people in Poland and Hungary who advocate big democracy! Hundreds of thousands of people in the streets! There is the dictatorship

of the minority over the people and the dictatorship of the people over the rival classes. Throughout history, the really big democracies or democratic movements have been against rival classes. Some comrades, within the party, and some friends, outside the party, can't figure this out. Others are hostile. For example, some people want to use big democracy to bring down the government, to follow the example of Hungary and to finish off the Communist Party before they are happy. Some university students made statements that they wanted to kill the Communists, by the thousands, tens of thousands, or even hundreds of thousands. They said that the Communists were too powerful and that people could not survive! They want us to know that they are too powerful. In fact, it was an overstatement. If he really said to kill, he could not kill so many. Calling for the killing of the Communists is just an indication of their state of mind. Some people think that our democracy is not as good as that of the West. They are naive in their thinking and do not understand the reality. They think that Western democracy, parliamentary democracy, is better, that people's congresses are worse than parliaments. It is said that democracy should have two parties, one on the stage and one off the stage, with the two parties singing to each other. Some propose the early abolition of dictatorship and some say democracy is the goal. They disagree with us that democracy is the means, or both the end and the means. The experience of Marxism-Leninism tells us that democracy is politics that belongs to the realm of the superstructure and serves the economic base. Raising the livelihood of the people is the goal. Politics, culture, ideas, all superstructures serve this economic purpose. Some people are uncomfortable when they hear that democracy is a means and not an end, and are only happy to say that it is an end. Some people say that there is a lot of freedom in foreign countries and that we have very little. I say that there is not much freedom in foreign countries. Parliamentary freedom is just a deception of the people. There are no abstract freedoms in the world, only class freedoms, concrete freedoms. The Conservative Party has Tory freedoms, the Labour Party has Labour freedoms. The Tories fought Egypt, but the Labour Party did not want it. Just like Eden fought Egypt's freedom, Eden had freedom, but it was bourgeois freedom, the freedom of the few, the individual. Freedom in general, in the abstract, there is no such thing in the world. Eden had the freedom of Eden, Nasser had the freedom of Nasser, depending on what class and what group. So, there is only freedom for classes and groups in the world, there is no freedom in the abstract.

Ideological problems are internal problems of the people and cannot be solved by rough methods. It is wrong to use crude (violent) methods to solve ideological problems and to deal with the internal problems of the people. It is ineffective and harmful to solve these problems by administrative orders and arbitrary repression. Religion is also a matter of ideological scope. Nor can it be solved by administrative orders. You cannot force people to disbelieve in idealism. Ideological problems should be solved by discussion, debate, criticism, education and persuasion to make people believe in you. In which category of contradictions should the question of the national bourgeoisie be placed? It is not addressed in the article on the Historical Experience of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat. The question of the national bourgeoisie should not be placed in the first category of the contradictions between the enemy and us. The question of the national bourgeoisie should be placed in the second category of contradictions among the people because it is not in the category of the contradictions between the enemy and us. The national bourgeoisie has two sides and embraces the Constitution. It accepts socialism, is willing to follow the path of socialism and is willing to accept socialist transformation. (At this point, Chairman Mao said to the waiter. "Don't pour out the tea if you haven't finished it, be economical.") The national bourgeoisie is different from the landlords and bureaucratic imperialists. The national bourgeoisie is willing to accept socialist transformation. The working class and the bourgeoisie are two classes that are antagonistic, but the antagonism can be transformed into a non-antagonistic one when handled properly. From the first type of antagonistic contradiction into the second type of non-antagonistic contradiction. Non-antagonism, if mishandled, and not adopted, is not a method of unity and transformation. Then the bourgeoisie and the working class are bound to move towards antagonism, a Type I contradiction. The way to

change from a Type I to a Type II contradiction is to act in accordance with the actual situation. In China, the bourgeoisie has the character of opposition to imperialism and is therefore a national bourgeoisie.

It has not been highlighted in history, so Marx Engels spoke very little about it. Lenin also spoke of it briefly, when he spoke of socialism, when antagonism was eliminated and contradictions existed. That is, there are still contradictions among the people. Although Lenin said that there were still contradictions in socialism, he did not have the time to analyse the issue comprehensively. Is it possible, for example, for the contradictions among the people to be transformed into antagonistic contradictions? It should be possible, but Lenin was not able to examine this question in detail. This was because there was not enough time. Lenin died soon after the October Revolution, too soon. For a long period of time, Stalin confused the two types of contradictions, those with the enemy and the contradictions among the people. While it is clear that contradictions among the people, such as the people being dissatisfied with the government and criticising the Communist Party, are internal criticisms of the people and should be distinguished from attacks by the enemy, Stalin for a long time made no distinction between the two. This is what the Soviet comrades said. In those days, they said, one could only say good things and not bad things, one could only sing praises and not offer criticism, and whoever criticised the Party and the government was an enemy and risked going to jail and losing his life. It is easy to confuse the two types of contradiction. We have done it before, confusing the two types of contradictions. In some stages of the suppression of counter-revolutionaries, we saw good people as bad people and fought people who were not counter-revolutionaries in the first place, as counter-revolutionaries. Did we or not? Yes, we did. There were and still are such problems. But we have one rule: if there is a mistake, it must be corrected, and if there is injustice, it must be rectified. And since the time of Yan'an, there have been internal rules that no one in institutions, schools, troops or groups will be killed for counter-revolution, no matter how big or small. Nowadays, although this rule is not legally stipulated (because a very small number of people have to be killed), in practice most people are not killed. This is a good rule, for there is room for redemption if one is wrong. It is easy to confuse the two types of contradiction. Two tendencies tend to arise on this issue. One tendency is right-leaning. That is, to recognise the enemy as ourselves and not to distinguish between the enemy and ourselves. This still happens. The people at large see it as if the enemy are our friends. I have here some material where someone proposes to release Kang Ze, a big KMT agent. This person is a people's representative from Xiangyang, who used to work in Xiangyang and used to be friends with Kang Ze, and his thoughts and feelings on the issue of Kang Ze are different from those of the people at large. There was also a man who always spoke well of imperialism. It is almost as if the American moon is better than China's. In fact, the American moon and the Chinese moon are both the same, and I agree that it is a moon. I don't believe that the American moon is better than the Chinese moon, I don't agree with it. Why is it better? The other tendency on this issue is left-leaning, left with parentheses. These people over-emphasise the contradiction between the enemy and ourselves. This was the case with Stalin, and it is the case with some of us too. To overemphasise the contradiction between the enemy and ourselves is to treat the contradictions among the people as contradictions between the enemy and ourselves. This "left" tendency often appears during the suppression of counter-revolutionaries. This is the left in quotation marks.

In 1942, during the Yan'an Rectification, we proposed the formula of unity-criticism-unity, which was the approach to solving this problem.

We proposed this formula in detail from the desire for unity, and after criticism and struggle, a new unity was reached on a new basis. This formula was proposed at the time to resolve the contradiction between dogmatism and the mass of comrades in the Party, between dogmatism and Marxism-Leninism. Dogmatism was the scripture taken back from the Western Paradise. The Western Heaven was Stalin's, i.e. it came from Stalin, whose approach to internal contradictions was one of brutal struggle and merciless combat, which is different from ours. We do not deal with

internal contradictions by doing what others do to us, by a tooth for a tooth. The approach we used was the unity approach, to achieve unity from the desire for unity, which was put forward in the Rectification Movement in 1942, after three years. By 1945 the aim of party-wide unity was achieved. Why is the desire for unity necessary in the first place? Because without this first desire for unity, the critical struggle would have been chaotic. Then it would have been unmanageable, and it would be merciless struggles and severe blows! Without a subjective desire for unity and ideological preparation, it is not possible. This formula must therefore put the desire for unity first. The formula of unity-criticism-unity was later extended to outside the Party. When I went to Beijing, I persuaded the democratic parties to adopt this same approach in dealing with internal problems, not either me or you, I live or you die. Later, this approach also worked with the industrial and commercial sectors. At the first national industrial and commercial conference held in Beijing in December 1955, they united and criticised for a month with good results, and the problem was solved without hurting feelings. So, this approach can also be adopted for capitalists and for the exploiting class. However, I think it is difficult to adopt this method for Taiwan, because the current fight between Chiang Kai-shek and Hu Shih in Taiwan is not applicable to exploiters like them. The reason is that there are two kinds of exploiters, and what can be used with the former, the industrialists and the businessmen, cannot be used with them. It is not possible for us to go from unity to unity with them. With the national bourgeoisie it is possible to go from unity to unity. This method can be used and extended to those who have made mistakes, to the bourgeoisie, petty bourgeoisie, to the religious community, to the idealists. It can be used throughout the people, in schools, factories, shops and institutions, and it can also be extended to the disarmed enemy, i.e. the captives, for whom it can also be used. Those who are not disarmed will not be able to do so, and for those who are not disarmed, they will have to fight soldier to soldier and general to general, to the death. This method can be used against those who have been disarmed. This method can also be used to rehabilitate prisoners of labour and disarmed spies. On 2 May 1956, at the State Council, I spoke about two of the ten articles, one on the relationship between the enemy and ourselves and the other on the relationship between right and wrong, which were about two types of contradictions. The so-called relationship between right and wrong is a contradiction among the people, a relationship between internal contradictions. I spoke for half an hour on one issue, and that was the opening.

## **2. The issue of eliminating counter-revolutionaries**

This is the first type of contradiction, the issue of the contradiction between the enemy and ourselves. In comparison, how well did our country do in eliminating counter-revolutionaries? Was it very good or very bad? I think we are doing better than the Soviet Union and Hungary. The Soviet Union was too left. We are not particularly smarter than others, and we have been left ourselves. We used to follow the Soviet approach in the southern base areas and suffered losses, but then gained experience and corrected them. Because of this experience, we did better than other countries. When we were in Yan'an we made it a rule not to kill one person and not to capture most of them. In Beijing there was a lot of progress again, and although there were shortcomings and mistakes mentioned, the Soviet Union and ourselves followed two different lines. The line on the elimination of counter-revolutionaries in the Soviet Union under Stalin was bad. But there were two sides. On one side, they eliminated the counter-revolutionaries, which was right. On the other side the wrong people were caught and killed, many of them important people, and that was not good. At the 17th Congress of the UCP, 50% of the Central Committee members and 8% of the Congress delegates were implicated. We kept this in mind and did not do these things. There were mistakes in killing the wrong people in the past, there were mistakes in killing the wrong people in 1950-1952, and there were mistakes in killing the five categories of counter-revolutionaries, but these were fundamentally not wrong at all. A total of 700,000 people were killed in the elimination of counter-revolutionaries, and 70,000 the year before last. Last year, fewer people were killed.

People say we are erratic, "If I had known, why would I have done it in the first place". In 1950-1952 we killed about 700,000 people. Hong Kong newspapers said we killed 20 million, 19.3 million more. "Zhou is no good. He's worse than that."<sup>101</sup> There is no need to reconcile the accounts. Where are the tens of millions? There are 700,000.

Killing some counter-revolutionaries is liberating the productive forces; the people cannot get ahead without killing them. They are all overlords, Nan Batian, Xi Batian<sup>102</sup> and so on. Killing them liberates the productive forces. The people want them killed. Now some of my friends want to overturn this, but they can't! If we overturn it, the peasants will have to beat us with flat sticks and the workers with iron bars, which is unbearable.

Hungary has not purged itself of counter-revolutionaries at all, but has killed a few revolutionary comrades by mistake, as in Iraq. There were not as many counter-revolutionaries killed as there should have been, which is why there are so many counter-revolutions today. Foreigners also think that this is the case. After Hungary, our country is stable. Foreigners also say that we are stable. We ourselves feel stable. After the Hungarian incident, was there any storm in China? There was. "The wind rose and blew across a pool of spring water"<sup>103</sup>. Small waves, a spring breeze blowing ripples, did they cause big waves? No. Why? Many reasons. After the suppression of counter-revolutionaries, there were not many counter-revolutionaries left. There are still a few, but they are few and far between.

The first reason why the Hungarian incident did not cause major waves in China is that our Party has been conditioned by decades of revolutionary struggle. Our army and cadres have also been conditioned by revolutionary struggles and tempering. The Party has taken root among the people and the army has combat power. The regime was developed from the base areas, not from those suddenly liberated. The democrats have gone through struggle and tempering, and they have been with the Party through trials and tribulations for a long time. Chinese students have been tempered by the May Fourth Movement and the January 29th Movement. There is a revolutionary tradition of anti-imperialism and anti-feudalism. In short, the people were being educated and reformed after the tempering of the long struggle against imperialism, feudalism and bureaucratic capital, including the intellectuals. Then there was the fact that the counter-revolutionaries were almost eliminated, and these conditions were not present in Hungary. There were of course other factors, such as

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<sup>101</sup> Mao cites an expression in classical Chinese from the Analects of Confucius. I've put it into plain English, which does not convey the archaic words at all well. Zhou was the last ruler of the Shang Dynasty (c. 16th – 11th century BC.) He was reputedly a tyrant. The saying implies that public opinion often evaluates a person to a higher degree of whatever quality he or she possesses. To say that someone is good is suggesting that they are better than what they actually are, and to say that someone is bad is suggesting that they are worse than they actually are.

<sup>102</sup> Nan Batian was the villain in the play (and subsequent movie) "Red Detachment of Women". He was a local bully landlord in Hainan. He was later defeated by the Red Detachment of Women. Xi Batian was the subject of the story "Xi Batian keeps a donkey" about how he beat a man at chess and forced him to surrender his donkey. The term has been applied to numerous tyrants including Xu Zicheng who became head of police in Chengdu in 1933. He was notoriously corrupt and a bully. He was arrogant and ambitious and in 1947 contested the position of the Chengdu representative on Chiang Kai-shek's National People's Congress against Chiang's own nominee. In the end he was bought off and withdrew from the contest. In the modern era of capitalist restoration, a number of Chinese "mafia" gangsters have been dubbed "Xi Batians" and executed in an attempt to rein in corruption.

<sup>103</sup> This is a line from a poem by Feng Yansi of the Five Dynasties and Ten Kingdoms period (907–979). It described a scene witnessed from a balcony of a spring breeze blowing suddenly, wrinkling the clear water of a pond. Feng Yansi was describing the depressed feelings of a woman, but in time it came to be used as a metaphor for a certain event, stirring up the calm or and even forming a new situation.

economic measures, the transformation of the national bourgeoisie, the unification of the democratic parties, and a correct policy towards the minority nationalities.

About 80% of our university students are now the children of landlords, rich peasants and capitalists. Sixty per cent of Hungarian university students are the children of workers and peasants. But they march against the government, whereas our children of landlords, rich peasants and capitalists support us. We don't have the Petofi Club. Apart from a few people who speak strange words, the absolute majority are patriots, in favour of socialism. All have the ideal of building a socialist motherland and all want to build China into a strong socialist country.

In comparison, our policy on the elimination of counter-revolutionaries was not as left as that of the Soviet Union, nor as right as that of Hungary. Our policy was "if there is any opposition, we will suppress it, and if there is any mistake, we will correct it". Did we go too far, did we miss anything? Yes, we did. But because we adopted a line on elimination that relied on the masses, although there were faults, it was better than the Soviet Ministry of Public Security, which had acted alone. The masses had gained experience through struggle. If they got it wrong, they had the experience of making mistakes; if they got it right, they had the experience of getting it right. All of this can be used to educate themselves.

We hope that all the faults of the elimination of counter-revolutionaries will be corrected. The Central Committee has issued instructions to correct the mistakes. The Central Committee has decided to carry out a major inspection of the elimination of counter-revolutionaries in steps this year and next. We suggest that a comprehensive inspection be carried out this time so that experience can be drawn from it. This inspection will be conducted by the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress and the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference at the central level, and by the Standing Committee of the local People's Congress and the local CPPCC at the local level. Individual inspections are not very effective. Some people have already written to us to express their views.

Our aim, the requirements of this comprehensive inspection, are: (1) Don't throw cold water on them, but help them, help those cadres who took part in the campaign. It is not good to splash cold water. Don't make it so that the cadres cannot lift their heads up. (2) Any mistakes must be corrected. This includes the work of the public security, procuratorial, defence and labour reform departments; all have many faults, and any faults must be corrected. This inspection will be conducted by the leaders of the National People's Congress and the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference. People's deputies and CPPCC members will all participate, putting the work of eliminating counter-revolutionaries through a thorough inspection. This will be very helpful to the work of the legal system. Provincial, municipal and local people's deputies and CPPCC members who are in good health will all participate.

The overall picture is that there are still counter-revolutionaries, but not many. These two sentences indicate two things.

The first sentence is "There is still a counter-revolution". Some people say that there is no more counter-revolution, so they can sleep with their pillows high and the world will be at peace. This is not true. There is a Deputy Secretary of the Party Branch at Qinghua University in Beijing, China, on earth. (What's his name? I should give him a name.) Oh, Ma Guofeng, he secretly wrote and posted many slogans against Soviet intervention in Hungary. The fact is that this Communist Party member was in favour of the Hungarian counter-revolutionary riots and of the Western imperialist countries supporting the Hungarian counter-revolution. So, there must be a counter-revolution, and this is one person that slipped through the net. Of course, if we check on this person, he may not necessarily a counter-revolutionary, but just have reactionary ideas, reactionary behaviour; he is not necessarily a counter-revolutionary, not necessarily sent by the Chiang Kai-shek and US imperialists cliques stay here and study. There are many reactionary slogans in Beijing schools, so it is not right to think that

there is no more counter-revolutionary thinking. The second phrase is "but not many more". Both statements should be affirmed, but not affirming the second statement would lead to confusion. There are very few counter-revolutionaries, perhaps only one in a thousand. In short, not many.

Is there an amnesty? Many of you are very interested in this question, which is good. But I'm a negative person, I'm not positive about amnesty, I'm not interested. This has led to a little friction with some of my friends. Amnesty is not an option. Some people say, "The Constitution says that the Chairman of the State has the right to grant amnesty, but you, Chairman Mao, don't grant amnesty". Yes, I have the right, but I don't advocate amnesty. We can do more on amnesty, but not in the name of amnesty. An amnesty is a total amnesty. If an amnesty is granted and Kan Ze<sup>104</sup> and others are released, the people will oppose it and the prisoners will be able to speak; the big prisoners will be pardoned and the small ones will be pardoned. The Ministry of Public Security and the People's Court can all be left alone. Some people say that even Chiang Kai-shek in Taiwan can be pardoned, so why can't Kang Ze be pardoned? Who says Chiang Kai-shek can be pardoned? The NPC has not made a resolution, and I have not issued an order. We are suggesting: an uprising in Taiwan and the reunification of the motherland. Learn from General Fu Zuoyi<sup>105</sup> and obtain the right to a pardon. Recently I have stopped calling Chiang Kai-shek a bandit, but Chiang Kai-shek still continues to call us bandits. They are not polite to the democrats either, calling Zhang Zhizhong as Zhang Zhizhong the rebel<sup>106</sup>. If we cannot grant amnesty, should we let none of them go? No, let them go. One today,

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<sup>104</sup> Kang Ze (1904-1967), was a well-known Guomindang agent, one of the founders of the China Renaissance Society, and one of the three founders of the Three People's Principles Youth League). After 1932, Kang Ze served as the secretary of the Central Committee of the China Renaissance Society and a member of the Central Committee of the Kuomintang. In 1933, Chiang Kai-shek established a special training class for the Central Military Academy in Lushan, appointed Kang Ze as the director. After the victory of the Anti-Japanese War, Chiang Kai-shek sent Kang Ze to study abroad. He returned to China in 1947 and became the commander of the Guomindang's 15th Pacification District in Hebei Province. In the Battle of Xiangfan in 1948, Kang Ze was captured by Liu Bocheng and Chen Yi. Liu Bocheng accused him of using toxic yellow phosphorous bombs to burn down the houses of the peasants. This and his reactionary secret service work for Chiang ensured his labelling as a war criminal. He was imprisoned for 13 years, and after reforming his ideology, was granted a special amnesty and appointed as the Commissioner of Culture and History in the CPPCC National Committee. However, many people could not forgive Kang, and shortly after the beginning of the Cultural Revolution, he was wounded once by the Red Guards, and was later transferred to Qincheng Prison under Zhou Enlai's direction to be protected in the form of guardianship. On 23 December 1967, he died of a recurrence of heart disease and other conditions.

<sup>105</sup> Fu Zuoyi (1895 – 1974) was a Guomindang general. He began his military career in the service of Yan Xishan, and he was widely praised for his defense of Suiyuan from the Japanese. During the final stages of the Chinese Civil War, Fu surrendered the large and strategic garrison around Beiping and his own troops of a quarter of a million men to the People's Liberation Army. He later served in the government of the People's Republic of China as Minister of the Hydraulic Ministry, a position he kept until 1972, as well as posts in the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference. During the Cultural Revolution, Fu was part of a list of people drafted by Zhou Enlai and approved by Mao to be protected, and was moved to Jingxi Hotel for safeguarding.

<sup>106</sup> Zhang Zhizhong (1890 –1969) was a Guomindang general and politician. Originally a supporter and close associate of Chiang Kai-shek, Zhang belonged to the left wing of the Guomindang, advocating policies such as collaboration with the Communists against Japan and nationalization of foreign-owned businesses. In 1949, Zhang was made the chief negotiator of the Nationalists for peace talks with the Communists in Beijing. After the failure of the negotiations, he remained in Beijing and announced his withdrawal from the Guomindang. After that, he was instrumental in persuading his close friend General Tao Zhiyue (then the Nationalist Governor of Xinjiang) to also defect to the Communists, an action which greatly helped in the mostly peaceful incorporation of Xinjiang into the People's Republic of China. Mao Zedong greatly appreciated Zhang's services and appointed him to high positions in the new People's Republic. Zhang Zhizhong served as Vice Chairman of the Northwest China Military and Political Committee (1949–1954), Vice Chairman of the National Defense Council (1954–1969) and Vice Chairman of the National People's Congress (1965–1969). During the Cultural Revolution, he managed to escape persecution due to the protection of Zhou Enlai and Mao Zedong. He died in April 1969, aged 78.

one tomorrow. One will be released today, one tomorrow, one in the yin and one in the yang, just not in the newspapers. It will not be proclaimed.

How did Pu Yi<sup>107</sup> deal with it? If people are emperors, they are my superiors, and all the people over 45 years old were subjects under his rule, but he has offended the people. He will have to be released in the future, but not now. If he is released now, the people will not understand, it will not be beneficial, it will not do him any good. Then invite him to visit, read the newspapers and study the issues. Invite him to visit Tiananmen Square, factories and bridges, and he can also do some work under the supervision of the people. The more repentant prisoners should be released gradually, but not in the newspapers. If the people oppose us, we will be in trouble. They will take up sticks and iron bars and beat us. We are all as weak as chickens.

### **3. Socialist Transformation**

Co-operative agriculture. In the second half of last year, after the climactic enthusiasm had passed, one thought soberly about the problems that had occurred again. The first half of the year was very superior, but in the second half the superiority was gone. A wind came, not a typhoon, but a small wind, a spring breeze blowing green waves, saying that cooperation was not working. There is a Wang Guofan cooperative in today's document, a good example of unity and hard struggle. Cooperatives must grow through hard struggle, there are difficulties in everything, and the growth and development of new things have to go through twists and turns and difficult paths. The people are not used to living collectively, especially the rich middle peasants, who are most unaccustomed to it. It is the poor and lower-middle peasants who support cooperation. Those who were dissatisfied with co-operative transformation, apart from the landlords and rich peasants, were the rich middle peasants. Those who were very dissatisfied accounted for 1-5% of all peasants. The reason is that the first few years of cooperative work were worse than when they worked alone, they could not hire workers and their production and livelihood did not suit them. How long will it take for the cooperatives to consolidate? It takes about five years. Most cooperatives in the country have only been in existence for a year or so, and it will take five years to gradually consolidate them, minus one year, last year. Wang Guofan's cooperative was in Zunhua County in Rehe, near the Great Wall, and it took five years for their cooperative to consolidate. Have the peasants' lives improved? Yes, they have. Since Liberation, the countryside has produced a total of 140 billion catties of additional grain; in 1949, there were 220 billion catties of grain production, and an increase of 140 billion catties would bring the total to 360 billion catties. Thus, the peasants' livelihood has improved considerably. It is not true to say that the peasants' lives have not improved. However, some peasants have not yet improved, and there are still food-deficit households. It will take another three to four years before the food-deficit households are eliminated, and only then will they be able to purchase and not sell. For a few years, only production will increase, not purchases. Most of the grain available was purchased collectively, and the public grain was only a small part of the total, adding up to 81.2 billion catties of grain, of which 39-40 billion catties were sold in the countryside, and more than 40 billion catties were used to supply the cities and to prepare grain for export. The farmers still have a lot of grain in their hands, so it is not true to say that their livelihood has not improved. Now there are cries of bitterness from below, and some cadres are saying the same, but they actually represent the position of the rich middle peasants. The influence of the cadres' families who have gone home and become rich middle peasants is very strong. Democrats are also

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<sup>107</sup> Puyi (1906 – 1967) was the last emperor of China as the eleventh and final Qing dynasty ruler, becoming the Xuantong Emperor at age two in 1908, but forced to abdicate on 12 February 1912 due to the 1911 Revolution. He later served as the puppet ruler of the Japanese state of Manchuguo during World War II. Captured by the Soviet Red Army, he was transferred to the People's Republic of China and kept imprisoned as a convicted war criminal whilst undergoing reeducation. In 1959 he was granted a special pardon and worked as a gardener, writing the autobiographical *From Emperor to Citizen*.

influenced by them, and democrats also have relatives of rich middle peasants. It was said that co-operation was not superior. I think that co-operation is still superior. You can see that Wang Guofan's cooperatives are superior.

Why have most of the cooperatives that were started in Poland and Hungary been blown away by a gust of wind this year? Before Gomulka's speech, there were over 10,000 co-operatives in Poland, but now over 10,000 have been blown away and only 1,000 remain, a 90% reduction, and the same applies to Hungary.

There are several reasons why we have been able to start cooperatives, and so quickly, for the following reasons.

(1) China has little land and many people and is desperately poor, so it is better to combine them.

(2) Our Party has adopted a step-by-step approach to cooperatives.

Our country differs from the Soviet Union in that the Soviet Union did not increase production for several years after the co-operatives, while we increased production for many years and last year increased production by 20 billion catties.

The landlords, rich peasants and wealthy middle peasants screamed bitterness, influencing some people inside and outside the Party to follow them. There is also a section of food-deficit households who also scream that they are really living in misery.

Then there is the argument of the disparity between the lives of workers and peasants when comparing urban and rural areas.

The average annual income of farmers is now 60 yuan, there are those above 60 and those below. Those below 60 yuan are 40-50 yuan, and some are below 30 yuan. 30 yuan is very difficult. I have also heard of a family of four living on 58 yuan a year, which is the most difficult. There are also families who earn more than 100 yuan or 200 yuan a year. There are even those with 1,000 yuan, and there is a family of four with an annual income of 4,000 yuan. If it goes on like this, in a few years' time you will see that workers are suffering more than peasants and peasants are richer than workers. The manual labourers among the workers were paid an inappropriate wage of 30 yuan a month for one person. The inappropriate wages stimulated the peasants. Peasant and worker, urban and rural life are different. A peasant family of six can get by on an average annual income of 60 yuan per person. If the per capita income is 240 yuan a year, then life is quite good. Many things in the country do not cost money to buy, but everything in the city costs money, and it is inappropriate to mix the two situations.

#### **4. On the transformation of the national bourgeoisie**

I have not researched this issue, but my nose has picked up a little scent. There are also small storms in this area, and also green waves blowing in the spring. For example, it was said that the bourgeoisie did not need to be reformed, that the bourgeoisie was more or less the same as the workers and peasants and did not need to be reformed. A few people even asked why the workers could not be reformed. Who says that workers can be unreformed! "The class struggle transforms the whole of society and transforms the workers themselves." These are the words of Engels. Why should the workers be transformed too? It is because "the proletariat cannot liberate itself without liberating all of humanity." This is our strategic approach. The working class cannot liberate itself unless it liberates 600 million people. The progress that we make here every year is the result of our transformation.

I myself was once an intellectual and believed in Buddhism (Chairman Mao pointed to Zhao Puchu, who was present, and said, "It is your religion that I believe in.") I worshipped Bodhisattvas, followed

my mother to Nanyue to return a wish, and also believed in anarchism, and at that time I thought how good it was. I also believed in Yan De's idealism. How complicated I am. Then Marxism-Leninism changed my mind a bit. For decades now, I have been remoulding myself mainly in the class struggle. Does the bourgeoisie not need remoulding! Is the bourgeoisie so clever! I need to be remoulded, and you don't!? Some people say that "the bourgeoisie does not have two sides, but only one", which is a metaphysical view. There are always two sides to a matter, there are advantages and disadvantages. Only one side cannot reflect the whole picture of things. Moreover, the bourgeoisie has not yet taken off its hat<sup>108</sup>, and even after it has done so, it still needs ideological reform. We all need to study. It is the wish of the majority of businessmen and industrialists to learn. Not to study is not in line with the wishes of the majority. Some people, after taking part in the forty-day study, felt that they had a new outlook after the study and had a common language with everyone, unlike in the past when they were at odds with each other and in different beds.

Some people are afraid of remoulding. America calls our remoulding brainwashing. In fact, the United States practices the real brainwashing, and we are a bit more civilized. According to the theory that the bourgeoisie does not need to be remoulded, even the Constitution would have to be amended. Since the bourgeoisie is now the same as the workers, then the Constitutional leadership of the working class should also be abolished. To be clear, this argument that there is no need for remoulding is not the majority opinion.

## **5. The Question of the Intellectuals, Youth and Students**

Intellectuals and young students have made as much progress as the 600 million people in the country. Workers and peasants have made great progress, business people have made great progress, and intellectuals and young students have also made great progress. But there are also some students who have incorrect ideas. They hate Marxism, push incorrect ideas and post strange arguments. They only care about studying business and study only to earn more salary, eat, get a wife and have children in the future. They think that political theory, the future of the country and human ideals are not needed, and Marxism-Leninism is no longer relevant. It seems that since the second half of last year, none of these things have been in vogue. They need to be given more ideological and political work. Intellectuals, young students need to remould themselves further and not run away from remoulding. The method of remoulding in the past was a bit rough and hurtful. This has to be improved and everyone has to study hard. Apart from professional knowledge, ideology and politics must also be improved. It is necessary to learn a little politics and a little Marxist-Leninist theory. Without political thought, you have no soul. It is not right to think that if you rely only on your professional knowledge, you will be able to eat for the rest of your life. Recently it is the political work that has weakened. The Ministry of Higher Education should be in charge of political work, and the youth league should also be in charge of politics. In the past, we talked about three types of education (moral education, intellectual education and physical education), but now some people only want two types of education (intellectual education and physical education), but not moral education. Moral education means learning Marxism-Leninism and politics. The emphasis in political work is on moral education, intellectual education and physical education - all three. It is not right that the Ministry of Higher Education does not care about political work, it should. The Party and the Youth League should also be in charge, and there should be moral education.

## **6. Increasing production and guarding against wastefulness**

"Here we go again with the fight against wastefulness. That's what the Communists do, after a few months it's all right." Isn't that right? There was really only one campaign against wastefulness. It was only once, during the Movement Against the Three Evils<sup>109</sup>, and not again, and the main reason for promoting economy in 1955 was to tackle waste in unproductive infrastructure, with the aim of reducing production costs. This time the

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<sup>108</sup> That is, it still carries its class label.

<sup>109</sup> The "three evils" were corruption, waste and bureaucracy.

savings were right. A total of 2 billion yuan was saved nationwide. But there were also inappropriate savings, which affected the quality of the works. But many of the projects have been reduced in cost, and overall the achievement is still great. This time the savings were not made in other sectors. Now, the nation-wide effort to increase domestic production and savings, is not just the beginning – no-one wants sofas, carpets, tables and chairs. Be thorough this time and come back next year if you can't get it done this year. It is just like washing your face. Do you all wash your face once a year? As far as I know, everyone washes at least once a day, and some twice. Why? For the sake of looking good, everyone has to wash their face every day. What about the fight against wastefulness? The fight against wastefulness is as frequent as washing your face. Not once a year, not once a week, but more often. Man is not another animal, but a superior animal, and he must wash his face every day. Workers, peasants, intellectuals, people from all parties, in short, all the 600 million people of the country must wash their faces every day to increase production and guard against wastefulness.

Last year the rankings went wrong and some people developed big ideas of promotion and wealth, which is nothing but a competition for fame and gain, for fame at court and for profit in the city. These people also need to wash their faces.

## **7. Overall consideration and proper arrangements**

This is a strategic approach. We have to plan, do things and think in terms of 600 million people. This is something that countries around the world do not have. We have to promote birth control and planned parenthood. I see that human beings are the worst at managing themselves. The production of cotton and cloth has a plan. The production of human beings themselves is not planned. Man has a plan for everything, but he has no plan for having children. There is no anarchy, no leadership, no organisation, no discipline. If this continues, mankind will tend to perish, deny itself and destroy itself in advance. Wouldn't it be great if China's 600 million people increased tenfold to 6 billion, with more children, more people, better sanitation, vaccinations, and all of them being older and more virtuous, and all of them being experts with university degrees and more knowledgeable than us? But there are so many people eating so much that it would be a disaster if 6 billion people had nothing to eat! Minister Li Dequan is also very conscious of this problem. I suggest that the government set up a department called the Ministry of Fertility Planning, OK? A committee could be set up, called a birth control committee. A people's group could also be organised to take charge of this matter. A sum of money should also be allocated to strengthen propaganda and to solve the technical problems of birth control. (Comrade Shaoyi interjected: There should be a plan for childbirth; it is a mistake for a couple to have three children, and a serious mistake to have four.)

I speak of a strategic approach. We have to be serious about disaster relief. There are many disasters in the country, and every year there are disasters, we have to allocate food and give them relief food. We have to do integrated marketing, which was not done in the Soviet Union, but we have planned integrated marketing of grain throughout the country. There are also arrangements for employment and the united front policy, all of which are taken into account and arranged in a reasonable manner. Last year we arranged for 3 million people to be employed, but according to the plan we could only arrange for 800,000 people, so 2.2 million were surplus, so there was a lot of trouble. Wages went out and 18 million people were paid, an increase of 3 million people. Unemployment can only be eliminated gradually, not yet completely. There are many unemployed people in Guangzhou and Shanghai, and we have to think of ways to do this. Some people propose that three people should eat for five, which can be considered. With a large population and low salaries, our senior staff will not die if they are without a pay rise for ten years. The principle is that no one should die. This is because the small amount of money in this year's plan can only do this much, so even those who are senior and virtuous will not receive an increase in salary. I am a little offended by this opinion, but it will not kill anyone. If you want increases, give a little increase to the comrades below.

What about the student problem? 40% of school-age children, when they reach school age, cannot go to school. The People's Government is not an all-powerful government, the People's Government cannot take one step forward. In addition, there are still 4 million senior primary school graduates who cannot go on to secondary school this year. There is no space and no funding. There are 800,000 junior high school students who can't go on to senior high school, 90,000 high school students who can't go on to university (these statistics are inconsistent and will vary sooner or later), and university students who can't go on to college. Employment has also become a problem, 800,000 people waiting for jobs! So many people waiting to be placed. It's like queuing up for pork. Waiting there. This is quite a big problem, let's discuss it. There is only so much money in the country this year and only so many can be placed in jobs. What should we do?

### **8. On "Let A Hundred Flowers Blossom, Let A Hundred Schools Of Thought Contend" And "Long-Term Coexistence And Mutual Supervision"**

Of the contradictions among the people, Lenin said that antagonism is eliminated and contradictions exist. Stalin said in his pamphlet *Dialectical Materialism and Historical Materialism* that there were no contradictions. Lenin could not examine the problem comprehensively then. Stalin did not admit for a long time that socialism had contradictions. But in 1952 he wrote a book, *On the Economic Problems of Socialism in the USSR*, in which he admitted that there were contradictions between the productive forces and the relations of production, that they could be handled well without confrontation or conflict, but that there would be conflict if they were handled badly. He had discerned this.

The Soviet Union was founded 40 years ago and we were many years behind. We started to establish base areas in some places in 1927 and have also had 30 years of experience. Based on the experience of the Soviet Union and ours, the existence of socialist contradictions should be affirmed. The basic contradictions are the contradiction between the productive forces and the relations of production, the contradiction between the superstructure and the base, which are all expressed as contradictions among the people, the contradictions between the collective and the individual among the people. There is no exploitation in socialism, it is all communal, but there are only two kinds: ownership by the whole people and by the collective. Stalin's failure to recognise contradictions lacked dialectics and was a serious violation of dialectical materialism. We said in the *People's Daily* article that he had made a partial mistake. It is to this point that we refer. Under his influence the article on identity in the *Concise Philosophical Dictionary* (edited by Eugene) quotes the identity of formal logic to analyse philosophical identity, without clarifying the difference between the identity of formal logic and the identity of dialectical logic. It says that there is no identity between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, between war and peace, between life and death, and other contradictions. Engels tells us that there is no unity without opposition, and that in fact opposites cannot be without unity, but only have struggle. Bourgeoisie and proletariat, war and peace, life and death all have identity, otherwise it would be wrong. After Stalin's death the Soviet philosophical community changed its view on these questions. There was a rather serious metaphysical view in Soviet philosophy in Stalin's time. The bourgeoisie was the bourgeoisie and the proletariat was the proletariat. The bourgeois and the proletarian do not change; war and peace, life and death cannot change. Our argument is different. We believe that the bourgeois can be transformed into the proletarian, the proletarian can be transformed into the bourgeois, war can be transformed into peace, peace can be transformed into war, life can be transformed into death, and death can be transformed into life. Although Stalin was philosophically metaphysical and denied the change of antagonism, later in his book *On the Economic Problems of Socialism in the USSR*, he said that socialism has contradictions and that poorly handled contradictions can be transformed into antagonism. That would be right. In effect Stalin was poorly and hesitatingly acknowledging the dialectical method.

It should be said that in a socialist society, the contradiction between the relations of production and the productive forces, and the contradiction between the superstructure and the base all exist. Politics, law, philosophy and ideology should all serve the economic base and conform to the requirements of its development; if they do not, conflicts will arise.

Recognizing that there are contradictions in socialism, we must let a hundred flowers bloom and a hundred schools of thought contend. When a hundred flowers bloom, even poisonous weeds may be released; when a hundred schools of thought contend, idealism may also contend. A little openness is fine as long as it does not destroy unity and does not organize groups in secret. Our country is large, with more than 9.6 million square kilometres, so it does not matter if we open up a little.

Fragrant flowers and poisonous weeds. Among the hundred flowers there would have been the flowers of weeds and poisonous plants. If you want grain and rice, you can't do without weeds. Every year the peasants have to hoe the weeds, every year. It is not possible to prohibit all weeds from growing, nor is it possible to give orders not to allow all weeds to grow. The fact is that if there are weeds, there are poisonous weeds. It is dogmatism to allow only fragrant flowers to grow and not to allow weeds to grow. It is a petty-bourgeois thing, metaphysical in its approach, without any concrete analysis of society or things. Metaphysics has been around for a long time, especially in the capitalist era, and also in China.

It is difficult to separate the fragrant flowers from the poisonous weeds. All new things suffer blows and go through this difficult path in the process of growth. In the West, Marxism has until now been considered a poisonous weed. The League of Nations and Sun Yat-sen were also considered poisonous weeds in the late Qing Dynasty. The Communist Party has long been called bandits and brigands. For those of us who meet here, Hong Kong and Taiwan still call us bandits, i.e. poisonous weeds. The old man Confucius was unpopular in his life, and he was also a category of weeds at that time. Jesus was also socially unacceptable at that time. Siddhartha Gautama, the founder of Buddhism, was also not welcomed by society at the beginning. The beginning of Martin Luther's Protestantism was also not recognised by society and was seen as a poisonous weed. The reason why Sun Xingshi in *Journey to the West* was ordained as a Pilgrim was that the Jade Emperors considered him to be a poisonous weed, but he identified himself as a Qi Tian Da Sheng<sup>110</sup>. There is a play in feudal society where the great hero Xue Rengui was only made a tiger-headed soldier, and that was his rival Zhang Shigui's appraisal of him<sup>111</sup>. The astronomical works of the European astronomer Copernicus could not even be published during his lifetime and were only recognised after his death. The same goes for Galileo. Darwin's theory of evolution was not recognised by people at first either. I read a biography of a scientist and the history of the invention of sleeping pills is quite convoluted. It got its name in France first, and the first person to take it in China was Li Liejun. After taking it, it was said to be good. Li Liejun was a member of the Central Committee of the Kuomintang and is dead now. It was later popularised by the American dancer Duncan who took sleeping pills when she had her second child and it relieved the suffering of her illness. All this shows that all scientific inventions and all new things in the world grow. There will be difficulties. Sima Qian wrote *The Records of the Grand Historian*, which was also not recognised at first. It had to be hidden away in a famous mountain, and only later was it passed on to future generations. It takes hard work for new forces to be recognised by society, and it is impossible to have smooth sailing; the harder it is, the stronger it is, and the smoother it is, the more vulnerable it is. Ours is a new society, but new things also run into the repression of stubborn conservative forces, and there are still difficulties. Dead bureaucrats and stubborn forces are the antagonists of the new forces. It should be said that in the new society new things grow in better conditions than in the old. But new things are recognised by society, and they have to go through hard struggle. Without hard struggle, without the struggle against difficulties, the new forces will never grow. This is the law of history.

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<sup>110</sup> Sun Xingshi is another name for Sun Wukong who took the name Qitian Dasheng and was called the Monkey King in the book *Journey to the West*.

<sup>111</sup> Xue Rengui (614- 683) and Zhang Shigui (586~657) were famous generals, and rivals, of the early Tang Dynasty.

There are also many questions about what is a fragrant flower and what is a poisonous weed. Stalin was a fragrant flower and Khrushchev turned it into a poisonous weed with one blow. Now it smells a bit better again.

Recently, some criticism has been problematic. Zhong Xiaoxian<sup>112</sup> wrote an article under a false name: "The Gongs and Bells of the Film" denies everything and has a great impact, which Taiwan appreciates and reproduces in full. Chen Yi, his subordinate Chen Qitong, four of them, published an article in the People's Daily on 17 January in which they doubted the blossoming of a hundred flowers, saying that they had not seen any major works even if they were blossoming. Such a conclusion is premature. Lu Dingyi's "Hundred Flowers Blossom" article was only published last July, only five months before the time of Comrade Chen Yi's article in January. How can an article on the victory of a hundred flowers be written? I expressed my disapproval of their opinions at the National Conference of Provincial and Municipal Party Secretaries. The People's Daily has so far not published an article of counter-criticism. What does it mean, do they disapprove of me? Or are there difficulties? If you have difficulties, you should consult the Central Government. Is there a problem with the People's Daily here?

They have misjudged the situation. That article, I dare not take their advice. Now the four of them have published a review, and Chen Yi made a statement in the fourth issue of Wenyi Bao (the Literary and Art Newspaper). Their past is still good. The Wenyi Bao did not publish Ding Yi's article, but published Chen Yi's. Taiwan liked Zhong Xiaoxian's article. It was sent out. In foreign countries, Romania sends out Lu Dingyi's articles, Pravda does not print them. Chen Yi's article was published in Pravda, which liked it. This is fine. Each is right, each is wrong. Things are gathered in groups, and people are divided into groups. Everyone likes what they like, dogmatism likes dogmatism, opportunism likes opportunism. I'm afraid this phenomenon deserves some comment. There was a young writer called Wang Meng<sup>113</sup>, probably Wang Ming's brother, who used to be the secretary of the league branch of a factory. He wrote a piece called "The New Young People in the Organization Department" (a novel), which also caused problems, both for and against. Party members fought with party members. Some said the piece was useless. Among them was Ma Hanbing<sup>114</sup>. There was

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<sup>112</sup> Zhong Xiaoxian (1919—1987) went to Yan'an Anti-Japanese Military and Political University to study in the spring of 1937, then went to Yan'an Lu Xun Academy of Art to study in the Fine Arts Department, and stayed on to teach after graduation. Soon he was engaged in cultural, educational and propaganda work in the guerrilla area behind enemy lines. Later, he served in a number of cultural institutions, and specialised in film. The publication of "The Gongs and Drums of Movies" in 1956 caused widespread controversy and he was classified as a rightist the following year. The intention of his writing was to attach importance to the box office and the audience. It was argued that from 1953 to June 1956, more than 100 domestic films were released, of which more than 70% did not recover costs, some recovered only 10% of the cost, and the documentary "Happy Children" did not even recover the advertising costs". In 1978, he was rehabilitated as a researcher at the Institute of Literature of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences. He continued to devote himself to film reviews and published several papers on film aesthetics.

<sup>113</sup> Wang Meng (October 15, 1934 -) is a contemporary Chinese writer, former Minister of Culture of the People's Republic of China (1986 to 1989), member of the Standing Committee of the CPPCC National Committee, vice chairman of the Chinese Writers Association and other positions. In 1956, he published the novel "New Young Man in the Organization Department", which described a young man who was new to a Communist Youth League Committee and was dissatisfied with the leadership of the bureaucracy. The critical novel quickly caused a sensation, and Wang Meng was classified as a "rightist" the following year. From 1963 to 1978, Wang Meng took the initiative to apply for decentralization. He lived and worked in Xinjiang. After learning Uyghur, he served as a Chinese translator. He was not related to Wang Ming - Mao was having a laugh at his expense.

<sup>114</sup> Ma Hanbing (1916-1957) had worked in Myanmar during the 1930s. He returned to China in 1938, and soon joined the Communist Party of China. During the Anti-Japanese War, he participated in the Eighth Route Army

also criticism that Beijing was the seat of the central government and it had no bureaucracy, then it was said that the location was poorly chosen and that it would have been more appropriate if Shanghai had been chosen. I have read a bit of Marxism-Leninism and there is no such thing as a central location where bureaucracy does not emerge. There are still bureaucracies in the centre. In the past, the central government produced Chen Duxiu, Li Lisan, Wang Ming and Gao-Rao. Such criticism is not correct. Marxism-Leninism has to be developed in the light of the actual situation, and Marxism-Leninism has to be developed. Dogmatism is not Marxism-Leninism.

With a population of 600 million, China is a large kingdom of petty bourgeoisie, with 500 million peasants and over 20 million craftsmen. Fifty million small traders. The bourgeoisie is half a million people. The petty bourgeoisie has 570 million people, and this is an objective existence. These people are not allowed to publish their opinions, how can that be?

The mouth has two functions, and one is for eating. The other is for speaking (to express an opinion). If they are only allowed to eat but are not allowed to speak, how can this happen! China is a big petty bourgeoisie country. Starting from being, petty bourgeois consciousness must be reflected. They will try every possible means to express themselves tenaciously, and a wild fire cannot be burnt out, and a spring breeze will bring it back to life. They must be educated patiently over a long period of time, not by repression so that they do not express themselves, but only by debate with them when they do say something. Writing articles of criticism cannot be metaphysical. It has to be fully persuasive. It has to be dialectical.

Can old cadres be criticised? In Marxist books it is never said that criticism distinguishes between new and old cadres. Or that one can only criticise new cadres, not old ones. The Constitution states that people are equal in law. Party members and non-communists should also be equal in making mistakes. Do old cadres gain the right not to be criticised just because they are old? I don't think so. If they are not criticised when they are alive, they should be criticised even when they are dead. Confucius has been criticised for thousands of years after his death. The May Fourth Movement proposed "Down with Confucius' shop". Now Confucius is a little better. Stalin was criticised even after his death. Criticism cannot occur according to the size of the official position, or the age of the young or the old, but can be made even if one is dead or alive.

Relying on old qualifications to eat noodles. You can eat noodles with old qualifications. It is because of old age that one has lived a long life without dying, i.e. one has a kind of qualification that allows one to eat. Old qualifications have a role to play, to wave the flag, they can have this function. (Applause) Even at 80 years old, they can play this role. Mei Lanfang<sup>115</sup>, who is here, (Chairman Mao interjected and asked: Is he here yet?) you can still run the show at 80 years old. I can't sing the red lady in *The West Wing*, but I can sing the old lady. I can't sing the lead role, the lead role is Premier Zhou. You can sing all of them, but it won't work either, people will kick you out. The old man can only sing once. But no matter how old the qualifications, work must be done correctly. It's okay to live to be right until you're 99, but it's not okay to make a mistake and be a big jerk at 100. That's

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Art Work Team. After the victory of the War of Resistance Against Japan, he was transferred to various military posts and then served as Minister of Logistics and Minister of Propaganda.

<sup>115</sup> Mei Lanfang (1894 –1961) was a notable Peking opera artist in modern Chinese theater. Mei was known as "Queen of Peking Opera" and known exclusively for his female lead roles. After the Japanese occupation of Beijing, the commander of the Japanese Army ordered Mei to perform for them and appointed him to a high ranking official position. But Mei refused to sing throughout the duration of the war and endured an impoverished lifestyle until it ended in 1945. After 1949 he served as director of China Beijing Opera Theatre, director of the Chinese Opera Research Institute, and vice-chairman of China Federation of Literary and Art Circles. Mei joined the Chinese Communist Party in 1959.

how it is with Rakosi<sup>116</sup>. A person cannot be shielded from criticism for doing the wrong thing because of his old qualifications.

The new cadres are the same, and the shortcomings of the youth should be criticised and used for education. In relation to youth, one should be sympathetic. Lenin said of young people that because they are young, God will forgive them. He said it in the book *Left-Wing Communism: An infantile Disease*. God forgives them because they are young. One should be strict with the elderly. You should also be strict with the youth, but help and educate them patiently over a long period of time. Otherwise, if you are only strict with the youth, the old men will be too comfortable and that is not good.

Many people do not agree with the policy of letting a hundred flowers bloom and a hundred schools of thought contend, or the policy of long-term co-existence and mutual supervision. Nine out of ten senior cadres are not in favour of it. Or they are half in favour of it, not having a clear idea of this policy. Those comrades who are really open-minded are in the minority. Idealism should be criticised, as should the petty bourgeois tendencies in literature and art. But criticism must be appropriate and persuasive. It must not be metaphysical. Dogmatic criticism will not solve the problem; not only will it not solve the problem, it will promote something bad. Our criticism is a criticism within the people. It is a policy of the people themselves educating themselves, uniting among themselves and developing their own cause.

What is right can only develop in the struggle against what is wrong. New things happen in the struggle against old things. Chinese Marxism-Leninism grew out of the struggle against the bad things that grew on Chinese soil.

There's nothing to be afraid of when something goes wrong. There's nothing to be afraid of when weeds and idle flowers grow up. Year after year weeds grow and bloom. Why don't you allow it? And there could be good weeds and flowers among the bad weeds and flowers, so it's not right not to allow them to grow. Weeds have been growing for hundreds of thousands of years, not just in the last few years. If we were to rule that no flowers are allowed to bloom, it is likely that among the flowers that are not allowed to bloom there would be fragrant flowers. Even the fragrant flowers of Marxism-Leninism have to grow and develop in the midst of critical struggle. Old things are not necessarily poisonous weeds, only some of them are. Some things that bear the sign of Marxism are not always Marxist either.

There is also disagreement with the approach of long-term co-existence and joint supervision. This is also metaphysical. I have spoken on this issue many times. We are against dogmatism. We advocate a hundred schools of thought, long-term co-existence, and the treatment of those who make mistakes to cure the sickness and save the patient. But when it comes to writing articles, we forget. Instead of curing the sick to save the patient, we beat them to death with a stick. I hope we will pay attention to this aspect and promote the planting of cowpox, which I have done. People are strong when they develop the ability to fight disease. People who have never been sick do not have the ability to fight disease and it is dangerous. It's good to get sick a lot, it creates the ability to fight disease and build immunity.

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<sup>116</sup> Mátyás Rákosi (1892 – 1971) was a leader of the Hungarian Communist Party politician and leader of Hungary from 1947 to 1956. His resignation in July 1956 ignited the counter-revolutionary “Hungarian Incident” of that year.

## 9. How to deal with strikes, walkouts, demonstrations and petitions

There is still a lack of materials that fully reflect student disturbances. Last year, roughly 7,000 students from more than 20 schools made trouble. Kunming Aviation School advocates the use of Marxist methods to run schools, and does not approve of bureaucracy. They analyse the materials of the student disturbances very well. They said that the cause of the students' trouble was the bureaucracy of the leadership and the naivety and ignorance of the young students. Students do not know how to work hard, and leaders do not know how to care about education. Moreover, the practical difficulties for the students were not resolved in time. They can't share the joys and sorrows with the students, instead they use various methods to deceive the students.

There were more than fifty strikes by workers last year. Smaller ones of ten or twenty people, and larger ones of a thousand. How are contradictions among the people handled? It seems that contradictions among the people happen all the time. There were strikes, school strikes and taking time off last year and there will be again this year. It can't all be blamed on the influence of Hungary and Poland. It's happened just since the Polish-Hungarian affair. Things are not done well.

What about workers' and students' strikes, and demonstrations? I see four solutions.

- (i) Try to overcome bureaucracy. Handle conflicts appropriately.
- (ii) When bureaucracy is not overcome, do we let it go or not? There are two guidelines: one is not to guard against it, and to regard anyone who makes a scene as being in rebellion. I do not think this is appropriate. There are counter-revolutionaries, but we cannot say that those who cause trouble are mainly counter-revolutionaries. The main problem is that our leaders have problems, shortcomings in their work, even bureaucracy; they do not know how to educate, do not know how to be leaders, do not do a good job. The second is to allow the disturbances. I think we should let the trouble be solved by allowing striking in classes or at work. You should solve the problem, but you are the one who failed to do so! (At this point Mao Zedong said to Shi Fuliang<sup>117</sup>: Shi Fuliang, you are a troublemaker, aren't you?)
- (iii) After the trouble is it OK to beat a hasty retreat? How can you do that when you haven't had your fill of it for two or three days? It's not enough. Let them create enough trouble. If they haven't had enough trouble after two or three days, the authorities should withdraw the troops. That's not right. Let him have his fun. I've been in trouble too. If you don't make enough noise, you can't solve the problem. If one week is not enough, then a fortnight; if two weeks is not enough, then three weeks; if three weeks is not enough, then four weeks - let them have enough time. See the process as a process of overcoming bureaucracy and improving work and educating workers and students. Leaders should actively work to educate workers and students, make up political lessons and see the process of strikes, school strikes and taking time off as a process of overcoming bureaucracy and improving work and educating workers and students.

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<sup>117</sup> Shi Fuliang (1899-1970) was one of the earliest members of the Communist Party of China. In 1945, he participated in the establishment of the China Democratic National Construction Association and served as a standing council member. In 1949, he participated in the preparations and attended the first plenary session of the CPPCC National Committee. After 1949, he served successively as the Deputy Minister of the Ministry of Labor of the State Council, and the Deputy Chairman of the First and Second Central Committee of the China Democratic National Construction Association.

- (iv) Should leaders of strikes and walkouts be dismissed? Except for individual ones. Except for those who kill with a knife and are sent outside the classroom, they should not be beaten, imprisoned or expelled. To expel worker and school strike leaders is a bourgeois approach. It is better for worker strike and student strike leaders to stay. Those who are right and those who are wrong should stay. Those who are wrong should stay as instructors, even if they are agents (as long as they don't kill anyone). What's wrong with leaving a few agents in a unit? You don't have to make it clean to feel comfortable. The leaders of the Qinghua University strike should also stay, even if they are instructors, and even better if they are famous. These are rare persons to hire.

Don't expel leaders of strikes and school strikes. Expulsion is the way of the Guomindang. We have to do the opposite to that of the Guomindang.

There will be more trouble. China is particularly problematic. People don't think alike. Many people think differently from us. Our staff and people in charge come from all over the place, and many of them are not educated enough and make mistakes easily, and intellectuals who are more educated do not necessarily not make mistakes, and sometimes they make even bigger mistakes. Our Party has made both left-leaning and right-leaning mistakes throughout its history. Those who made mistakes, such as Chen Duxiu and Li Lisan, were intellectuals. Mistakes will be made and conflicts will be constant. We have to take the trouble to deal with it properly as a way of regulating conflicts.

#### **10. Is making a mess a bad thing or a good thing?**

Strikes, school strikes, marches and demonstrations I would say are both good and bad. There are two sides to a commodity, and there are two sides to this. The same duality as the events in Hungary and Poland. The Hungarian events were bad, and good, and bad. The Hungarian fiasco was not good, but the fiasco also helped us a lot. The first thing is that the situation in Hungary has stabilised and the situation in Hungary is now better than it was in the past. Furthermore, the socialist camp has learned a great lesson. There was a worldwide upsurge of anti-Soviet and anti-communist activity. The first is of course bad, but the second is good. For the anti-Soviet and anti-communist efforts of the imperialist camp had tempered the communist parties of all countries. The organs of the French Communist Party were disrupted and the leader of the Swiss Communist Party hid in the mountains and sought out our embassy. Large numbers of communists left the party. Intellectual party members in Britain, Holland and Belgium left the Party. It was good that they left the party and purified it. The main aspect is good.

Criticism of Stalin is also a duality, is two-sided. On the one hand it was bad, on the other good. The good is that it lifted the lid on personal superstition and was an ideological liberation movement. But because it was uncovered in the wrong way, it was beaten to death with a stick and caused several major storms in most of the world. It caused the Polish and Hungarian incidents and other difficulties. This issue was addressed with our Soviet comrades face to face at the 20th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, but only not in public documents. The mishandling of the Stalin issue also reflected the Soviet Communist Party's chauvinism.

The United States does not recognise that we are also a duality and two-sided. Not recognising us is bad, for we can't get into the UN – it is as if we don't exist, but then there are great advantages. We can live our lives comfortably. I've spoken to my friends about this view and I just haven't been able to convince them. It's better to acknowledge us in another six years, and in another 15. Let them see that we can build without them. When we have built, it will be too late for them to repent. I am happy if the United States does not recognise us; if it does, I will be worried. It is the same with

Britain and China having diplomatic relations: we will not give up Taiwan whether it recognises us or not. If it does not recognise us, we have something to say. There are articles to be written.

It is also good that a few articles with errors have come out. We are grateful to them for the erroneous articles mentioned above. Because they gave us a basis for opposition to criticism and gave us a target for opposing criticism, so that opposing criticism is possible. What about the article "The Gongs and Drums of Movies", which says that there are no great works, no good films? Great works will be produced, whether they are good or bad is another question. If there are more bad things, good things will come. This is dialectics. The defence was not invented by Marx, but by our ancestor, Lao Tzu, who said "Lao Tzu is the best in the world", who had the idea that bad things can become good and good things can become bad. " In ancient times, there were even people who burned their houses and their guests went to congratulate them instead. This was because the bad thing that happened when the house was burnt down would turn out to be a good thing for the family.

The Japanese fought their way into China and China failed. But in China's defeat there was an element of victory. In this way, China's defeat was transformed into victory and Japan's victory was transformed into defeat. So it was with the Soviet-German War. The war began with the loss of a large part of the Soviet Union and Hitler's army approaching the city, but Hitler's victory included defeat, and the Soviet Union's defeat included victory. When the Japanese delegation came to China to say sorry, I said that your aggression was also good in a sense, helping to unite China. Defeated Japanese imperialism.

The Third World War, if it arose, would have both good and bad aspects.

China is poor and blank, poor in the sense that the standard of living is not high, and blank in the sense that the level of education is not high. Both of these have a dual nature. Our revolution is based on these two, one poor and one blank. It would be difficult to have a revolution if we were as well-off and highly educated as the West. If we want a revolution, we have to rely on the poor, poorly educated and even illiterate masses. I am not advocating illiteracy. What if World War III is fought? What if it's fought immediately? What if we break up the meeting and fight? As I see it, if you want to fight, you fight, and if you want to make a scene, you make a scene. You have to be prepared for a world war right after the meeting, with half of humanity wiped out? Or all of them wiped out? I just don't believe that will happen. I have argued with the prime ministers of India and Pakistan. In short, on World War III, number one, it is not welcome; number two, we are not afraid.

If the Third World War breaks out, not a few hundred million people will be involved in it, but one and a half or two billion. In the end it will be the annihilation of imperialism and the triumph of socialism.

There are two sides to the war: the bad side and the side that makes the people aware, nervous and revolutionary, and causes the revolution to erupt. In short, there are two sides, the destructive side and the side that mobilises the people and raises their revolutionary consciousness.

In a real fight, don't be afraid. We can fight even with millet and rifles, not to mention that we have new weapons. Don't be sad when you hear of a world war, that would be worse than even Chiang Kai-shek. Chiang Kai-shek did not cry foul about the war. Montgomery said there were only two great powers in the world that could not be wiped out. These were the Soviet Union and China, which could not be wiped out. The Soviet Union relied on the Arctic Ocean and we relied on the Kunlun Mountains, neither of which could be wiped out. The outbreak of the Third World War would be good for us too. As I said earlier, when the representative of Japan visited China to admit to us its

mistakes and said to me that it was sorry for us, I said my friend, in a sense you have done a good thing, you have educated the Chinese people to unite against the Japanese and educated them to oppose you.

In the world, opposing sides permeate and influence each other. In the international arena, the two opposing sides are also interpenetrating and influencing each other. As a song says, "We are like a pair of clay figures that will be broken together, then shaped and reshaped, and reunited, with you in me and me in you." The world is also two clay Bodhisattvas with me in you and me in you. The capitalist world has our people and the socialist world has theirs. There are people in Hungary who like to listen to the Voice of America. One man listened to the Voice of America and bought food and hid in his house waiting for the World War. There were people in the Soviet Union who liked to listen to the Voice of America, and there are people in China who like to listen to it too.

In short, our approach to the Third World War is this.

First, prepare to fight. Fight it and prepare to take the final victory. And double the victory. Now there's 900 million people in red. At that time, it could become 1.8 billion.

Secondly, a long period of fighting is not possible, I think it could be ten or twenty years. Or maybe longer.

Fight, stop construction and specialise in war. But it doesn't look like fighting now. What are the imperialists up to now? Infiltrating each other. Subverting Poland, Hungary. The main conflict in the world now is imperialism fighting over colonies, the US is fighting over British colonies, fighting over Asia and Africa. This is the main contradiction in the world.

There are now three forces in the world.

1. the socialist forces. They are pro-peace, anti-imperialist.
2. The national independence forces. They can co-operate with us in varying degrees on the issues of peace and anti-imperialism.
3. The imperialist forces. It is not in their interest to go to war. Without war the United States will have to compete with Britain and France for colonies, for Asia and Africa, and their course is not the same as ours in our estimation, as if we had told them to do this.

The main areas of conflict are (i), India, Pakistan (ii), Syria, Morocco (iii), and vast areas or regions of the Middle East. This is analysed in Rockefeller's article, which is well worth reading. The main objective was the competition for colonies.

## **11. National Minorities and Great Han Chauvinism**

China has tens of millions of national minorities, who occupy 60% of the country's land. One of the ten major relationships talks about the relationship between the Han and the national minorities. The relationship between the Han and the national minorities must be improved. The main problem to be solved is the problem of great Han chauvinism. This problem has not been solved. The Central Committee of the Communist Party of China is going to hold a plenary session of the Central Committee to discuss the issue of the united front and the minority nationalities, and must change its style and its disrespect for the minority nationalities.

There was a faction in Tibet that wanted an independent kingdom and was going to India for support, and the Dalai Lama faltered. India sent an invitation, but we did the work, he didn't listen, and we let them go. Britain had set up an intelligence centre in India, dedicated to undermining our

unity with Tibet. Nehru and Premier Zhou had said that it was a spy centre. We said to those who left, you can leave if you want to, but it won't be good for you.

We have an Article 17 with Tibet. The system in Tibet must be reformed, but the reform must be done with their consent, and if they do not agree to change it, it will not be changed. The second five-year plan period may not be changed. Whether or not to change during the Third Five-Year Plan is also subject to your opinion, and if you want to change, then change, or not change.

## 12. Construction and people's lifestyles

China may initially change its face after three five-year plans. For industrialisation, the Soviet Union had a line, and we had a line too. There are some differences between our approach and that of the Soviet Union, and I spoke about this in my speech on the Ten Major Relationships. The main thing is that the ratio of investment in heavy and light agriculture is appropriate. The ratio of heavy and light agriculture in the Soviet Union was 9:1, with nine for heavy industry and one for light agriculture, which smacked of exhausting the peasants. Of course, this is for nation building. But the farmers are not motivated and the market is not flourishing enough. Where is the market for heavy industry? It's in light industry and agriculture. China has 500 million peasants. The ratio of heavy to light agriculture in the first five-year plan was 8:1, but the result was 7:1. I think it would be better to make the second five-year plan 6:1. I would like to ask comrades in the State Council to study whether this is feasible. I have not studied this specifically.

Light industry and agriculture are one and the same thing. There is no light industry without agriculture. Without light industry, there is no heavy industry. How can you have heavy industry if you don't have raw materials or markets!

Heavy industry should be a priority, and 6:1 is still a priority. It is still in line with the law of productivity development, but it takes a new path, and on the surface it appears that the proportion of investment in heavy industry is smaller and slower than in the Soviet Union, but in fact it may be faster. Our hopes are pinned on the possibility that we can develop a little faster than the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union had 4 million tons of steel in 1913 in the days of the old Russia, recovering to 4 million tons of steel in 1921 and increasing to 18 million tons in 1941, an increase of 14 million tons over the old Russia. That is, an increase of 14 million tons in 21 years, and our old base was 900,000 tons of steel.

The statistics from 1950 are mainly from the Japanese in the Northeast. From 1950 onwards if we could have had a peaceful environment for 21 years, like the Soviet Union, then from 1950 to 1971, i.e. by the second five-year plan<sup>118</sup>, I can conclude that we would have had more than 18 million tonnes of steel, probably up to 20 million tonnes. Of course, if imperialism does not give us a chance for peace and the world is in chaos, I will have to fight and then build. Once the fight starts, it's a case of redressing the world. The greater likelihood is that the fight will not come.

So, it might be better to take a bit of a roundabout route in terms of construction guidelines. It is important to feed the farmers and make the market situation better. More work has to be done to give the peasants purchasing power. Only if the farmers can produce more food will the light industry have the raw materials. Only when agriculture develops will there be a market for light industry, a market for fertiliser, a market for steel and a market for electricity. In other words, heavy industry will have a market and be able to develop more. When heavy industry has a market it will in turn lead to the potential of agriculture and light industry being realised. We have more experience

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<sup>118</sup> 1971 appears in the original text, but the First Five Year Plan ran from 1953 to 1957 and the Second from 1958 to 1962.

of the revolution, we have made mistakes, we have tumbled, we have certainty. Inexperienced in economic construction, we hope not to turn over a big tumble or make a big mistake. There is no need to be like the democratic revolution when 90% of the Soviet area was lost and ended up in a 25,000-mile Long March. Mistakes are inevitable, but we should not make it so that the whole country's base areas are lost and only a few small places like Shaanxi are left. Economic construction can be done with fewer mistakes, and mistakes do not have to be so big and cost less. Now we still lack experience and do not know how things should be done properly. We still have to gain experience in many things.

Is the Soviet Union good or not? Should we continue to learn. The Soviet Union is good and we should continue to learn.

The Soviet Union is still a good country. They helped us with so many factories, including military factories. Did Britain, France and the United States help us? No. No other country helped us design and build so many factories as the Soviet Union did! No other country could have helped us like that, and it was the Soviet Union, the socialist Soviet Union, that helped us like that. The shortcomings of the Soviet Union are another matter, we are in the same category as them. We still have to learn mainly from the Soviet Union. We have to learn from all countries, from the USA, Germany, France, Japan and the UK. Foreign languages of all countries also had to be studied, Russian alone was not enough. But the main thing we had to learn from was the Soviet Union. Only they are willing to teach us design, only they are willing to give us equipment. Only they could give us aid. It was the Soviet Union that really helped us. That's why studying the Soviet Union was our priority.

There are several attitudes to learning. The dogmatic attitude is also learning, good and bad together. Another attitude is to learn from advanced experience. The dogmatic attitude to learning is not right; we need to learn from advanced experience. Our press does not suggest learning from backward experience, but sometimes we actually learn backward things as if they were advanced experience. This situation has to be avoided.

Unity with all socialist countries is required. Unite with the invaded countries of Asia and Africa, but above all with the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union is reliable. The imperialist countries have no conscience and are unreliable. What conscience does Dulles have? He is very problematic, scolding us every day and keeping Taiwan occupied.

That's enough. What time is it? Seven o'clock. Three, four, five, six, seven, that's more than four hours. No more. (Applause)

(Recorded and collated by Qi Benyu)

## Chapter 7: The Origins of the Anti-Rightist Movement, Its Expansion and Subsequent Rehabilitations

1. Causes of the Anti-Rightist Movement
2. The Development of the Anti-Rightist Movement and its Enlargement
3. On the issue of rehabilitating the Anti-Rightist Movement after its expansion

Appendix: Historical facts before and after the Anti-Rightist Movement show that the old intellectuals did not shoulder the historical responsibility of the proletariat.

### 7.1 Causes of the Anti-Rightist Movement

The "Hungarian incident" and the "Polish incident" in the autumn of 1956 within the socialist camp in Eastern Europe had an impact on our side that cannot be underestimated. It cannot be denied that, only a few years after liberation, a very serious bureaucratic and subjectivist style had developed among some Party cadres, and that there was considerable and not insignificant public opinion, and that many social contradictions had accumulated. The opinions of the masses and social contradictions could not be ignored, or else the slightest movement could lead to a major incident like the one in Hungary. In order to take the initiative, Chairman Mao made an internal speech at the Supreme State Council on 27 February and 1 March 1957, determined to give the masses who had opinions a chance to speak and take the initiative to resolve social conflicts.

As soon as the spirit of this speech came out, the masses moved to respond to Chairman Mao's call to give advice to the Communist Party, and to speak out freely, with large-character posters appearing in some parts of the community. This situation was in fact what the Chairman had expected and gave great confidence to Chairman Mao himself and some cadres in the Party. Therefore, about two months after Chairman Mao's internal speech, i.e. on 27 April 1957, the Central Committee issued an official Instruction on the Rectification Campaign. The repercussions of this directive were very strong in the community and the masses mobilised even more, seizing the opportunity to put up big-character posters to leaders with serious bureaucratic practices and exploding all the grievances in their hearts. Many friendly members of the democratic parties were also mobilised, responding to Chairman Mao's call to help the Communist Party to rectify the situation. As a result, large-character posters were no longer a local phenomenon, but a widespread phenomenon in society as a whole, and it really became "a hundred flowers blossoming and a hundred schools of thought contending".

It was a good thing that a speech caused such a relaxed climate and such a situation of contention among a hundred schools of thought. However, some people at the top of the party were originally afraid of this and that, and at this time they all said that Chairman Mao was not good. According to what I heard in the office at the time, Liu Shaoqi, Deng Xiaoping, and Peng Zhen said that the chairman spoke at the Supreme State Council and went out without prior discussion. In the past, everything was discussed first inside the party and then outside the party. This time Chairman Mao held the discussion outside the party first and then inside the party. The same thing was said at the Supreme State Council before it was said at the party's propaganda work. They attacked Chairman Mao for violating procedures, making the party precarious and messing up the country. A considerable number of people in the Party followed their lead and complained that the Chairman should not be so liberal and should not let anyone come out and give their opinions. Some even said that the Chairman had just finished saying that "modesty makes people progress, but pride makes

people lag behind", and that he himself was no longer modest. All these people demanded that the Chairman should change the policy he had stated at the Supreme State Council. Before Chairman Mao's speech, there was an international wave of anti-communism, and after Chairman Mao's speech, many people from the democratic parties in China rose up to make waves again. The newspapers also said that the rightists had attacked rampantly, that they were going to kill the communists and that the world was in chaos. Things were being exaggerated to the extreme. According to Ge Peiqi<sup>119</sup>, an old Communist, he only made critical comments to the Party Committee, saying that the Party Committee should keep in close contact with the masses, that Party cadres should not live a special life, and that efforts should be made to overcome subjectivism, sectarianism and bureaucracy, and that he had in no way said anything about killing Communists or the like. What is wrong with such opinions? At that time, Deng Xiaoping presided over the work of the Party, and a great deal of material, including some irregularities, was quickly reported to the Chairman through internal Party channels. The Chairman could not figure out for a while what was true and what was not.

This created a situation that led Chairman Mao to believe that things might be changing, and the Chairman, not willing to believe that the rightists had turned over a new leaf, wrote "Things are Beginning to Change"<sup>120</sup> on 15 May to make his attitude clear through Party channels and also to remind the rightists to be cautious. But things did not go as planned. Rightists like Zhang Bojun and Luo Longji<sup>121</sup>, who thought that spring had come, were all stirred up and out, all demanded bourgeois democracy in the name of responding to the call of the Chairman's Supreme State Council. They had a lot to say and a lot to do, launching attacks on the Party and directing their attacks at the socialist system. At a symposium of the democratic parties convened by the United Front Work Department, Zhang Bojun proposed to set up a "political design institute", which would also have powers, like the Senate of the United States. This was in effect a demand for the Communist Party to step down. Of course, this demand for the Communist Party to step down did not mean that all the Communists should be arrested, but that there should be a multi-party "rotation of power" as in the United States.

Luo Longji suggested that the "Three Anti's" and "Five Anti's" campaigns at the beginning of the country were overdone and that a "vindication committee" should be set up to vindicate those who had been suppressed. The Communist Party was criticised by Chu Anping<sup>122</sup> at a meeting of the

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<sup>119</sup> Ge Peiqi (1911 – 1993) was a revolutionary and a physicist. In 1935, Japan instigated the North China Incident. Ge Peiqi felt that he could no longer "ignore everything in the world and concentrate on reading physics", so he participated in the launch of the Peking University Student Union. He was a leader of the January and February 9th Movement and engaged in the work behind enemy lines for a long time during the War of Resistance Against Japan and the War of Liberation. In the spring of 1957, the rectification movement began. The party committee of Renmin University of China invited him to participate in a symposium at which he criticised the party committee, calling on it to overcome subjectivism, sectarianism, and bureaucracy. On June 8, the "People's Daily" reprinted his "speech" (he claimed it had been tampered with) under the heading of "Ge Peiqi's Counter-Revolutionary Speech". He was subjected to mass criticism and jailed for 18 years. He was released in 1976.

<sup>120</sup> See [THINGS ARE BEGINNING TO CHANGE \(marxists.org\)](http://marxists.org)

<sup>121</sup> Zhang Bojun (1895 – 1969) was a Chinese politician and intellectual, and was removed from his ministerial position (he was in charge of transport) in the late 1950s after being declared "China's number one rightist." Luo Longji (1898 –1965) was a Chinese politician and intellectual who spent seven years studying in England and America, culminating in a Ph.D. from Columbia University in 1928. One of the founders and leaders of the China Democratic League, Luo was called the "China's number two rightist" in 1957. He and Hu Shih collaborated to promote bourgeois liberalism and bourgeois rights.

<sup>122</sup> Chu Anping (1909–1966) was Editor of the China Democratic League newspaper "for intellectuals", the Guangming Daily, in the PRC era. Following publication in 1957 of his article entitled "The Party Dominates the

Guangming Daily for "party domination". At that time, some people said that most people in the democratic parties listened to them, and that the leftists in the democratic parties were a minority. Shi Liang<sup>123</sup> and Lei Jieqiong<sup>124</sup> were not bad, and Shi Liang told the Chairman and the Premier about some of their internal activities. At the same time, there was the "May 19 Democracy Movement" at Beijing University, and on 23 May Lin Xiling<sup>125</sup> gave a speech at Beijing University, glorifying and spreading Khrushchev's secret report and directing criticism at the socialist system itself. There are many other similar things, large and small, throughout the country. The consensus within the Party was to resolutely combat the attacks of the rightists.

The above situation inside and outside the Party was, in short, that there was a large force outside the Party which considered that the Chairman's speeches were not enlightened enough and demanded a rotation of power, while there was a large force inside the Party which criticised Chairman Mao for his reckless speeches. Chairman Mao was being attacked from both inside and outside the Party.

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World", he was criticised by Mao Zedong and purged during the Anti-Rightist Movement. It is believed that he committed suicide in 1966.

<sup>123</sup> Shi Liang (1900- 1985), was a well-known lawyer in Greater Shanghai, and an active participant in the national salvation movement and the struggle for democracy. She was arrested and imprisoned for participating in and leading the anti-Japanese salvation movement. After Liberation she served as the first minister of the Ministry of Justice, vice chairperson of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference and of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress, and was twice the chairperson of the Chinese Democratic League. She was a pioneer of judicial work in New China and one of the leaders of the Chinese women's movement. After 1957, the legal system came under criticism and the Ministry of Justice was abolished. During the Cultural Revolution, Shi Liang was also criticised. However, she was protected by Zhou Enlai. After 1976, the China Democratic League resumed its activities. In October 1979, the Fourth National Congress of the Democratic League elected Shi Liang as chairperson.

<sup>124</sup> Lei Jieqiong (1905— 2011), studied in the United States in 1924, received a master's degree in sociology from the University of Southern California in 1931, and returned to China that year. One of the founders and leaders of the China Association for the Promotion of Democracy, she was Vice Chairperson of the Standing Committee of the Seventh and Eighth National People's Congress and of the Sixth National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference. In 1952, professional education in social work in China ceased with the abolition of sociology. During the Cultural Revolution, she and her husband were sent to perform manual labour in rural Anhui province, but Zhou Enlai managed to relieve them from this. After the Cultural Revolution, Lei served as a law professor at Beijing University and was appointed Deputy-Mayor of Beijing (1977–1983). In 1979, the subject of sociology was restored and rebuilt. Lei Jieqiong proposed at that time to develop social work education and train social workers when rebuilding sociology. Lei taught at Beijing University until the age of 100. She died on 9 January 2011 at the age of 106.

<sup>125</sup> Lin Xiling (1935-2009) gave six speeches at Beijing University and the National People's Congress, expressing her views on democracy, the legal system and the Hu Feng case. In the ensuing anti-rightist movement, she was roundly criticised and became a "student rightist" and an "anti-party vanguard". She was subjected to the punishment of "expulsion from school, detention in supervised labour and being a negative instructor". Since Lin Xiling had not shown any "repentance" when she was detained for supervised labour, Luo Ruiqing, who was then the Minister of Public Security, planned the operation himself on the instructions of Liu Shaoqi and kidnapped her secretly in the middle of the night on 21 July 1958 and put her in prison. She was then arrested for "counter-revolutionary crimes" and sentenced to fifteen years in prison. In her eleventh year, 1969, Lin Biao issued Circular No. 1 and she was sent to Jinhua Labour Reform Farm to continue her sentence. In 1973, Mao Zedong asked Wu De, then secretary of the Beijing Municipal Party Committee, where Lin was "working and how she was doing", and he found out that she had been sentenced to prison. Mao Zedong instructed that she should be released immediately and that work should be arranged. She was assigned work as a worker at the Wuyi Agricultural Machinery Factory in Jinhua, where she married fellow factory worker Lou Hongzhong at the age of 38. In 1979 she was invited to the Fourth National Congress of Literary and Artistic Workers. Lin was then transferred to the People's Literature Publishing House as a special editor for a time.

In the summer of 1957, the Central Committee held a meeting in Qingdao and Jiang Qing accompanied Chairman Mao there. The scenery of Qingdao is good. He was accompanied by Jiang Qing, who invited him to her hometown, and he should have been happy all the way there. However, Jiang Qing later told me: "The Chairman was in a sullen mood all summer, and when I told him about Qingdao, he was not in the mood to listen". I asked, "What was it about?" She said, "It was not because the Chairman had fired a salvo at the Supreme State Council, advocating the "letting a hundred flowers blossom and a hundred schools of thought contend" and the correct handling of internal conflicts among the people, which had resulted in attacks from outside the Party and dissatisfaction within the Party." I was there to listen to the Chairman's speech and saw all the things that happened in the Party and in society after that, so I understand why the Chairman was in a bad mood. On the one hand, it was because the Chairman spoke at the Supreme State Council and let everyone speak freely that a nationwide relaxed political climate of loud and loose voices emerged. When this climate emerged, the Party wanted to wipe it out again, and wanted Chairman Mao to use his original report to wipe it out. Wouldn't that be like asking Chairman Mao to eat his own words? Not to mention that the bureaucratic style in the Party had not yet been resolved! On the other hand, at that time he also sent people down to see what was going on and learnt that after his speech, all sorts of comments did come out in society, both good and bad, and that there was indeed a "Petofi Club" in China as well. The Chairman also did not want the rightists to turn over a new leaf. However, if he got it wrong, he would have to suppress the democratic atmosphere that had developed so easily. It was a complex situation in which the party was caught between the inside and outside. The opinions of the masses, the opinions of the friendly members of the democratic parties and the attacks of the right are actually still easy to deal with; the hard part is that the criticisms from the top echelons of the party were not easy to deal with. At that time, Liu Shaoqi was already an approved successor in the Party, Deng Xiaoping was appointed General Secretary of the Party Secretariat by Chairman Mao himself less than two years after his arrival in Beijing, and Peng Zhen, although he was very leftist during the Yan'an period, had contributed a lot to the Party's rectification of the situation during the Yan'an period and had held a very high position in the Party since then. There were also a large number of comrades following them, who also complained in one way or another about Chairman Mao's speeches. Can all this be ignored? In this way, the Chairman naturally did not have the heart to just visit the scenery of Qingdao.

Outside the Party it was the rightists who launched the attack and anti-socialist things came out in droves, and inside the Party it was the unanimous demand to counter the rightist attack. Under such circumstances, Chairman Mao agreed to launch an anti-rightist campaign. The People's Daily first published an editorial on 8 June 1957, followed by several editorials in succession, and the anti-rightist movement was thus launched in mid-June 1957, under the collective will of the Party.

## **7.2 The Development of the Anti-Rightist Movement and its Enlargement**

The anti-rightists always need a guiding document, right? To untie the bell, the Party Central Committee used Chairman Mao's speech at the Supreme State Council to do so. Chairman Mao respected the opinions of the other comrades in the Party and abided by the Party's consistent principle of democratic centralism. Perhaps because he saw so much talk in society after his speech at the Supreme State Council came out, and because he was influenced by all kinds of materials around him and by people up and down the Party, he left his original speech to Hu Qiaomu, Tian Jiaying and Chen Boda, and revised it by incorporating the views of others in the Party hierarchy. This changed thing was the article "On the Correct Handling of Contradictions Among the People"

published in the People's Daily on June 1. It became a programmatic document for the anti-rightist movement because it set out six criteria for classifying rightists. This article was not as good as the original one by the Chairman himself. I listened to the Chairman's original speech, and the article that was officially published was very different from the original speech, and the six criteria for classifying rightists were also not in the Chairman's original speech (see the previous chapter for details).

The original speech of the Chairman at the Supreme State Council was the Chairman's own opinion, his true thinking, and the article published, "On the Correct Handling of Contradictions Among the People", was the collective opinion of the Central Committee. This is not denied even in the most formal terms nowadays. There are rightists, and it is possible to debate them, as Pang Xianzhi and Jin Chong and their biography of Mao 1949-1976 admit on page 702, that the published article was "revised repeatedly on the basis of extensive consultation. It is the elaborate work of Mao Zedong and the culmination of the collective wisdom of the Party". This means that the anti-rightist movement was not the opinion of Chairman Mao alone, but that it represented the opinion of the Party. Therefore, it is unjustified to say later that Chairman Mao was alone in "luring snakes out of holes". How was this "luring a snake out of a hole"?

But there was no need to have such a big anti-rightist campaign, which involved hundreds of thousands of people. Chairman Mao was responsible for this, and he should have been responsible for the leadership, but the anti-rightist movement was mainly in the hands of Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping, and Peng Zhen was also very active. Peng Zhen was so far to the left at that time, I wonder why he was so right again later? They were the ones who demanded that the rightists be beaten proportionally. The Chairman said one, two or three percent, and they said five percent was not even enough, there should be ten percent. Deng Xiaoping spoke at the Central Party School and proposed beating rightists at a rate of ten per cent. Wasn't every unit later hitting rightists on the basis of a ten per cent target? This was the basis, and this was documented at the time. Some people now put the blame on the Chairman for the widening of the anti-rightist movement, which is wrong. The Chairman did not think the anti-Rightist movement would be such a large scale. It was not Chairman Mao's idea to hit rightists according to these targets.

An important reason for the so-called expansion is that the rectification movement came first and the anti-rightist movement followed after it. There was no specific standard for the free airing of views in the rectification movement, and in the anti-rightist movement people waited until after they had heard what others said. After the anti-Rightist movement began, people used the six criteria to determine how to classify them. Then a lot of what people said was over the top and a lot of people become rightists. Later, some people said that Chairman Mao was "luring the snake out of the hole", based on this. This statement is contrary to the basic facts and is a subjective view without a concrete analysis of the various actual situations mentioned above. Chairman Mao did not intend to set standards first, and to induce people to sound off indiscriminately, and then deliberately find excuses to use standards to clean up after they had sounded off. Rather, he first sincerely wanted people to give their opinions, and after finding that some opinions had gone too far, he hoped to incorporate the opinions of other Party comrades, set a few standards to regulate the sounding off, and correct the direction of the previous sounding off, so as to steer the Rectification Movement onto a reasonable track.

There is also a specific problem of implementation and operation here. The use of the criteria set later to measure some of those who had already crossed the line inevitably led to a problem of amplification, and some of those who did the work were guilty of bureaucracy and took the opportunity to retaliate against those who had given legitimate advice to the party organisation and

individual party leaders, just as some people in Zhongnanhai retaliated against our "Eight Secretaries of Department" (see later chapter). This made the problem of amplification even more serious. This is how Ge Peiqi, the old Communist mentioned earlier, was branded as a rightist; he should never have been branded as a rightist at all. It can be said that if one were to measure the rhetoric of the Mingle in the spirit of the Chairman's original speech at the Supreme State Council, then there would be no problem of enlargement. And if the concrete operators did not make bureaucratic and subjectivist mistakes, and were all as selfless as the Chairman, then there would be even less of a problem of enlargement. The Chairman has spoken of Li Shenzhi<sup>126</sup>, [Wang Fang?] (of the Xinhua News Agency) and others who should not be branded as rightists, but Deng Xiaoping still branded them as rightists. What Chairman Mao said was no longer valid. Therefore, you cannot put all the blame on the Chairman for the expansion. Chairman Mao had said at that time that there were only 4,000 or 5,000 rightists in the country. If we had followed Chairman Mao's advice, the rightists would not have exceeded that number.

The combination of the above is that the standards came out late and other specific enforcers engaged in retaliation, bureaucracy, and meeting high targets ... In the end, it became an expansion.

Jiang Qing also told me that the Chairman had said this to her when she was in Qingdao: "People say that I am luring a snake out of a hole. I didn't lure a snake out of a hole. It doesn't matter if the poisonous grass comes out, there will always be some problems when it is blooming and a hundred flowers bloom, it doesn't matter. As I said, farmers have poisonous plants in their fields too. It's just a matter of spending some medicine to get rid of it. I am not conspiring and I am conspiring." The Chairman meant to criticise what had been imposed on him, which was in fact an unwarranted attempt to "lure a snake out of a hole". But later on, those who wrote history said that the Chairman himself admitted that he had "lured the snake out of the hole" and engaged in a "yang conspiracy"<sup>127</sup>. In fact, the Chairman really wanted democracy for the masses. During the "Eight

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<sup>126</sup> Li Shenzhi (1923-2003), joined the Communist Party of China in November 1948. In 1949, he was Deputy Director of the International Department of Xinhua News Agency. From 1954 to the first half of 1957, as the foreign secretary of Zhou Enlai, he participated in many diplomatic activities with Premier Zhou Enlai, including the 1954 Geneva Conference and the 1955 Bandung Asian-African Conference. He wrote a large number of international news reviews and participated in the drafting of many diplomatic and political documents. After Khrushchev's secret report on Stalin came out, the "Polish-Hungarian incident" occurred in October 1956, and the entire socialist camp was shocked. Mao Zedong thought that all the relevant information he had had come from the "Reference Materials", so he sent Secretary Lin Ke to ask Wang Fei and Li Shenzhi, the directors and deputy directors of the International Department of Xinhua News Agency their views. The two talked about the Soviet-East European issues and advocated that "a little reformism should be pursued after the revolution." Li Shenzhi even proposed that "a constitutional court should be established." In 1957, Li Shenzhi was labeled as a rightist and expelled from the party.

<sup>127</sup> A conspiracy is usually defined as doing bad things secretly. The Chinese used the term "yinmou", where the yin of the yin-yang opposites embraces darkness and secrecy. Mao apparently came up with the term "yangmou" for overt conspiracies where certain objectives are defined in advance and in the open. He was saying that he had set a trap, but had not concealed it. He first used it in his "Summary of the Second Plenary Session of the Seventh Central Committee of the Communist Party of China" on 13 March 1949: "The Rectification Movement has raised the comrades' sense of smell and narrowed the market for dogmatism. Some say that this is a conspiracy to replace it. In fact, it is not a conspiracy, but a yang conspiracy. It is also to take over." (Collected Works of Mao Zedong, vol. 5, p. 264) On 1 July 1957 the People's Daily published an editorial written by Mao Zedong, "The bourgeois direction of Wen Hui Bao should be criticised", in which he outlined the part of the anti-rightist struggle strategy that could be made public and called it a "yang conspiracy". (the English translations in the Selected Works use "overt" and "covert": "Was it wrong for a while to refrain from publishing any positive views or to publish only a few and to let erroneous views go unrefuted? Between May 8 and June 7, acting on the instructions of the Central Committee of the Communist

Sigma Incident" in Zhongnanhai during the same period, some people wanted to brand us as counter-revolutionaries, but the Chairman disagreed. This is also a proof that he wanted the masses to speak and democracy to be practised. If the Chairman had not spoken at that time and given the masses a place to express their feelings, the masses might have taken to the streets because of their dissatisfaction with the bureaucracy and the "Hungarian Incident" would have really occurred. It is difficult to say. It was after the 20th Congress of the Soviet Union that the Chairman spoke. When he spoke, the masses mobilised and so did the rightists, and the Party used these incidents to say that the Chairman had messed up the country. The Chairman was really well-meaning, but Liu Shaoqi was not like that, he did not review the situation and even put the shit on the Chairman's head. "I am the one who implemented it, I am the first line and take the main responsibility", something Liu Shaoqi should have said but did not. The Chairman said he was responsible, but he, Liu Shaoqi, did not say a word about being responsible, not to mention that the Chairman disagreed with those who were beaten into rightists, and they beat many of them.

### 7.3 On the issue of rehabilitating the Anti-Rightist Movement after its expansion

On the issue of rehabilitating rightists, Chairman Mao advocated that the facts be investigated and that any mistakes be corrected. Here I will start with two specific incidents.

The first one is about Cui Ying, the female secretary of the third section of our secretary's office. Once Zhongnanhai held a weekend ball and Cui Ying danced with Chairman Mao, who asked her what her name was. She said, "My name is Cui Ying." The Chairman said, "Then you are Cui Yingying, where is your Zhang Sheng?"<sup>128</sup> Knowing that the Chairman had misheard the word "Ying" or had deliberately said "Ying", Cui Ying said, "My Zhang Sheng, who had responded to the call to go to the countryside for training, was killed in the floods in Anhui." The Chairman listened to her and comforted her, saying that he had died for the people and you should not be sad. He also said, "You are a family member of a martyr, the organisation will take care of you. The Chairman remembered

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Party of China, our paper and all the other Party papers did precisely that. The purpose was to let demons and devils, ghosts and monsters "air views freely" and let poisonous weeds sprout and grow in profusion, so that the people, now shocked to find these ugly things still existing in the world, would take action to wipe them out. In other words, the Communist Party foresaw this inevitable class struggle between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. The bourgeoisie and bourgeois intellectuals were allowed to start this war, and for a time the press refrained from publishing any positive views or published only a few and did not take any action to repulse the wild attacks of the reactionary bourgeois Rightists, nor did the Party organization in any of the departments and schools where the rectification movement was in progress. The masses could thus clearly distinguish those whose criticism was well-intentioned from those whose so-called criticism was malevolent, and thus forces could be mustered to counter-attack when the time was ripe. Some people say this was a covert scheme. We say it was an overt one. For we made it plain to the enemy beforehand: only when ghosts and monsters are allowed to come into the open can they be wiped out; only when poisonous weeds are allowed to sprout from the soil can they be uprooted." (See: WEN HUI PAO'S BOURGEOIS ORIENTATION (marxists.org) )

<sup>128</sup> The Chinese language is awash with homophones – words that have the same sound, but a different meaning. To a certain extent the differences can be determined from the context, but it is also a reason why the spoken language is tonal: four different tones help to distinguish one homophone from another. Cui Ying's given name "Ying" is written with the character 英, but Mao misheard it as the character 莺. Both are pronounced in the high flat first tone. Cui Yingying (using the second "Ying" character) is the heroine of Yuan Zhen's novel *The Legend of Ying Ying* (also known as *The Book of Hui Zhen*) from the Tang Dynasty. Zhang Sheng is a character in Yuan Zhen's novel *He* was the son of the Minister of Rites, and his parents were both dead and his family was poor. The story of Zhang Sheng's affair with Cui Yingying in a temple has been widely circulated in a play called *The West Wing*.

Cui Ying in this way, and later when he saw her again at a dance he would say, "Come here, let's dance together." The Chairman was actually showing his concern for the families of the martyrs.

Cui Ying was in the secretary's office dealing with letters from the masses, and it was around 1961 or 62 that she came into contact with a large number of complaints from people who had been wrongly labelled as rightists, and told the Chairman during another dance with him that some of the cases of wrongly labelled rightists indicated that the situation of wrong labelling in the anti-rightist movement seemed to be quite serious. There were many letters from the public reflecting that their work units had wrongly classified them as rightists, and that people who had given advice to the leaders of their units had been branded as rightists. The Chairman was taken aback and said, "Are there so many mistakes and so many rightists? Why is it that people who put forward opinions are classified as rightists, how can that be OK?" The Chairman added, "Cui Ying, go and get a report on this situation and show it to me. We in the Communist Party are always truthful, and if there are mistakes, we must correct them. If you misclassify someone as a rightist, you must also correct them." Obviously, the Chairman was trying to rehabilitate the wrongly classified rightists.

The Chairman asked Cui Ying to get this material, and Cui Ying was happy. But there were rules for writing reports to be sent up, and they all had to be approved by the head of the secretary's office. Moreover, she was only a section clerk and had no authority to dispatch all the letters from the public. After the end of the anti-rightist movement, there were letters of complaint from all over the country from people wrongly classified as rightists, which were sent to the secretary's office like snowflakes, and there were many from all sections. Even if I was asked to do this, I would have to get permission from the head of the department before I could transfer letters from other sections. Cui Ying, who was quite arrogant and didn't think much of anyone, and who didn't have a good working relationship with the head of her section, Xiao Ma (Ma Zhisun)<sup>129</sup>, came to discuss it with me. I asked, "Have you got the section chief's permission?" "The head of the section? She's so far to the left, she won't agree." Cui Ying said.

Cui Ying's section chief, Xiao Ma, is Tian Jiaying's junior partner, and I didn't want to offend her. Besides, it was against the rules for me to interfere in the affairs of her section. However, it was after the "Basi Ma Incident", and I had a special understanding of the wrongful classification of rightists, and I didn't want anyone to be wronged as we in the "Basi Ma" had been. So, I supported Cui Ying from the bottom of my heart. When I saw that she was really reluctant to discuss the matter with Xiao Ma, I said, "Go to Chen Bingchen<sup>130</sup>, he is the deputy director, he has given his approval, and he has also spoken to the leaders, so you can go to the various sections and ask for letters". I didn't suggest that Chen Bingchen go directly to Tian Jiaying because of the good relationship Ma Zhisun and Tian Jiaying had, so if he went to him, he would definitely support Ma Zhisun and the problem would still not be solved.

Cui Ying listened to my opinion and went to Chen Bingchen. This man was a cadre from the army with a strong organizational concept and a good person, but he was not flexible at all. He went to report to Tian Jiaying. Tian Jiaying was very sensitive to the fact that this was what the Chairman

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<sup>129</sup> Not much is known about Ma Zhisun. (The prefix "Xiao" or "Little" before a person's surname indicates friendship and affection.) Ma Zhisun co-wrote with Li Ping A Chronicle of Zhou Enlai 1949-1976, published in 1997.

<sup>130</sup> Chen Bingchen (1903~1986) was a long-time worker in the central organs of the Party and government. He was arrested in 1932 as a suspected communist and imprisoned for 3 years, after which he went to Yan'an, joining the Party in 1941. From December 1949 to March 1950, he accompanied Chairman Mao Zedong to the Soviet Union as a technical secretary. He was sent to work in a May 7 Cadre school during the Cultural Revolution. He was a member of the Fifth National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference and retired in 1982.

wanted, so he felt it was a big deal. He knew that the anti-rightist faction was presided over by Deng Xiaoping, and that Yang Shangkun and Deng Xiaoping had a very close relationship, and that if this was not done properly the Chairman would get many people involved. He went to report to Yang Shangkun. This report did not matter, for the situation had now taken a turn for the worse. Yang Shangkun said, "This is not OK! It is creating trouble. How come a small cadre in your secretary's office can stir up trouble at will? If this is the case, and if this person stirs up trouble today and that person tomorrow, and if everyone goes to Chairman Mao at will, how can we still work?" Yang Shangkun asked Tian Jiaying, "Where did this person come from?" Tian Jiaying replied, "She was transferred from the Propaganda Department." Yang Shangkun said, "Hurry up and transfer her away, we can't have her." And he said, "You have three days to get rid of her before the ball on Saturday".

Tian Jiaying immediately approached Section Chief Xiao Ma, who was already dissatisfied with Cui Ying (in fact, both of them were talented women), and Tian Jiaying conveyed that she would have to be transferred within three days, but Xiao Ma said she would have to leave tomorrow, giving Cui Ying only one day to prepare. Cui Ying felt that her work was all accounted for, and that it should be evaluated as part of the transfer to the new unit. So, the section hurriedly met, a few opinions were offered, and that was considered to be the evaluation. The section's main goal was to get her to leave, but it didn't say what the reason was, so it said it was a job requirement. In fact, Cui Ying also guessed: relaying the rightists' complaints to the chairman, had caused the people concerned to be unhappy. Cuiying asked me about this before she left, and I couldn't answer her. How I was going to tell her! I said, "I really don't know about this. You're not in the same section as me. They transferred you. They didn't have to go through me, they reported to Yang Shangkun, and they didn't have to discuss it with me." At that time, those in the secretary's office who did not approve of Cui Ying's transfer included Li Gongchuo and Zhu Gu, who were among the "Eight Secretaries of Department". After Cui Ying was actually transferred out, the Central Propaganda Department did not take over either. The incident hit Cui Ying so hard that she was said to have suffered from mental depression for several years afterwards. It is also said that after Cui Ying left, the Chairman asked at the Saturday ball why Cui Ying had not come, and the secretary's office comrade said she had been transferred. At this time, Chairman Mao was busy commanding the artillery bombardment of Jinmen<sup>131</sup>, after which he probably forgot about the matter of asking Cui Ying to write materials.

During the Cultural Revolution, the rebels put up big-character posters on Xiao Ma, saying that Xiao Ma had retaliated against Cui Ying. Xiao Ma explained, "I didn't tell Cui Ying to leave, it was Yang Shangkun who wanted to transfer Cui Ying, and it was Tian Jiaying who told me that Yang Shangkun had told her to be transferred." The rebels went to Yang Shangkun's secretary, Meng Fanshu, to clarify the whole process. After the reform and opening up, Cui Ying published an article "I danced with Chairman Mao" in the Guangzhou-based magazine *Together in the Same Boat*, which gave a very detailed account of the whole process. Cui Ying is still in Beijing, living in Xidan Education Department Street.

The second incident was about a senior editor of the East China News ("Xinwen Bao") newspaper. I read a letter from a member of the public saying that this person had written a piece after Khrushchev's anti-Stalin affair had become public, concerning Stalin and saying that Stalin had not listened properly to the views of the masses. At that time, we had not yet broken with the Soviet Union, so the newspaper considered him to be "anti-Soviet" and "attacking the Communist International" and classified him as a "rightist" on the basis that he was "detrimental to international

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<sup>131</sup> Jinmen (Kinmen) is an island close to the mainland but administered by Taiwan Province. It was shelled by the PRC in 1958 as part of the Second Taiwan Straits Crisis.

unity". I thought this was a misclassification, so I forwarded the letter to Xinwen Bao and asked them to reconsider it, to which Xinwen Bao replied that the consensus was to classify him as a rightist. At the time of the Cultural Revolution, this man again asked to be rehabilitated. When the Central Cultural Revolution received the letter, I followed the normal procedure and conveyed the situation to the Chairman, and also asked the Premier if he would rehabilitate people. The Premier said, "The matter of rehabilitating rightists is best dealt with later, not now". When the Chairman saw our reporting materials, he asked about this and asked whether there was such a person or not. I asked Zhang Chunqiao from East China to check it out. Zhang Chunqiao was very good and said that since the Chairman was asking about this, it was our duty to find out. When he checked, there really was such a person. This person really did not oppose the Party and really supported Chairman Mao. He was "anti-Soviet" and was anti both Stalin and Khrushchev. I felt that such a person should be vindicated, so I reported to the Premier: "Premier, look at the investigation. ...." I told him what Zhang Chunqiao had found out. The Premier listened and said: "There is more than one case like this. It's better to be handled uniformly by the later stages of the campaign." The Premier said there should be unified treatment, so let's unify the treatment. There was nothing I could do. At least I reported the matter to the Chairman and also reported to the Premier that the situation had been investigated. I remember the Premier emphasizing at the time, "If this matter is dealt with separately, it will be a chain reaction, like a snowflake, dealing with one and then another, then it will impact the Cultural Revolution and turn into a rehabilitation campaign. It is better to deal with it in a unified manner at a later stage." When I entered Qincheng at the end of the Cultural Revolution, I don't know whether this person's rehabilitation was dealt with or not. Whether the Premier discussed this with the Chairman, I don't know. Anyway, there was such a thing. This person was from the East China News at the time, and I guess he is still alive and can be traced.

The above two incidents show that the resistance to rehabilitating the wrongly classified rightists does not lie with the Chairman. The Chairman was pragmatic and never abandoned this approach. When a rightist was wrongly classified, there should be rehabilitation. We in the Secretary's Office had been sending letters to the Chairman, conveying information about the wrongly classified rightists and requesting that they be corrected. When the Chairman saw this, he asked us to investigate and deal with it, but at that time we had not seen any document from the Central Committee correcting the misclassification of rightists. It was only during the Cultural Revolution that we found out that the United Front Work Department, after receiving some of the letters of complaint we had forwarded to it, had been going to prepare a document to rehabilitate the rightists and submit it to the Central Committee, but Deng Xiaoping told the Minister of the United Front Work Department that no rightists could be rehabilitated. "We will talk about any problems later; it is not appropriate to rehabilitate them now". Deng Xiaoping's instruction that rightists should not be rehabilitated was contrary to the CCP Central Committee's August 1962 instruction that the wronged rightists should be rehabilitated, and also contrary to Chairman Mao's advice that rightist complaints should be handled seriously. At that time, the Central Committee did not yet have a disagreement between Chairman Mao and Liu Shaoqi on the question of "two lines" or "one line". Some people now say that Deng Xiaoping's opinion, which was contrary to the Central Committee's instructions, was derived from Chairman Mao's September 1962 "Remarks on Checking the Pilot Issue of Screening Rightists"<sup>132</sup>. Now that I have checked the documents, Chairman Mao did criticise the wrong practice of the Party Committee of State Organs in requesting that "rightists

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<sup>132</sup> This is a single short paragraph addressed to Liu Shaoqi, Zhou Enlai and Deng Xiaoping. I have not seen it translated into English in any collection of works by Chairman Mao, but my translation of the relevant section reads: "The Rightists themselves did not ask for screening, but the superiors insisted on "piloting" them in order to gain experience and promote it." Mao then asks the other three to check it out.

themselves should not be screened, but that their superiors should insist on a pilot scheme in order to gain experience and spread the practice" (Chairman's Critique) in the central organs [note the source of the critique quote]. However, in this and all his previous criticisms, Chairman Mao did not give instructions not to correct the misclassified rightists. On the contrary, he always advocated that the facts should be investigated, mistakes should be corrected, hats should be removed, and those who should be vindicated should be rehabilitated. His talk with Cui Ying at the ball proved this. Therefore, it is contrary to the facts and unconvincing for someone to excuse Deng Xiaoping now, to use this remark of Chairman Mao as a shield for Deng Xiaoping, and to put the blame on Chairman Mao for not correcting the wrongly classified rightists. What this criticism means is that "the rightists themselves did not ask to be screened", "but the higher-ups insisted on piloting it", rehabilitating people and promoting it as an experience, which was unnecessary. This does not mean in any way that there would be no screening or correction of the wrongly classified rightists.

Deng Xiaoping did not agree to the rehabilitation of the rightists at that time, but later, he and Hu Yaobang's group put the shit and charges of not rehabilitating the rightists on the Chairman's head. Either they criticised and fought indiscriminately, classifying rightists according to a subjective and imaginary ratio, creating a large number of unjust cases; or they all blew the whole country away, rehabilitating all of the rightists except a few token rightists, treating a large number of hard-core rightists who attacked socialism crazily and were determined not to change as good people, giving them screening and reversal, and even worshipping them as guests of honour (such as Mao Yushi<sup>133</sup> and the like); neglecting the left and neglecting the right, being pragmatic and opportunistic. This is really a far cry from Chairman Mao's consistent spirit of seeking truth from facts.

All in all, on the issue of the anti-rightist camp and its widening, the Chairman's shortcomings and mistakes were there, but they cannot be compared with those of Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping. Their mistakes were much more. And the Chairman did not make qualitative mistakes, whereas theirs were qualitative mistakes.

## **Appendix.**

### **Historical facts before and after the Anti-Rightist Movement show that the old intellectuals did not shoulder the historical responsibility of the proletariat.**

The history before and after the Anti-Rightist Movement has left behind so many rights and wrongs, many of which are rotten accounts, pots of shit, which are now held over Chairman Mao's head. One of the biggest shitpots is that Chairman Mao always hated intellectuals and launched the anti-rightist movement to crack down on them, and that the backbone of intellectuals was broken by Chairman Mao in the anti-rightist movement. However, it seems to me that the opposite is true: the intellectuals who came from the old system (let's call them the old intellectuals) as a whole simply did not have a consistent independent personality before and after the anti-rightist movement, nor

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<sup>133</sup> Mao Yushi (1929 -), is an economist who was classified as a rightist in 1958, and was struggled against during the Cultural Revolution. In 1975, he began to engage in microeconomic research on transportation economy, mathematical economy, etc., and in 1979 put forward the principle of "merit-based distribution". In 1986, he went to Harvard University to be a registered visiting scholar. In 1990, he was a lecturer in the Department of Economics at the University of Queensland, Australia. In 1993, Mao Yushi and other economists co-founded the Tianzhe Institute of Economic Research, a private think tank funded by the American Foundation and private capital. In 2012 the 83-year-old economist won the Milton Friedman Freedom Award, with a prize of \$250,000. The announcement was made on March 29th by the Cato Institute, a right-wing US think-tank.

did they have any backbone to bear the historical burden of the proletariat and socialism. Therefore, the shit that was held over Chairman Mao's head should and must be removed.

In fact, Chairman Mao has always valued knowledge and intellectuals. He said in Yan'an that the Communist Party had two armies, one with guns and one with culture. The army of culture is made up of intellectuals. This shows how important Chairman Mao regarded knowledge, going so far as to equate the role of intellectuals in the revolution with that of the armed forces. Chairman Mao also said that an army without culture is an army of ignorance and cannot defeat the enemy. He not only attached importance to the army of culture, but also attached special importance to the cultural transformation and cultural construction of the army with guns. Throughout the New Democratic Revolution, he did indeed practice what he preached, attaching importance to the role of the intellectuals and to mobilising their revolutionary zeal and enthusiasm. The speech he made at the Supreme State Council in 1957 was to the same effect; his attitude towards the intellectuals in the subsequent Party rectification campaign was consistent with that of the past.

During the anti-rightist movement Chairman Mao and certain old intellectuals were at odds and even clashed, after which Chairman Mao's attitude towards intellectuals who had come over from the old system changed. What was this all about? Who was to blame? What changes had taken place in Chairman Mao's thinking? Why did he no longer trust the old intelligentsia as a whole, but wanted to transform them and launch an educational revolution and even a proletarian cultural revolution to cultivate new intellectuals, i.e. the intellectuals of the proletariat? To answer these questions, I am afraid we have to analyse and examine them from the perspective of the creation and maintenance of the socialist system. Here we may take a glimpse of Lin Xiling and his words and actions.

Lin Xiling, then a law student at the NPC, was young, pretty, active and politically motivated, and shortly after the beginning of the Rectification Movement, she went to Zhongnanhai to consult on the situation in the Central Committee, where she was received by Wang Wen in the secretary's office. She thus happened to be an outsider in the Zhongnanhai "Eight Sima Incident" (see the next chapter). Wang Wen spoke to her several times, and Lin Xiling gave a speech at Beijing University, which she attended. Therefore, I am still familiar with her situation.

The Chairman's internal speech to the Supreme State Council was very open-minded, and the Rectification Campaign that followed was also intended to promote co-existence with other parties in the long term, to monitor each other and to create a political atmosphere in which "a hundred flowers bloom and a hundred schools of thought contend". Moreover, the Chairman soon made it very clear that Stalin's mistakes were not caused by the socialist system, but only by Stalin's personal subjective ideology. Stalin cannot be dismissed in his entirety. His merits are first and primary, his mistakes are secondary and are the mistakes of a communist in his work.

However, Lin Xiling's speech at Beijing University on 23 May was aimed at the socialist system. She said, "I think the cult of the individual is a product of the socialist system. I call this society a socialism arising from a feudal basis, atypical socialism", "We have to fight for a real socialism" and "let everyone live like a real human being". "Do not think that it is enough for the Communist Party to use the method of rectification, to adopt a reformist approach and to make concessions to the people. The blood of the Hungarian people has not been shed in vain. What little democracy we have fought for today is inseparable from them." By saying this, Lin Xiling was not expressing a genuine intention for democracy by raising her opinion. No matter how much she spoke under the banner of the people, under the banner of socialism, "to have real socialism" and "to let the people live a human life", she could not hide her true meaning of opposing the socialist system. Her claim

that the "cult of the individual" was a product of the socialist system does not stand up. At that time, shortly after the end of the Second World War, the cult of the individual was a widespread phenomenon throughout the world, and everyone wanted powerful people to come forward to rectify the social order and restore normal life in society, both under capitalist and socialist systems at that time.

As for her claim that "socialism arose on the basis of feudalism", this is certainly in line with reality. China entered socialism directly from a colonial and semi-colonial feudal society through the New Democratic Revolution, and this socialism was certainly "born on a feudal basis". The new system always came into the world with the umbilical cord of the old one. There is always a process of quantitative to qualitative change in the development of things, and when the quantitative change is sufficient, a leap will take place, completing the complete renewal of things and forming new things. This is the Marxist view of history. The building of a socialist system should also follow this historical perspective. Socialism is not a heart transplant operation where the old feudal heart is cut out and replaced with a new socialist heart and everything is fine. Even in such a transplant, the whole body still has to be slowly adapted to the new heart with the help of the original one. The Communist Party itself knew this, and Chairman Mao knew it even better. That is why Chairman Mao wanted the Communist Party to help rectify the situation through the democratic parties and the masses, to knock out the feudal bureaucratic style in the Party and to carry out the real socialist cause. Lin Xiling, however, targeted her attack on the socialist system at a time when engaging in socialism was the general direction, and at every turn, described issues that were not socialist as products of the socialist system. This of course runs counter to the spirit of Chairman Mao's internal speeches, to the spirit of the Central Government and to the original spirit of the Rectification Movement.

Lin Xiling was just a college student who was in the limelight and had this real attitude towards the socialist system, so it is not difficult to know what her real attitude towards Chairman Mao's socialism was, like Zhang Bojun, Luo Longji and Chu Anping.

Chairman Mao had many distinctive comments on Qin Shihuang. He spoke of him many times after the anti-rightist movement, including once at the Second Session of the Eighth Congress in May 1958, in connection with the intellectuals' criticism of Qin Shihuang's burning of books and burying Confucius, when he said the following:

I was happy to read a recent article by Comrade Fan Wenlan. It was straight talk. Many facts cited in the article prove that respecting the modern and belittling the ancient is a Chinese tradition. He quoted Sima Qian, Sima Guang . . . but it is regrettable that he did not quote Qin Shihuang. He was an expert in respecting the modern and belittling the ancient. Of course I do not like to quote him either. (Comrade Lin Piao interrupts: "Qin Shihuang burned the books and buried the scholars alive".) What did he amount to? He only buried alive 460 scholars, while we buried 46,000. In our suppression of the counter-revolutionaries, did we not kill some counter-revolutionary intellectuals? I once debated with the democratic people: You accuse us of acting like Qin Shihuang, but you are wrong; we surpass him 100 times. You berate us for imitating Qin Shihuang in enforcing dictatorship. We admit them all. What is regrettable is that you did not say enough. We have had to say it for you. (Laughter.)

What exactly was the greatness and historically progressive role of Qin Shihuang? Just combine this with Chairman Mao's later further evaluation of Qin Shihuang. In 1973, in response to Guo Moruo's

dismissal of Qin Shihuang in his Ten Criticisms, he wrote a seven-line poem in which he pointed out that the key historical progressive role of Qin Shihuang lay in institution-building<sup>134</sup>.

I have come to advise you to curse Qin Shihuang less, and to discuss the matter of "burning books and burying Confucian scholars alive" again.

Although Qin Shihuang is dead, his achievements still exist and his government and laws have been adopted by hundreds of generations, and although Confucius has a great reputation there is little of value in practice.

Successive rulers have implemented the county system of Qin Shihuang, and the Ten Criticisms you have written is "not a good article".

Read carefully the feudalism of the Tang man Liu Zongyuan, but don't regress from Liu to the time of King Wen of Zhou.

In the phrase "Qin still exists", it means that the centralised system of government based on the county system established by Qin Shihuang has survived for more than 2,000 years after his death; "Qin's government and laws have been adopted by hundreds of generations" refers to the fact that after Qin Shihuang, various dynasties merely improved Qin Shihuang's centralised system in one way or another to suit the needs of the new era. But what was fundamental to Qin Shihuang's centralised system of government was not lost, nor could it afford to be lost. So, isn't it true that Chen Yinkeng also said, "For 2,000 years, the Qin government has been in place"? After the Qin Dynasty, when people saw that the Qin Dynasty fell soon after the death of Qin Shihuang, they thought that Qin Shihuang's centralized system was wrong. The Western Jin dynasty once again reverted to feudal lords, which led to the "Eight Kings' Rebellion" and the downfall of the Western Jin dynasty. This shows that the problem was not the centralisation of power per se. Gu Yanwu said: "No one after the Han Dynasty thinks that the Qin Dynasty died because of isolation, or that the king of Qin died because of feudalism, but because of non-feudalism". Liu Zongyuan, on the other hand, said: "The failure of the Qin lay in the government, not in the system", which is why he opposed the division of land and feudalism in his treatise on feudalism.

Chairman Mao urged intellectuals (mainly intellectuals from the old society at the time) and Party comrades to familiarise themselves with Liu Zongyuan's A Dissertation on the System of Principalities and not to assume that the fault of Qin Shihuang lay in the centralised system of power. This was Chairman Mao's way of looking at social and historical development from the perspective of a society's fundamental system. Chairman Mao was particularly concerned about the creation and maintenance of a fundamental system. Therefore, it was clearly unacceptable to Chairman Mao that attacks should target the socialist system that the Chairman was creating, as Lin Xiing did, and as Zhang Bojun and others did.

It was inevitable and progressive for slavery to replace clan-based primitive communes; it was inevitable and progressive for feudalism to replace slavery; and it was inevitable and progressive for centralised power to replace feudalism. The replacement of capitalism by socialism is also inevitable and progressive. No matter how difficult or how long the history is, this progress must happen, and someone must make it happen. Therefore, without the construction and consolidation of the fundamental system of socialism, it is impossible to understand why Chairman Mao did not want the

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<sup>134</sup> I have taken the easy way out and translated Mao's poem into a vernacular sentence structure. Qi Benyu quotes the original, which is written in a formal structure of lines of seven characters each, with little regard for syntax and grammar. The poem was written in 1973, in the wake of the Lin Biao Incident of 1971. King Wen was the founder of the slavery-based Western Zhou Dynasty that preceded the Qin Dynasty.

rightists to turn over a new leaf and also advocated the anti-rightist offensive; and it is impossible to understand why he later made the above remarks so bluntly at the Second Session of the Eighth National Congress. The "pit"<sup>135</sup> of Qin Shihuang was physical annihilation, but Chairman Mao's "pit" was ideological reform. This is a world of difference and reflects the fact that Chairman Mao was not a feudal emperor in any sense, but a leader of the people.

Like Liu Zongyuan, Chairman Mao saw that "the failure of Qin lay in the government, not in the system". In his view, if socialism was to be "lost", it would be "in the government", not "in the system". Therefore, after the completion of the three major reforms in 1956 and the initial establishment of the socialist system, he wanted to uphold and consolidate this system and focus on the "government", not on the system. Therefore, after Khrushchev's secret report and the events in Poland and Hungary, Chairman Mao took the initiative in "politics" and used the Rectification Campaign to overcome the bureaucracy and subjectivism of the Communist Party, so as to improve the administrative capacity of the Communist Party and not allow it to lose political power.

It is precisely on this issue of the relationship between politics and the system that many old intellectuals and members of the democratic parties failed to take the overall interests of the socialist cause into account, and under the banner of democracy, improving the socialist system and seeking a "human life" for the people, they actually put their personal selfishness and the interests of small groups above all else. In name, they talked about "politics", but in reality, they fired their cannons at the "system". After Chairman Mao had already made it clear that Stalin's "cult of the individual" was not a product of the socialist system itself, but of Stalin's personal subjectivism, they still used Khrushchev's secret report to direct their criticism at the socialist system itself. In this way Chairman Mao could not but wonder whether the old intellectuals were willing to engage in socialism.

Here, the old intellectuals needed to examine themselves and not be so over-inflated that they thought they were right about everything; nor should they have put all the blame on Chairman Mao. From the fact that the old intellectuals (at this time it would be more appropriate to call them "bourgeois intellectuals") all worshipped capitalism and advocated capitalism, it is certain that the old intellectuals were not willing to engage in socialism at that time. But not only did they not dare to admit this, they also had to say that they were wrongly branded as rightists. Under the conditions at that time, they were not willing to engage in socialism, but they also attacked the socialist system and were branded as rightists. Not only were they not perfect, but they did not even have a consistent character, nor did they have the backbone to take responsibility for history. If you keep blaming, accusing, slandering and denigrating Chairman Mao, you do not even have the basic old morality of being a feudal scholar, let alone the new morality of socialism.

Returning to Lin Xiling, we can see how Chairman Mao "hated" the old intellectuals, but had to love and protect them. When the anti-rightist campaign began, the content of Lin Xiling's speech was relayed to Liu Shaoqi through internal Party channels, and Liu Shaoqi gave instructions to "ask the public security departments to pay attention to it". It was Luo Ruiqing himself who later arrested her. According to the standards of the time, there was nothing wrong with Lin Xiling being branded as a rightist. (However, to be realistic, Deng Xiaoping did wrong her when he came to power and did not rehabilitate Lin Xiling for the "special socialism" she wanted.) One size does not fit all. They are two different things and should not be confused. (The fact that Lin Xiling was not rehabilitated even afterwards just goes to show that it was not Chairman Mao's intention alone to oppose the rightists, and that the resistance to rehabilitating the rightists did not indeed come from Chairman Mao.)

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<sup>135</sup> The "pit" in which Confucian scholars and books were burnt.

After I came out of Qincheng, I read an article saying that in 1973 Chairman Mao asked Wu De where Lin Xiling was working, and as soon as he heard that she had been imprisoned by the Public Security Bureau, he immediately demanded that she be "immediately released and arranged for work". Chairman Mao always advocated curing the sickness to save the patient, and giving them a way out no matter what mistakes they had made. I think this must be true. This shows that Chairman Mao was more open-minded than other central leaders in dealing with the undoubtedly great rightist Lin Xiling, who was judged by the standards of the time, so how could Chairman Mao have hated other intellectuals, "lured the snake out of the hole", and even expanded the anti-rightist camp, breaking the backbone of the old intellectuals? It is obvious that the old intellectuals did not have a backbone in the first place! Shouldn't the shit that was put on the Chairman's head be removed? A distinction must be made between the intellectuals of the new and the old, otherwise it is confusing. The old intellectuals are the intellectuals of the feudal class and the bourgeoisie, the new intellectuals are the intellectuals of the proletariat. There are not many proletarian intellectuals yet, but there will be more one day.

Chairman Mao originally trusted even the old intellectuals, and there are many good stories between him and many of them, such as the "cave pair" relationship with Huang Yanpei<sup>136</sup>, the list of the great intellectuals protected during the Cultural Revolution and the request to Premier Zhou to carry out the protection, and the reply to Xiong Shili and the delivery of chickens to Zhang Shizhao in the middle of the night, as discussed in this book. Why can't these be taken as evidence that Chairman Mao valued and loved the intellectuals, and mainly the old intellectuals?

In short, before and during the Rectification Movement, Chairman Mao trusted the "intellectuals" as he always had, and placed great hopes in them. But the actual performance of the "intellectuals" in the Rectification Movement failed to live up to Chairman Mao's expectations. After this round of observation of the "intellectuals", and after repeated observations of the "intellectuals" in many subsequent matters, Chairman Mao eventually found that these "intellectuals" (the old intellectuals) who had come from the old system were, on the whole, unwilling to engage in socialism, so he no longer trusted them as much as before. The overall performance of the old intellectuals during the Rectification Movement was a key event that led to Chairman Mao's change of attitude towards the old intellectuals, and was also a key event that led to Chairman Mao's subsequent launch of the proletarian cultural revolution to cultivate new proletarian intellectuals by reforming the education system.

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<sup>136</sup> The "cave pair" refers to a conversation about democratic China between Mao Zedong and Huang Yanpei in the cave living room of Mao Zedong's residence in Yan'an in July 1945. Asked by Huang Yanpei how to change the law of the dynastic cycle, according to which a dynasty existed until it lost the mandate of Heaven and was replaced by a new dynasty, Mao Zedong said, "We have found a new way, and we can jump out of this cyclical law. This new path is democracy. Only by letting the people supervise the government will the government dare not relax. Only when everyone stands up and is responsible will there be no 'death' of the new regime".

## Part 8. The "Eight Secretaries Incident" in Zhongnanhai during the Rectification and Anti-Rightist Movement

Preamble

1. From after Chairman Mao's speech at the Supreme State Council to before the Rectification Campaign
2. From the beginning of the Rectification Movement to before the Anti-Rightist Movement
3. During the anti-rightist campaign that began in mid-June
4. The Working Group enters phase
5. Chairman Mao investigated and personally solved the problem
6. Epilogue

Appendix 1: Qi Benyu's "Where is the 'Historical Truth' of Rongquantang?"

Appendix 2:

Rong Quantang's "Cultural Revolution Preview and Experiment: The Historical Truth of the 'Black Flag Incident' in Zhongnanhai

### Preamble

The "Eight Secretaries Incident" in Zhongnanhai began in the spring of 1957 during the Rectification Movement and continued into the subsequent Anti-Rightist Movement, which only ended in May 1958. This political incident, which took place around Chairman Mao and which Mao Zedong did not know about and resolve until the final stage, has extraordinary political implications. It is by no means as simple as the retaliation suffered by He Zai and the "Eight Secretaries", but reflects the difficult and tortuous process of the Party's rectification campaign and the complicated historical process of the anti-rightist movement being artificially distorted by some people. Even more so, it reflects the fact that some people were making small moves in the central organ of the Central Committee, making small moves around Chairman Mao, and attempting to infiltrate Chairman Mao's secretary's office under his direct leadership, and to install their own people around Chairman Mao.

The Secretary's Office had three sections to handle the Chairman's correspondence and receive visits from the public when Tian Jiaying was mainly responsible for them: one section was responsible for the Northeast, Northwest and North China (the Three Norths) plus Beijing; the second section was responsible for South Central and Southwest China; and the third section was divided among the provinces of East China plus Shanghai. When He Zai came to power, he established the Receiving Section and added the Internal Affairs and General Affairs Section [this is not in the original text, which only mentions the establishment of five sections, while it says six sections and lists six sections. This sentence was therefore added for continuity], and the three municipalities directly under the Central Government of Beijing, Tianjin and Shanghai were taken out to create a separate section of five. This would make a total of six sections, each with specific responsibilities as follows:

Section 1: divided into Northeast, Northwest and North China; Qi Benyu, the section head.

Section 2: in charge of South-Central and South-West China; Head of Section Zhu Ku and Deputy Head of Section Shen Dongnian.

Section 3: in charge of East China (this section has the most letters); Chief Ma Zhisun.

Section 4: in charge of general affairs, internal affairs, sending and receiving letters; Section Chief Wang Xiangqian.

Section 5: in charge of Beijing, Tianjin and Shanghai; Chief Li Gongchuo.

The Reception Section: specialised in public visits; the head of the section, Lu Cheng.

The so-called "Eight Secretaries" were eight section-level cadres, i.e. the above seven plus Chairman Mao's English secretary Lin Ke, who was the leading person.

Lin Ke, a native of Changzhou, Jiangsu province, joined the underground party at Beijing's Yanjing University in 1946, joined the Xinhua News Agency after Beijing's liberation in 1949, and began working as Chairman Mao's English secretary in the autumn of 1954. Li Gongchuo, a native of Shenyang, Liaoning Province, joined the secretary's office eight or nine months before I did, was originally a student at Northeastern University and was fluent in both Japanese and English. He was very clever and had very clear handwriting. At that time, Mao Anqing came twice a week to teach us Russian and was very strict. After Han Ruiding, who knew six languages, was transferred to the Liaison Department, he took over from Han Ruiding. He was the head of Section 3, but was later transferred to Section 5, where he supervised letters from abroad.

Zhu Gu, a native of Pei County, Jiangsu Province, was also a member of the underground. He was originally working at the Russian special training school to help Shi Zhe manage the organisation of cadres, but as he had no interest in Russian, but had a good command of ancient Chinese, and handled the summaries of the Chairman's letters accurately and replied to them properly, he was transferred to head Section 2 (I had transferred him to my office to help after succeeding to Tian Jiaying's position in the 1966).

Ma Zhisun, a native of Shanghai, came to the secretary's office before I did. She was a high achiever from Qinghua University and joined the underground party in Shanghai in 1946 [Note 1].

Lü Cheng, a native of Tai'an in Shandong province, was tall, had studied education at the Northern Normal University, and was a good writer and eloquent speaker. Therefore, when the Reception Section was established, he was transferred to head the section. During the "Eight Secretaries Incident", he stood firm and did not compromise with He Zai and Wang Gang, and was called a stubborn anti-Party element by Wang Gang.

Wang Xiangqian, a native of Qingdao, Shandong Province, studied at the North China Revolutionary University after the liberation [the original material is unclear here, it is written: attended the North China Revolutionary University after the liberation], and was transferred to the secretary's office in early 1950. He worked conscientiously and meticulously, and did a good job of sending and receiving letters, and was elected as a model worker in the Central Government.

Shen Dongnian, a native of Shanghai and an underground member of the Shanghai Yucai Middle School, was assigned to the secretary's office with me from the Central League School. This man had a strong party spirit, was active in his work, and wrote well, especially regular script in small characters. This is why Tian Jiaying liked him and gave him charge of all the personal letters to and from the Chairman's old friends, relatives and so on. These letters were collectively known as old friendship, and were as important as letters from celebrities from all walks of life [Note 2].

In the "Eight Secretaries Incident", Yang Shangkun and Liu Huafeng mainly wanted to get rid of Lin Ke. The Chairman trusted Lin Ke, and Lin Ke did not associate with leaders other than the Chairman, not even the Premier, nor did he report his work to Yang Shangkun. Jiang Qing was very pleased with him, saying that he did not make friends with bigwigs in Zhongnanhai and knew the rules well. Chairman Mao also praised him for "not making friends with princes". His organisational ties were in the secretary's office, and he often came to branch life meetings and was frank with people. The key person who triggered the "Eight Secretaries Incident" was He Zai. He was an old cadre who joined the revolution in 1938 and had a high school education. High school graduates were already rare and remarkable in the Northwest Bureau where he worked at the time. So, he was always working as a

secretary to the leaders and was promoted very quickly. He had frequent dealings with Liu Shaoqi and was much admired by him. In 1949, he had accompanied the delegation of the Central Organization Work led by Liu Shaoqi to the Soviet Union as a representative of the Northwest Bureau. He was transferred to the Secretary's Office in the second half of 1950. As soon as he arrived, Liu Shaoqi's wife Wang Guangmei visited him specifically. He was also the general secretary when he first arrived, under the leadership of Peng Dazhang, and assisted him in his work. As he was an old cadre, after he had been familiar with him for some time, Peng Dazhang assigned some of the leadership work to him. Later, he became the deputy director as well, and also replaced Peng Dazhang as the branch secretary of the secretary's office.

Soon after He Zai took power, a lot of old cadres were transferred. The head of the group was called Yan Cao, a cadre at the level of the local party committee, who went to the secretary's office to manage the party branch. The rest are: Zhang Dianke and Cheng Zhi to the first section; Liu Yun to the second section; Yuan Lin and Ma Zhijiang to the third section; Cong Zhirong to the fourth section; Wu Yunsheng, Fang Shiyu and Zhang Yiping to the fifth section; Wang Mingkuan and Zhang Daojing to the reception section. He Zai actually wanted to replace the original section chiefs and deputy section chiefs with this group. These people were indeed He Zai's supporters and were the backbone of the criticism and struggle against the "Eight Secretaries" during the rectification and anti-rightist activities.

I don't know how he treated his subordinates and the masses in the Northwest Bureau. But I know very well how he treated his subordinates and the public when he came to the Secretariat, especially after he became the deputy director of the Secretariat. This man was very proud, very self-righteous, very arrogant in his attitude towards people, always lecturing his subordinates and scolding the masses, in and out of meetings, regardless of the occasion, and if anyone made the slightest mistake, he would open his mouth and scold. He was not swearing, but specifically picking out words to insult people's character. There was a female comrade in the secretary's office who was so scolded by him that she almost committed suicide. I also experienced this once. I sent a report to Tian Jiaying (those kinds of reports used to be given to Tian Jiaying), and He Zai, thinking it should be given to him first, scolded me, "What are you doing with your head? If you don't know how to do it, don't do it. You gave your report to Tian Jiaying without going through me, do you want to hold on to someone else's big leg?" To be honest, I had never violated the principles of the organisation since I joined the revolutionary underground, and I had never been scolded like that before. Nor had I ever encountered a leader who had seized power like him, and who was rude and unreasonable.

A true communist does not bother to conceal his views. I did have a problem with him, not just because he had insulted me in any way, but because of his whole style of work, his fundamental attitude towards his subordinates and the masses. In fact, it was a group of people in the secretary's office who had a problem with him, not me alone. Therefore, in March 1957, after Chairman Mao had delivered a speech to the Supreme State Council calling on the masses to help the Party improve its working style, we conceived the idea of giving him advice, which led to the "Eight Secretaries Incident" in Zhongnanhai.

### **1. From after Chairman Mao's speech at the Supreme State Council to before the Rectification Campaign**

Soon after Chairman Mao's internal speech at the Supreme State Council, some local people responded to the spirit of the Chairman's internal speech by posting big-character posters and giving opinions to the Party leaders of their units. At that time, I was in the Party School of the Beijing Municipal Committee receiving rotational training, and as I was in the Secretary's Office of the Central Office, I had to take leave at any time to return to the Secretary's Office to deal with matters

that others could not figure out and could not handle on my behalf. Therefore, I knew very well what the attitude of the comrades in the secretary's office was towards Chairman Mao's speech at the Supreme State Council. Some of us, inspired by the Chairman's speech and also by the big-character posters in society, got together to discuss the matter of giving advice to the leaders, mainly targeting He Zai. The result of the discussion was to write small-character posters (not big-character posters) for He Zai, which were later posted in the conference room of the secretary's office.

## **2. From the beginning of the Rectification Movement to before the Anti-Rightist Movement**

On 27 April 1957, exactly two months after Chairman Mao's first address to the Supreme State Council, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China issued the Instruction on the Rectification Campaign. The repercussions of this instruction were so strong in society that big-character posters were no longer just a local phenomenon, as they had been in March, but a number of factories, organs and schools, all of which posted big-character posters criticising the bureaucratic style of some of the leading cadres in their respective units or organs. The call of the Central Government for a rectification campaign was also heeded in Zhongnanhai. We in the secretary's office held a one-person-one-vote mass election to select the members of the leading group for the rectification. I received the highest number of votes, but as I was not the leader, I was only the deputy leader. He Zai, who received a lower number of votes than me, became the leader of the group.

In March, we put up small-character posters for He Zai in a small conference room, and that's when I took the lead in putting up a big-character poster for him. As many people in the secretary's office had been scolded and roughed up by He Zai, they were all very unhappy with him, and once my big-character poster was posted, many more people followed. The more that were posted, the more they filled the small conference room of the secretary's office; as it continued, they were posted on the corridor and on the wall outside the main door, and attracted many people, including some central leaders, to see it. At that time, the secretary's office was located on the ground floor of the C building in Zhongnanhai, while Liu Shaoqi lived in the A building and Zhu De in the B building of the same compound.

I mainly reported two problems with He Zai: one was that he had a serious bureaucratic style and did not treat people equally; the other was that he did not have any enthusiasm for the masses and did not seriously deal with the problems relayed and raised by the masses in their letters and visits, but pushed them away whenever he could, or even simply ignored them. There were big-character posters from other people saying that He Zai was touting Khrushchev's secret report at the 20th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, saying that Khrushchev had developed Marxism-Leninism and so on and so forth. The problems I reported arose from seeking truth from facts. I criticized him for bullying the masses, for treating people unequally, and did not put labels on him, but let him think for himself (when we criticised He Zai after the "Eight Secretaries Incident", he admitted that what I said was true, and only insisted that the big-character posters of a few other people were rumours).

At first, the big-character posters only criticised He Zai, but later they did not mention the "leaders of the General Office" by name. The main reason was that some leaders of the General Office, such as Yang Shangkun, were indeed as detached from the masses as He Zai and had serious bureaucratic practices. For example, shortly after liberation, when a model worker from northern Shaanxi, Lao Yang, visited the office, no leader came out to receive him. When the Party Central Committee was still in northern Shaanxi, this old Yang lived not far from Chairman Mao and Yang Shangkun, and Chairman Mao knew him well, and Yang Shangkun often went to his home for dinner. I reported the arrival of Lao Yang to the Chairman, who quickly came out to meet him and even took a photo with

him. However, even though the Chairman had met with him, Yang Shangkun or other leaders of the General Office still did not see him; furthermore, many family members of senior cadres came to Zhongnanhai to report the deteriorating behaviour of some senior cadres after they had entered the city, saying that some senior cadres were dissatisfied with the low rank they had been awarded, did not study, did not seek advancement, drank all day long, cursed, and threw pots and bowls, and some were not happy with their former wives and were looking for young and beautiful new girls. The problems reported were serious and directly related to the lives of the people, the deterioration of cadres and the image of the Party. But none of the leaders in the General Office came out to receive them. Later I wrote a report and gave it to Chairman Mao, who was angry to see so many problems and told Luo Ronghuan to investigate and hold a meeting to come up with ideas on how to deal with them. When the Chairman gave these instructions, Yang Shangkun and the others got up in arms and said, "When they come back next time, you report up to us." But that was just talk, and the next time they came, they still didn't come out to any of them. So, when I wrote the big-character poster for He Zai, I brought out these circumstances in a measured manner as well, and without naming Yang Shangkun.

### **3. During the anti-rightist campaign that began in mid-June**

When the anti-rightist movement began, those to whom we had given advice, in reality He Zai and Yang Shangkun behind him, began to pursue the matter of putting up big-character posters, targeting the eight activists: Lin Ke, Li Gongchuo, Lu Cheng, Zhu Gu, Shen Dongnian, Ma Zhisun, Wang Xiangqian and myself, arguing that our writing big-character posters to give advice to He Zai and individual leaders of the Central Office was a rampant attack on the Party. They wanted to brand us as rightists. Tian Jiaying, the Director of the Secretary's Office [Director or Acting Director? Qi had said that Tian Jiaying had been the deputy director in charge] and deputy director Peng Dazhang, who supported us in our views, were implicated and it was decided to transfer Peng Dazhang out of the secretary's office. The person who specifically set up the tracing was Yang Shangkun, who was then Director of the General Office of the Central Government and Secretary of the Party Committee of the Central Authorities. He Zai, on the other hand, had the group of people he had personally transferred to the Secretary's Office put up big-character posters saying that we were against the leaders of the General Office and were trying to mess up Zhongnanhai. The way Yang Shangkun and He Zai did this was the same as what was happening in society at the time when they were expanding the campaign. At that time, many units, institutions and schools from all walks of life, in countering the attacks of the bourgeois right, treated a large number of people who had put forward their views (some of which were undoubtedly correct) to the Party organization and individual leaders of their units during the Spring Rectification Movement through the free airing of views in big-character posters, as if they were bourgeois rightists, and combated them.

Of course, we were not convinced, because our big-character posters were about specific work-related matters, which were totally unrelated to the rightist anti-Party and anti-socialist rhetoric. We resisted, insisting that we were responding to Chairman Mao's report (meaning the report of Chairman Mao at the Supreme State Council) by advising the leaders and responding to his call, so how could we be anti-Party? In this way, a debate began between the two sides over big-character posters. We seized on their support for the rightist Lin Xiling to fight back, insisting that the real rightists were not us, but He Zai and the others. The rightist Lin Xiling gave an anti-Party speech at Beijing University, and He Zai sent someone specifically to attend. He Zai himself supported some of Lin Xiling's views, which might instead be anti-Party.

Lin Xiling was then a law student at the National Peoples' Congress Law Department, full of new terminology and knowledge of French literature, and very capable of political activism, so soon after the beginning of the Rectification Movement, she went to Zhongnanhai to discuss the situation with

the Central Committee. She was received in the secretary's office by Wang Wen, who listened to her after talking to her a few times. Wang Wen reported her talks to He Zai, who then said she was "bold, brave and talented" [As mentioned before, Wang Wen was under Qi in 1955, so why did he dare to report directly to He Zai? Did his job and position change between 1955 and 1957?]. In this spirit, Wang Wen later went to Beijing University to attend Lin Xiling's lecture, where Lin even pointed to Wang Wen and said, "Today, the General Office of the Central Government has sent Comrade Wang Wen to attend my lecture", giving the impression that the Central Government supported her.

Who were the rightists? We were unable to resolve this matter even though we were arguing about it in big-character posters until the autumn of 1957, when the national anti-rightist climax was nearing its end. It was time to submit the matter to the higher party committee, the Party Committee of the Central Committee, for resolution.

#### **4. The Working Group enters phase**

In early 1958, the General Office of the Central Government sent Wang Gang to replace He Zai in the Secretariat. At the same time, with the consent of Yang Shangkun, a working group, headed by Liu Huafeng (Deputy Secretary of the Party Committee of the Central Government) and Xiao Lan (Director of Personnel of the Central Government), was sent to the Secretariat in the name of the Party Committee of the Central Government [Meng Fanhua's material says that Wang Gang was the head of the group?] It was this working group that wanted to brand us as a counter-revolutionary group. According to He Zai later on, the leaders from above already had an opinion when they sent Xiao Lan and the others, and it was He Zai himself who put it forward: He Zai was an old cadre. He made some mistakes, but was not anti-Party. Eight of us were anti-Party. This working group, with the support of the Party Committee of the Central Committee, mobilised the masses to criticise us for a two-month period from March to April 1958, and struggled against us at conferences and small meetings (they were rhetorical, not physical. We later criticised them, also rhetorically, not physically. Both sides were civilised). As the nominal deputy head of the leading group for the rectification in the secretary's office, I had no right to speak.

They said that we did not want the Party branch, the leadership of the Party General Branch, the leadership of the Central Party Committee or the General Office, and that we were nominally promoters but in essence liquidators and Martovs<sup>137</sup>. They also made an issue out of our personal history, saying that Li Gongchuo had historically joined the Guomindang and that in 1948, when the Guomindang raided Pingjin, many Party members were arrested but Lin Ke was unharmed (by implication, Lin Ke was a traitor), branding the eight of us as an "anti-Party clique" headed by Lin and Li. In fact, I put up the most big-character posters at that time, but because I had more prestige among the masses, and people thought that I was a person who spoke truthfully, did not tell lies and had a solid history (He Zai also admitted that my big-character posters told the truth, only he said that several other people had written them, saying that they were disinformation), so they put me in third place.

I knew that this criticism was coming from a very big source. The posting of big-character posters in Zhongnanhai was something that had never been done before. During the period when our criticism of He Zai's support for Lin Xiling was posted, Liu Shaoqi even came to see the big-character posters, and I had already heard that Liu Shaoqi had taken the position that it was not good to do so. Liu Shaoqi's wife and secretary, Wang Guangmei, formerly returned the relevant documents which used

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<sup>137</sup> Martov was the leader of the Mensheviks who clashed with Lenin in 1913-14 over the role of the vanguard Party. Liquidationism opposed the role of a vanguard and sought to abolish it in favour of a mass social-democratic organisation.

to be returned to me, but now they were not returned to me. My hunch was confirmed by He Zai's own later statement that a senior leader in Zhongnanhai had suggested that there was something wrong with writing big-character posters in Zhongnanhai to give advice to the leaders, and why should this be done in Zhongnanhai? He Zai did not say who this senior leader was. But from his foreword, it was someone higher than the leader of the General Office, Yang Shangkun, so it was either Liu Shaoqi or Deng Xiaoping.

Regarding Li Gongchuo's participation in the Guomindang, he joined that Party when he was studying at Northeastern University and at the victory of the Anti-Japanese War. Later, when he saw the corruption of the Guomindang, he joined the Communist Party. I was a member of the committee that examined him in 1953 and knew his situation (during the Cultural Revolution, someone wanted to investigate him and he tried to commit suicide, but I spoke up for him so he didn't get into trouble). Lin Ke was an old member of the underground, a graduate of Yanjing University, with a high level of English, and was the Chairman's English secretary and a formal English teacher. He specialised in "reference news" and often discussed foreign affairs with the Chairman, so he knew many core things. The Chairman trusted him very much. The Working Group brought Lin Ke into the fight and isolated him.

The working group even set up people to follow and stake us out. One day, I went to Peng Dazhang's house and when I came out, a man jumped out from the shadows, grabbed me and took me to the working group. This man was called Fang Shiyu, who turned out to be from the Qingdao Public Security Bureau. This means that they had even transferred people from outside Public Security Bureaus in order to spy on us. [As mentioned earlier, Fang Shiyu was transferred in shortly after He Zai's arrival, and it seems that he was not specifically transferred from Qingdao to engage in surveillance of the Eight Secretaries, but was only now acting as a surveillance person. The statement here is to preserve Qi's recollections to Sun Yancheng. Does it require an appropriate adjustment of terminology?] I protested at the time, saying that this was illegal surveillance, but Xiao Lan dared not admit that she had arranged it. By the end of April, they had already written the conclusion that we were an "anti-Party clique", and they had also spoken to Wang Zhen in Xinjiang, telling him to prepare to accept us for reform through labour in Xinjiang. We were all well aware of this and were prepared to leave Zhongnanhai and go to Xinjiang for reform through labour.

## **5. Chairman Mao investigated and personally solved the problem**

Just when we were ready to go to Xinjiang for labour reform, the whole thing suddenly took a turn. Chairman Mao was looking for his English secretary, Lin Ke, in Guangzhou at the time, but when he could not find him, he was told that he had made a mistake and was a member of an "anti-Party clique" and was undergoing isolation. The Chairman was taken aback. His trusted English secretary had become a member of an "anti-party clique" and was being examined in isolation, without even his knowledge. The Chairman had been talking to Lin Ke a lot and knew him very well, and he certainly could not believe him when he said that Lin Ke was an anti-party activist. The Chairman called for Lin Ke to be found and brought to Guangzhou. In this way, Lin Ke was released from isolation and rushed to Guangzhou. When he saw the Chairman, Lin Ke wept and told him what had happened in Zhongnanhai, that he had been branded as a member of an anti-Party clique and that he was to be sent to Xinjiang for labour reform. Chairman Mao was well versed in history. We were attacked by the working group by exactly eight section-level cadres, and Tian Jiaying and Peng Dachang, who were much higher in rank than us, supported us in our views. Therefore, after listening to Lin Ke's complaint, Chairman Mao associated it with the "two Wangs and Eight Secretaries Incident" of the Tang Dynasty and added: "Now we have a new 'two Wangs and Eight Secretaries Incident' in Zhongnanhai, I will not allow such reactionary events in history to repeat

themselves around me". This is what Lin Ke said to me later. This is how the "Zhongnanhai (Two Wangs and) Eight Secretaries Incident" got its name.

After the Chairman learned through Lin Ke's report of the arguments between the two factions in the secretary's office and the specific circumstances of the struggle against us, he asked his secretaries Xu Yefu and Gao Zhi to go and copy the big-character posters of the two factions, copying everything that said Lin Ke and his group were anti-Party and anything that Lin Ke and his group defended. Xu Yefu and Gao Zhi came overnight to copy them, and they did so very carefully. It was a special sign that the secretary beside the Chairman had come to copy the big-character posters. The working group was already ready to declare us as an anti-Party group, and also called Wang Zhen in Xinjiang, so that he was ready to take us to Xinjiang for reform through labor. As soon as the Chairman asked about this matter, they immediately stopped to see which way the wind was blowing, and even the meetings and struggles were temporarily suspended, all waiting for news from Chairman Mao.

Chairman Mao returned to Beijing on 3 May. He had already read all the materials copied to him before he returned, and did not take a position immediately after his return, but made a personal investigation and held a meeting in person that night at the Juxiang Study House where he lived. The meeting was attended by Yang Shangkun, Secretary of the Party Committee of the Central Government and Director of the General Office of the Central Government; Zeng San and Liu Huafeng, Deputy Secretaries; Xiao Lan, Director of the Personnel Division of the Central Government; Tian Jiaying and Peng Dazhang, leaders of the Secretariat; Lin Ke and Li Gongchuo, the eight section chiefs involved; and Deng Liqun (Director of the Political Research Office of the General Office of the Central Government) and Li Dongye (Secretary of the General Party Branch of Zhongnanhai), Wang Gang, Yan Cao and others.

It was the first time that I attended a meeting convened by the Chairman himself as a member of the conference, and as I knew that I had been designated by the working group as a member of the "anti-Party clique", I was very nervous and had mixed feelings. Before the formal meeting, Chairman Mao asked some of the people he did not know well about the incident for information. He first asked Li Gongchuo where he was from. What school did he graduate from? Li Gongchuo said he was a graduate of Northeastern University. Then he asked me. I was a bit embarrassed and replied, "I didn't go to university, I'm a secondary school student". Unexpectedly, the Chairman said happily, "Like you, I was also a secondary school student. I graduated from teacher training and was also a primary school teacher!" Hearing the Chairman's words, my heart, which had been in a state of turmoil, immediately calmed down and I felt that things might not be so serious. For the Chairman would not talk like that to a person from an anti-Party group.

The chairman told the people in the working group to speak first, and when Wang Gang didn't say anything, Xiao Lan came out and spoke, recounting how we carried out unorganised activities, how we held on to old cadres, how we wrote big-character posters attacking the party leadership and so on. When she finished, the Chairman asked us to speak next. I knew that they were grasping at Li Gongchuo's history, that Li Gongchuo might not have the strength to speak, that Tian Jiaying and Peng Dazhang were not in a position to speak, and that Lin Ke had already spoken to the Chairman, so there was no need to speak again, so I was the only one left to speak. I then stood up and said that we were responding to the Chairman's call and how and what the Chairman's February speech (referring to Chairman Mao's speech to the Supreme State Council at the end of February 1957) had said. While listening, Chairman Mao nodded his head and said, "That's what I said". This gave me more courage to plead my case. I said that we were responding to the Party's call to give advice to the leaders in order to help them improve their style and do a better job. Some leaders in the Secretariat and the Central Office were so high and mighty that they refused to meet with the

people, which was bureaucratic. When we gave them advice, they described us as rightists and anti-Party, but the real rightists, like Lin Xiling, they did not object to and even said she was "bold, brave and talented" and supported her. When Lin Xiling gave a speech at Beijing University, they sent Wang Wen to attend. Lin Xiling said on the spot that the General Office of the Central Government had sent someone to listen to my report today. This is the way to boost the ambition of the rightists and undermine the prestige of the leftists (the Chairman nodded his head frequently upon hearing this). Therefore, they did not oppose the rightists, but those who opposed the rightists (us) they said were rightists and an anti-Party clique.

When the Chairman heard what I had told him, he asked them, "So, is there anything else they (meaning those of us) have done against the Party?" Yang Shangkun, Wang Gang and the others did not say anything. At this point, Xiao Lan spoke again, "They attacked the Party Committee of the Central Committee, and their big-character posters were directed at Comrade Yang Shangkun, Director of the Central Office. Is this not still anti-Party?" When the Chairman heard this, he said, "Oh, opposing Yang Shangkun is anti-Party?" Yang Shangkun hastily said, "No, you can't say that, I am under the leadership of the Chairman, and only opposing Chairman Mao and the Party Central Committee is anti-party." The Chairman went on to say, "You are two factions, representing the two opposing factions, the left and the right, one fighting the red flag and the other the black flag. I am on the side of the left, I am for the left and against the right, and I advocate pulling up the black flag and planting the red flag". Chairman Mao asked again, "Who is Wang Gang?" When Wang Gang stood up, the chairman looked at him and said, "I have heard a lot about you". Then he unceremoniously criticized him: "You are the leader of a faction. You protect the rightists, attack the leftists, and do bad things. You have the support of people above you, the General Branch and the Party Committee of the Central Committee. Otherwise, you wouldn't have been able to make such a big splash. Your mistake is not a general mistake, but a mistake in policy and line. You have continued to carry out He Zai's line and follow He Zai's recommendations. What flag did you plant? Is it a red flag, a grey flag or a black flag? I don't think it is a red flag, nor a grey flag, but a black flag, a pure black flag. That is my opinion. Convene a general meeting of all the staff of the secretary's office immediately today to convey my opinion, open a discussion and lift the lid." --The "Eight Secretaries Incident", also known as the "Black Flag Incident", was based on this speech by the Chairman. What the Chairman said here about He Zai's proposal was that He Zai, as explained earlier, had suggested to Wang Gang and Xiao Lan's working group that he himself had made mistakes but was not anti-Party, while we people were anti-Party. Those of us were using his perceived errors to try to bring down the old cadres and oppose the Party leadership. So Wang Gang and Xiao Lan were advised to carry out a struggle against us.

The Chairman also asked Yang Shangkun if he knew anything about it. Yang Shangkun, who was quite experienced, knew that the climate was not right when he saw the situation, and said, "I have been busy with my work and have no time, so I did not catch it and did not have a good understanding of it". Peng Dazhang described Fang Shiyu's stalking, and the Chairman was furious, saying, "Bringing the means of dealing with the enemy to deal with the people, engaging in fascism and Beria in Zhongnanhai, will not be allowed." After saying this he looked straight at Yang Shangkun, who bowed his head and said nothing.

Seeing that the situation was somewhat deadlocked, Deng Liqun came out to round things up. He first said that it was wrong to brand young activists as an anti-Party group, and then said that young people were prone to radicalisation and posting big-character posters, somewhat similar to the light cavalry of the Yan'an era<sup>138</sup>. He argued that both sides had shortcomings and that both sides should

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<sup>138</sup> In Yan'an, the many problems that had arisen in the literary and artistic circles caused strong dissatisfaction among many cadres. Some of this was expressed in wall newspapers. "The Light Cavalry" was one of them. The disagreements led Mao to convene the forum on literature and art, allowing him to clarify the issues.

unite to carry out rectification and anti-rightist activities. Upon hearing this, the Chairman said, "Oh, give them 50 flat boards each<sup>139</sup>. What is wrong with young people giving advice to their leaders? If one has to be slapped for giving advice to the leaders, then in that case, they are all young and I am old, so let's beat me with the flat board first. Because I was the one who called for the rectification". When he heard the Chairman say that, Deng Liqun immediately got up to make a review. (Later, when I was transferred to the Red Flag magazine, he, who was already deputy editor-in-chief of the Red Flag magazine, even said to me enthusiastically: "Back then, in the 'Eight Secretaries' incident', I said that both sides should be beaten fifty times each and be criticised by the Chairman, but I was wrong. Young people responding to the Party's call to participate in the rectification movement was not wrong! What was wrong with that?") [From the beginning of the on-site investigation by the Chairman until the speech by Deng Liqun, I have compared Sun Yancheng's article and the materials that have come from Guo Zhi many times. Meng Fanhua's material has no relevant content. I am here to repeatedly proofread the materials of Sun Yancheng and Guo Zhi, and determine the content and order after comprehensive selection. Please Qi Lao check.]

At eight o'clock that night, the secretary's office held a general meeting of all the staff. Yang Shangkun was still very factual this time and conveyed Chairman Mao's speech to all the staff in its original form and without missing a word. Many people were filled with tears after listening to it, some even cried out in pain and refused to leave until midnight. The situation was very similar to the scene at the beginning of the Cultural Revolution. At the beginning of the Cultural Revolution, Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping staged a "White Terror for more than 50 days" in Beijing, and many people and students were branded as rightists and counter-revolutionaries. At the rehabilitations across the country, many people wept and sang the song "Looking up at the Northern Dipper"<sup>140</sup>, "I miss Chairman Mao in my heart" and did not leave the venue for a long time after being rehabilitated.

## Epilogue

Because of Chairman Mao's timely intervention, we "Eight Secretaries" were rehabilitated and were not labelled as "rightists" or "anti-party cliques". This was the end of the "Eight Secretaries Incident". After the meeting on the evening of May 3, Zhongnanhai held another conference to expose and criticize the incident, which was attended by cadres from various departments of the Central Office and lasted for seven or eight days. These meetings were held at the Spring Lotus Root Cave, and although they were triggered by the "Eight Secretaries Incident", they were by nature a purge of the adverse effects of the "Eight Secretaries Incident" and no longer belonged to the "Eight Secretaries Incident" itself. Of course, all eight of us attended these meetings, and after we were rehabilitated, we were in the position of the critics, and the people who had been criticising us became the targets of criticism and struggle. The criticism and struggle were not physical, but rather a debate of views, the same nature as when He Zai and the others first criticised us. They were very civilised in their criticism of us, and we are very civilised in our criticism of them at this time.

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<sup>139</sup> "Hitting with the flat board" was a punishment originating in the Eastern Han Dynasty, and only revoked in 1910 on the eve of the Qing Dynasty's collapse. The person to be punished was laid face down. His or her ankle and shoulders were grasped firmly by assistants, and the buttocks often exposed. An official would then deliver blows with a long, narrow, flat board. The punishment was capable of causing broken bones and death. The colloquial expression "50 flat boards each" meant that the two sides of a dispute shared responsibility.

<sup>140</sup> The Northern Dipper refers to the seven brightest stars of the Ursa Major constellation. This set of stars was used for navigation. During the Third Taiwan Straits Crisis of 1996, when the Chinese were threatened with the loss of access to the US GPS system, the Chinese responded by developing their own, which is called Beidou, or the Northern Dipper. Thinking of Chairman Mao when gazing upon the Northern Dipper is an acknowledgement of Chairman Mao's political and ideological guidance.

Those who made mistakes during the "Eight Secretaries Incident" were a group of people, including Yang Shangkun. At the end of the series of meetings, most of them were dealt with to varying degrees, and four people, including He Zai and Wang Wen, were designated as rightists (one of the four was a supporter of the Eight Secretaries, named ××××, who was studying at the Central Party School at the time and was designated a rightist there for other reasons - this is the earliest material I have. -This is the earliest material, which I have kept. Who was this person?), expelled from the Party and demoted to a lower rank. Eight people, including Wang Gang, Zeng San, Liu Huafeng and Li Dongye, were also disciplined by the Party.

After the " Eight Secretaries Incident", most of them were sent down to the Shisanling Reservoir to take part in labour, and after the Lushan Conference in 1959, they were all somewhat dissatisfied with Chairman Mao and sympathetic to Peng Dehuai. The Beijing Municipal Committee reported the situation and brought them back to rectify the situation and convey the spirit of the Lushan Conference. Chairman Mao then said, "You see, when people who have made mistakes are allowed to go down to work on their own, and there is no care and concern for them, they will of course have emotions. What they did before was wrong, and those of you who were active in the movement should take them down to labour, work and exercise together, reform their minds together, and set an example for them to follow, so that they will slowly realise their mistakes, change their minds and become good cadres of the Party." After Tian Jiaying conveyed this instruction from the Chairman, I took the initiative to sign up to go to the Erqi locomotive factory in Changxindian, to start as an apprentice, to work while learning about industry, and to take with me ten or so of them who had made mistakes (Yan Cao took sick leave and did not go) (see Chapter 12 for details). We worked together for over a year, and when we returned I reported to Chairman Mao that the disciplinary action against them had been withdrawn and they were all given suitable jobs. Some went abroad, some stayed in Beijing, and those who stayed in Beijing remained in the Secretariat. It is true that He Zai was an old revolutionary who was out of touch with the masses and had serious bureaucratic practices. But it was not right to brand him as a rightist, because being a rightist was a contradiction between us and the enemy, and the "two lines" of Chairman Mao and Liu Shaoqi did not exist at that time. After Yang Shangkun qualified He Zai's problem as an "internal contradiction", He Zai was also sent to work in the Shisanling Reservoir.

Wang Wen was the leader of a branch of the underground party in Beijing that was involved in the student movement. He was transferred to Zhongnanhai from his post as deputy director of the General Office of the Beijing Municipal Committee, and initially worked in my section as my deputy. He was a very hardworking person, but he was a bit confused during the Rectification Movement, probably because he was influenced by Lin Xiling and convinced by her, and also by Khrushchev's secret report that Stalin was running a fascist dictatorship and had killed so many people. In terms of the time, this was a big mistake on Wang Wen's part.

Wang Gang was only following the advice from above and was implementing the Yang Shangkun line. Chairman Mao said it was a case of " uprooting the red flag and planting the black flag", so there were always a few people to blame, and since Wang Gang was the replacement for He Zai, it was Wang Gang who had to be found, and he was given a sanction of detention in the party. Again, political opinions and line issues aside, I think this man is not bad. The people who went with me to the Erqi locomotive factory included Wang Gang. When I returned from the Erqi Locomotive Factory, I reported to the Chairman and withdrew the disciplinary action against him.

Xiao Lan was actually an admirable person, a party member who came from a textile factory and was deeply attached to the Party. She later became the director of a textile factory and was later transferred to the Central Government as the head of the personnel department. She was the deputy head of the working group sent by the Party Committee of the Central Government to rectify

the "Eight Secretaries Incident", so to speak. She was firmly on Yang Shangkun's side, and her concept was very simple, that whoever opposed the leadership of the Central Office was anti-party. Therefore, it was only as a matter of perception that she made the mistake. When she "contradicted" Chairman Mao on May 3, the Party Committee of the Central Committee was prepared to use her as a scapegoat, saying that she had made a big mistake and was prepared to classify her as a person who had made a right-leaning line error. I disagreed with this treatment of her and stood up for her. I said, "Director Xiao Lan was only carrying out the opinions of the Central Party Committee and did not know enough about the situation. She just made that one remark to the Chairman, which cannot be considered anti-Chairman Mao. This understanding of hers is generally understandable. She only made mistakes in her working methods, and she was not someone who pulled out the red flag and planted the black one". Xiao Lan, like Wang Gang, was carrying out Yang Shangkun's line. Yang Shangkun, the Party Secretary of the Central Committee, was fine, but he wanted to mess with the people underneath him, which was not logical. There were other comrades who, like me, thought that Xiao Lan had only spoken her mind during Chairman Mao's investigation, which was not considered to be contradicting the Chairman. The Chairman disagreed with her views and did not criticise her. Therefore, we did not recommend that Xiao Lan be given disciplinary action. In 1960, when I took the wrongdoers to the Erqi Locomotive Factory, considering that Xiao Lan had feelings for the Party, that making mistakes was only a matter of awareness, and that she had a good attitude towards them, and that being a female comrade, it was not convenient for her to work with a dozen of us men, I went to talk to her leader, Deng Diantao, about my opinion and hoped that she would not have to work anymore. Xiao Lan was originally the secretary of Deng Diantao, who was then the deputy director of the General Office of the Central Committee and a cadre of the Long March, and he was so pleased to hear my opinion that he kept her on in the personnel office. During the Cultural Revolution, Xiao Lan became a rebel, and because she had learned a deep lesson from her experience in the "Eight Secretaries Incident", she told others that Chairman Mao's treatment of giving opinions to leaders was different. It was okay to give opinions to party leaders. As long as the opinions are correct, they are still good comrades. If they are wrong, they cannot be classified as rightists. In this way the masses embraced her and she became the leader of the rebels in her unit. Later I heard that after I was branded as an anti-Party element and entered Qincheng in 1968, when Jiang Qing and the Premier were criticising me, Xiao Lan came forward and said, "As far as I know, Qi Benyu is a good comrade, he is not anti-Party, so maybe there is a misunderstanding here." It was something I admired her for. I also heard that someone wanted to fix her because of this, but it didn't go down. Xiao Lan was much older than me and I don't know if she is still alive today.

Li Dongye was a veteran cadre, and he was at the ministerial level before the "Eight Secretaries Incident". Later he was demoted and became an official like the secretary of a county party committee. It was a difficult period. Although he didn't work much, he did not go hungry for food. In 1961, I sent a report to the Chairman requesting that the punishment be lifted and work be assigned to those who had been sent to the Erqi Factory with me. Chairman Mao gave his approval. Following Chairman Mao's instructions, Yang Shangkun removed the disciplinary actions of those who had been disciplined by the central government, including Liu Guofeng and Li Dongye, and restored Li Dongye to ministerial rank, making him Secretary of the Liaoning Provincial Party Committee and later Minister of Metallurgy. Chairman Mao had a good memory and once saw his name on a report and said, "Isn't this the man who staged the Black Flag incident? How did he get promoted to such a big official? I said not giving a punishment didn't mean awarding a promotion. He made a mistake, how come he was promoted?" When the Chairman said this, Yang Shangkun again sent Li Dongye down. In fact, I can't say that he was promoted, he was a provincial minister. They complained to me, saying that you, Qi Benyu, were too vindictive. All the people who worked with you had their disciplinary actions lifted and were assigned jobs. We have been released for several years, and we are not under your control, so how could you report to the Chairman and have our positions

removed? I was on very good terms with Meng Fanshu, Yang Shangkun's secretary, and I told him, "I was really wronged, I didn't report that to the Chairman! (The material that came before me said that Wang Gang and the others saw the report in the People's Daily and had a problem with it. He said that they had sent me to the secretary's office and that I had acted in accordance with their advice, but that I had made a mistake and was sent down to work, but they had been promoted instead. This is not a feudal society, so you can't be so unequal! Isn't this just allowing the state officials to set fire to the city and not allowing the people to light a lamp? I reported Wang Gang's opinion to Tian Jiaying, who then sent it to the Chairman. The Chairman then approved it. What happened when he was promoted instead of making mistakes? Deng Xiaoping was asked to look into it. Later they were demoted. So, they were very critical of both Tian Jiaying and me.) Liu Huafeng was formerly secretary of the Party Committee of the Central Committee, but after the "Eight Secretaries Incident", he was transferred to Shaanxi Province as secretary. [Was he transferred there immediately afterwards, or was he transferred there after Yang Shangkun took the opportunity to restore their rank in 1961, just like Li Dongye?] Fang Shiyu, who had followed and monitored me, was classified as a rightist. At that time, he had a very bad attitude and talked nonsense, and the public was very critical of him. When he was classified as a rightist, the whole room was 100 per cent in favour. But now it seems that he was only talking nonsense and not a rightist.

After the Tian Jiaying incident in 1966, some people took the opportunity to purge us, saying that we were the remnants of Tian Jiaying's party, because we had a good relationship with him. They were not successful. Later on [specifically or roughly when?] Wang Dongxing intervened in the Secretary's Office (which had by then been reorganised as the Secretariat of the Secretariat Bureau of the General Office of the Central Committee) and also branded six of the "Eight Secretaries" (among them Zhu Gu) as Tian Jiaying's "remnants" and sent them to study classes. Lin Ke served as Chairman Mao's English secretary until the summer of 1966, and after 1970 he worked as a researcher for the Xinhua News Agency and the Academy of Social Sciences before he died in 1996. [Did Wang Dongxing send Lin Ke to the study class? Qi Lao himself didn't go into the study class. There should be another one who didn't. Was it Lin Ke? If not, why didn't he serve as the chairman's English secretary in 1966?] During his lifetime, Chairman Mao repeatedly used the "Eight Secretaries incident" to teach Party cadres not to suppress the opinions of the masses, but to let them speak. As soon as the incident was over, Chairman Mao criticized it as a case of injustice to the leaders of the Central Committee and the leaders of the various ministries and commissions of the Central Committee, but it was not responded to. On the eve of the Second Session of the Eighth National Congress in mid-May 1958, Chairman Mao even asked Lin Ke and me to prepare a speech on the "Eight Secretaries Incident" and make a presentation at the Second Session of the Eighth National Congress. However, Deng Xiaoping later cancelled the speech on the grounds that the agenda of the meeting was too tight. If we had been able to speak at the second meeting of the Eighth Congress, we might have played a part in stopping the further expansion of the anti-rightist faction at that time, or at least it would have been of much help in screening and removing the hats of the misclassified rightists. But Deng Xiaoping pulled a sleight of hand and squashed it. Thereafter, Chairman Mao mentioned the "Eight Secretaries incident" on many other occasions, and in a directive to the East China Bureau, when referring to the "Eight Secretaries incident", he even used the phrase "it brings tears to my eyes". In 1976, Chairman Mao passed away. Three more years later, in 1979, the "Eight Secretaries Incident" was reversed, saying that the "Eight Secretaries Incident" had created the unjust cases of He Zai, Wang Wen, Xiao Lan and others with the support of Chairman Mao, and that the Central Government should withdraw "all falsehoods" "imposed" on these people back then and restore their reputation.

#### **Appendix 1: Qi Benyu's "Where is the 'Historical Truth' of Rong Quantang?"**

In 2007, He Zai's son, Rong Quantang, published an article in the journal Yanhuang Chunqiu ('Preview and Experiment of the Cultural Revolution: The Historical Truth of the Zhongnanhai "Black Flag Incident"'). The article was based on the tone of the 1979 "vindication" of the "Eight Secretaries Incident" and was so well received that it was reproduced in full or quoted in part in many places.

It is understandable that Rong Quantang would build a monument for his father, but by using the techniques that have been popular for the last 30 years or so, such as "diluting facts, distorting facts, modifying facts, pouring out personal subjective views to meet the realpolitik needs of denying Chairman Mao, deliberately moving the actual time of the main events to establish logical connections between certain facts that do not exist or reversing their logical connections " and other techniques, a mishmash of speculation, conjecture, blackmail, outright fabrication, desire to impose guilt and outright realpolitik perceptions, have taken an event where the truth is otherwise clear and written without any truth at all.

For example, Rong Quantang said in his article, "In his capacity as the person in charge, He Zai praised the good ones and criticized the inappropriate ones, and inevitably sometimes his methods were simpler and sometimes he seemed a bit impatient, especially when he was strict with several young cadres and criticized them a bit more, from which individual comrades developed ideological misunderstanding". "Taking advantage of the momentum of the rectification campaign, Qi Benyu and others put up big-character posters listing three imaginary problems of He Zai's". "He also reported the speeches of some comrades at the meeting to the organization.... They adopted a one-sided and untrue way of posting big-character posters by making up things out of nothing, taking them out of context, and putting them on the line at will, and by making indiscriminate accusations", "In addition to the big-character posters, they also held several criticism meetings against He Zai and Wang Wen, at which they actually pushed, shoved and beat people. To add insult to injury there were also several incidents of censorship". "During the 1957 rectification, some people in the community were designated as 'rightist' elements in the anti-rightist struggle for writing big-character posters to make a big noise. In the Central Secretariat, on the other hand, it was Qi Benyu, Lin Ke and others who wrote the big-character posters to carry out the loud and clear campaign to designate other comrades as 'rightist' elements"; "influenced by one-sided words and one-sided reports, the one-sided attitude of the top leaders was exploited by Qi Benyu, Lin Ke and others. In the Zhongnanhai Secretariat, with just over 70 people, four people, including Wang Wen and He Zai, were branded as rightists, and 18 comrades, including Zeng San, Liu Huafeng, Li Dongye and Wang Gang (deceased), were found guilty of 'anti-Party mistakes' and punished. ", "Qi Benyu, the originator of the Zhongnanhai 'Black Flag Incident', with the experience gained from the Zhongnanhai 'Black Flag Incident', was promoted eight years later to 'member of the Central Cultural Revolution Group". In the "historical truth" written by Rong Quantang, He Zai's bureaucracy, detachment from the masses, disrespect for subordinates and unequal treatment of people became both praise and criticism, only that in the criticism by the people, he "appeared to be more impatient" and "a bit more". The "three opinions" we gave to He Zai were turned into false accusations; He Zai and the others, in their anti-rightist campaign, took us out of context, elevated minor issues to ones of line struggle and class struggle, and then framed us with their accusations. Then they changed it so that we were taking them out of context, we were elevating minor issues into ones of line struggle and class struggle, and alleged that we had put hats on He Zai and others to label them as Rightists. We swapped places with He Zai, who had been labelled a Rightist, and after 1957, were labelled as Rightists by He Zai and others. Again, in 1958, the working group controlled by He Zai's supporter Yang Shangkun labelled us as an "anti-Party group", which was a non-existent thing. The "supreme leader" sent people to copy and read and analyze the big-character posters of both sides of the controversy, and gathered with both sides of the controversy and the leaders concerned to conduct on-site investigations, listened freely to the statements of both sides, and finally made judgments and conclusions based on what both sides had actually done. Turning the

supreme leader into someone "influenced by one-sided words and one-sided reports and one-sided reports ..... to engage in a brutal struggle and fight mercilessly" - is Chairman Mao really something that we small section chiefs could "use"? Is it? In fact, Chairman Mao always dealt with things fairly and did not to favour any party. When he learnt during his on-site investigation that we were being followed and stalked, he criticised "treating the revolutionary masses in the same way as the enemy".

In the Cultural Revolution that occurred eight years later, Chairman Mao also adhered to this principle, and after learning that the Qinghua students who had been persecuted and attacked by Wang Guangmei earlier had "wisely captured" Wang Guangmei, he also severely criticised the students for not treating their Party comrades in the same way as they had treated the enemy's underground workers, and approved the document signed by Zhou Enlai and Lin Biao on the Wang Guangmei case. This is an example of Chairman Mao's unfailing commitment to the Party. All this illustrates Chairman Mao's great mind as a proletarian revolutionary and his great Marxist style of working in a practical and realistic manner. Would such a revolutionary leader, a true Marxist, be "influenced by the one-sided remarks and one-sided reports of (a few small section chiefs) to engage in a brutal struggle against the Party comrades and strike them mercilessly"? Rong Quantang was also totally irresponsible when he said that we had "pushed, shoved and beaten" He Zai during the criticism of him, and that this had developed into "several raids". The truth is that at first, He Zai and the others criticised us, in the morning, in the afternoon and sometimes in the evening, in a civilised manner, without any shoving or beating. Later on, when the incident was reversed and we spoke and pointed out their mistakes, it was also very peaceful and there was no "pushing, shoving or beating" at all, not to mention that it developed into "several raids". That is, whichever side had the initiative before and after the whole incident, they never engaged in physical criticism towards the other side. They were all seated during the debate at the meeting in Chunjushai, and they were never asked to stand up. At that time, it was Zeng San who took the notes, and later on, he wrote a note to me, which is still there. It read: "Chairman (I was the chairman of the meeting at that time), now I have a terrible headache and I can't support myself anymore, is it possible for me to go out for a rest". I agreed, and he went out. Whether it was Rong Quantang or anyone else, anyone who said there was "pushing, shoving, beating" or "grabbing faces and pulling hair" was talking nonsense. At that time, even debates in society did not involve pushing, shoving or beating people, let alone inside Zhongnanhai. Those who say "pushing, shoving, beating and censoring" are taking advantage of the fact that many people later did not understand the history of the time, and are making up evidence and presuming guilt. Rong Quantang also implied that "Qi Benyu entered the Central Cultural Revolution because he had gained experience in slandering and framing people in this incident, and was favoured by Mao Zedong, who appointed him as a member of the Central Cultural Revolution Group eight years later". Even if I, Qi Benyu, became a member of the Central Cultural Revolution Group "because of my experience in this incident", it had nothing to do with the incident itself. If so, how come other people who also had this "experience" were not "promoted" to the Central Cultural Revolution Group? I was admitted to the Central Cultural Revolution because of my comprehensive political performance and academic achievements in the following eight years, not because of any experience gained in the Black Flag Incident, but specifically because of my unwavering adherence to the socialist path and my writing of a number of important theoretical articles, following my 1963 article "A Comment on Li Xiucheng", which were in line with Chairman Mao's vision of the Cultural Revolution and the reality of building a new socialist culture in the society.

The blatant disrespect for historical facts quoted here is only part of what is contained in Rong Quantang's "historical truth". His entire text is a tale of fantasy, not history.

For example, Rong Quantang not only said that "Chairman Mao Zedong's lingering anger had not yet subsided, and at the second meeting of the Party's Eighth Congress from 8 to 23 May 1958, he used the topic of the rectification in the secretary's office three times, and he demanded that every hilltop, village, organ, army, factory and co-operative plant red flags and pluck out white flags", and he also far-fetchedly labelled the events wrongly, put forward the fake as the real, so as to directly link the cultural and historical controversy in the 1960s with the "Black Flag incident", completing his argument that the "Black Flag Incident" was a "preview and experiment of the Cultural Revolution". The "Eight Secretaries Incident" was indeed like a "mini-cultural revolution" in its manifestation, but it was not a "cultural revolution rehearsal and experiment". The reason is that neither Chairman Mao nor other Party comrades had the ideas of the later Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, and Chairman Mao's theory of continuing the revolution under the dictatorship of the proletariat did not exist before the "Eight Secretaries Incident", so it was impossible to carry out a "Cultural Revolution rehearsal and experiment" at that time. If it were to be seen as a "Cultural Revolution rehearsal and experiment", then people with different political views and class positions would see and understand this "rehearsal and experiment" from different political perspectives and class positions, just as they see and understand the Cultural Revolution itself. The political and class meanings of each are completely different.

Again, for example, in Rong Quantang, Lin Xiling came to the secretary's office not in the midst of the Rectification Movement, but after she had been branded a rightist during the Anti-Rightist Movement and had come to ask for vindication; Wang Wen does not seem to have received her during the Rectification Movement, let alone gone to Beijing University to listen to and support her speeches that led to her being branded a rightist - Lin Xiling was identified as a rightist by Liu Shaoyi himself after the start of the anti-rightist campaign because of her speeches at Beijing University during the Rectification Movement, spreading Khrushchev's secret report and making openly and directly anti-socialist remarks. This is well known. Rather than being unaware of the facts, Rong Quantang deliberately misplaced the chronology and ignored the facts.

For example, Yung Quantang's father, He Zai, was not branded as a "rightist" during the "Eight Secretaries Incident", but Yung said that he had been branded as a rightist and he even said that he was the first "rightist" to have the words "within the Party" added to his name. I wonder what his basis was. He Zai, Wang Wen and four others were branded as rightists after the "Eight Secretaries Incident", either because their performance and practices in the "Eight Secretaries Incident" violated the principles of internal Party democracy and confused the contradictions between the enemy and us, or for other reasons, none of which was the result of the "Eight Secretaries Incident". We Eight Secretaries of Departments, who were subordinate to He Zai, did not have the power to label them as "rightists", nor did the "Two Kings" (Tian Jiaying and Peng Dazhang) have the power to do so. However, in order to conceal the historical truth that He Zai and his subordinates had attacked and persecuted us during the anti-rightist movement, and to create a "historical truth" that He Zai and his subordinates had been attacked and persecuted by us, Rong Quantang said that the anti-rightist movement in Zhongnanhai was "half a beat slower" than the anti-rightist movement in society " - the anti-rightist movement in Zhongnanhai had only begun after the anti-rightist movement in society had ended. However, no matter how Rong Quantang tried to create the "truth", it is impossible to deny the basic fact that the Rectification Movement and the Anti-Rightist Movement in Zhongnanhai were in complete harmony with the movement of the whole society at that time. It was under this basic fact that He Zai, as the leader of the secretary's office, had to brand us, his subordinates, as rightists for giving him advice, rather than us, his subordinates, branding him, our superior as a rightist. May I ask Rong Quantang, how in the internal life of the Party, can a subordinate give a superior an organizational conclusion? If Rong Quantang could not even face such common sense, he had to create a "truth" that Chairman Mao was "used" by we little section chiefs. That's enough, no more "for example"! ....

Rong Quantang not only glorified the antagonists of the "Eight Secretaries" and openly used the "spring and autumn brushwork"<sup>141</sup> against Chairman Mao and myself, but also showed great disrespect to another person, Lin Ke, who insisted on his own views. He writes: In the description of his book Mao Zedong's Human Face, published in Hong Kong on 1 March 1997, before the handover, Lin Ke mentions that when the book was being finalised, he added, after much consideration, the words "the rectification of the wind in the Secretariat of the Central Office - the 'Black Flag Incident' began". The "Black Flag Incident" was still written from the extreme "leftist" viewpoint prevalent in 1958. Rong Quantang not only glorified the antagonists of the "Eight Secretaries" and openly used derogatory words against Chairman Mao and myself, but also showed great disrespect to another person, Lin Ke, who insisted on his own views. He writes: "In the description of his book Mao Zedong's Human Face, published in Hong Kong on 1 March 1997, before the handover, Lin Ke mentions that when the book was being finalised, he added, after much consideration, the words "the 'Black Flag Incident' began after the rectification movement in the Secretariat of the Central Office. The "Black Flag Incident" was still written from the extreme "leftist" viewpoint prevalent in 1958."

Why can't Lin Ke stick to his views? Why can't he stick to the political characterization of 1958? Must the "Black Flag Incident" be written in accordance with later political views? The so-called "extreme left" given later has a specific meaning and is not at all linked to the "Black Flag Incident" at the time. In the Black Flag Incident, if there is an "extreme left", it is obvious that He Zai and the supporters behind him are "extreme left", and it is they who branded those who gave them advice as "rightists" and thus "anti-Party cliques". What is this if not "ultra-leftism"? Chairman Mao put a stop to their "ultra-leftist" behaviour in time and vindicated a case of injustice committed by He Zai and other "ultra-leftists" against the "Eight Secretaries". Nowadays, history writing abuses the term "ultra-left", hoping not only to describe everything Chairman Mao did during the Cultural Revolution as "ultra-left", but also to describe everything Chairman Mao did in his life as "ultra-left". The "Eight Secretaries Incident" is therefore not only "extreme left", but the "Eight Secretaries" became "ultra-left" elements, and Chairman Mao's vindication of the "Eight Secretaries" became an "ultra-left" act. According to this logic, it is also "ultra-left" for Chairman Mao to have saved the Chinese Communist Party and the Chinese Revolution many times before 1949, to have fought against the Japanese and the Guomindang, and to have established the People's Republic. This is absurd!

I was one of the main parties involved in the "Eight Secretaries Incident", and I was indeed the instigator of the incident in terms of writing a big character poster to He Zai. However, because of the retaliation against us by He Zai and others, what happened afterwards was out of my control and that of the eight of us. This is precisely why this incident took many twists and turns until the Chairman intervened before the tide turned and we were liberated. After the Cultural Revolution, this incident was once again reversed. I have now written down everything I know here, giving a full account of history and testifying to it. This testimony is tantamount to saying a few words of justice for the deceased, who were once beaten by He Zai and the Working Group, then rescued by Chairman Mao Zedong, and are now being slandered again, but can no longer defend themselves, as well as providing a little proof of Chairman Mao's consistent democratic style within the Party. Rong Quantang can continue to smear myself, continue to disrespect Lin Ke, and even continue to smear Chairman Mao. However, when dealing with such an important historical event, please be careful in your writing and leave some real historical truths to future generations, rather than being dominated by subjective ideas dominated by realpolitik and leaving them with a pile of subjectivist and materialist historical rubbish. After all, history and serious historical researchers will have their own judgement on such important events.

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<sup>141</sup> This refers to a style of criticism associated with the ancient *Spring and Autumn Annals* and characterised by the use of guarded and subtle language.

## **Appendix 2: Rong Quantang's "Cultural Revolution Preview and Experiment: The Historical Truth of the 'Black Flag Incident' in Zhongnanhai"**

**Author: Rong Quantang Source: 《Yanhuang Chunqiu》 No. 12, 2007**

According to the book "A Chronicle of the Life of Yang Shangkun", "In the spring of 1958, Mao Zedong thought that the Secretary's Office of the Central Office had 'supported the right and opposed the left' in the rectification of the right, and Yang Shangkun was criticized for this." According to the recollection of comrades who experienced this history in Zhongnanhai back then, what the book says: "supporting the right and opposing the left" refers to the "Black Flag Incident" in Zhongnanhai; "being criticized" refers to the abolition of the Party Committee of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China (CPC) and Yang Shangkun's role as secretary of the Party Committee. I have gone through the information and interviewed some of the people involved in order to "return" to the truth of the incident.

### **The Rectification Movement in the Secretary's Office of the Central Office as a Preview of the Cultural Revolution**

After the Eighth Party Congress in 1956, Comrade He Zai was the head of the Secretariat Office of the General Office of the Central Committee (referred to as the Central Secretariat Office) and the secretary of the General Party Branch of Zhongnanhai (subordinate: Juren Hall Rear Building Branch, the Secretariat Office Branch and the Secretariat Office Branch), presiding over the overall work of the Secretariat Office. There were more than 70 staff members in the Secretariat Office, and in terms of experience, it was mainly composed of two parts: partly old comrades who have experienced the revolutionary war years, selected from various places and departments, and partly young students selected from institutions of higher learning in the early years of the founding of the country, Qi Benyu and Lin Ke (Chairman Mao's English guide) belong to this category of cadres. As with any social units, the Secretariat had to strengthen its management without exception. He Zai in his capacity as the person in charge had to praise the good and criticise that which was inappropriate. Inevitably sometimes simpler ways and means seemed to be impatient and irritable. The strict demands on a few young cadres and the many criticisms caused some comrades to have ideological problems.

On 27 April 1957, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China (CPC) issued an Instruction on the Rectification Campaign, calling on the general public to make suggestions to the Party for criticism. On 4 May, when the Rectification Campaign began in the Central Secretariat, several young cadres, who had been criticised by He Zai, took out their prepared speeches after the mobilisation meeting of the Rectification Campaign in the Central Secretariat and, with harsh words and a strong tone, proposed to make a big fuss everywhere about the situation in the Central Secretariat, and began to expose and criticise Comrade He Zai.

Taking advantage of the momentum of the Rectification Movement, Qi Benyu and others put up big-character posters listing three imaginary problems that He Zai had made: he made false reports to the leaders of the Central Office, saying that the staff of the secretarial office were not interested in the Rectification Movement in their own unit, but in the Rectification Movement in society; some people attacked the Premier's government work report, and He Zai used them as a backbone to brand activists in the Rectification Movement as rightists; during the Rectification Movement, He Zai and Wang Wen (then head of the Central Secretarial Office Section Chief and Secretary of the Party Branch) received Lin Xiling, a student at Renmin University (designated as a rightist during the 1957 anti-rightist struggle), and expressed sympathy and support for the reversal of her case.

In addition to this, some comrades' speeches at the meeting were reported to the organization...it was made out of nothing, taken out of context, freely raised as a class and line struggle, labels were slapped on indiscriminately, and big-character posters with one-sided and untruthful words were put up.

Wang Wen was the first to be the focus of criticism because he had received Lin Xiling's petition. Qi Benyu and others criticised Wang Wen by "dragging his views", and Wang Wen spoke truthfully about his views on Lin Xiling. They then elevated the criticism to a struggle of class and line. His speech was altered into a reactionary statement and turned into material for criticism in big-character posters, which also became the basis for later designating Wang Wen as a rightist.

After the to "speak freely," to "air your views freely," to write "big character posters," and to engage in "big debates" (referred to as: "four bigs"), the majority of comrades thought that the problem of speaking freely in big-character posters was not consistent with the facts, repeatedly denying the person criticised a right of appeal. The issues listed prevailed, as if they were true. The big-character posters were overwhelming falsely accusing He Zai of being an "ambitious person", a "class dissident", a "political pickpocket" and a "liar Li Wanming"<sup>142</sup>. "..... In addition to the big-character posters, several criticism meetings were held against He Zai and Wang Wen, at which there was actually pushing, shoving and beating. To add insult to injury there were also several incidents of censorship. The Party Committee, the Central Office and the Zhongnanhai Party General Branch were opposed to these acts, and Qi Benyu, Lin Ke and others shouted the slogan: "Kick out the branch, the General Branch, the Party Committee and the Central Office and make revolution". A series of unconventional practices such as speaking freely, airing views freely, writing big-character posters, and engaging in big debates, beatings, and scrutiny occurred in Zhongnanhai. At that time, some people believed that this was a violation of party discipline and national laws and undermining party democracy. Eight years later, "The "Cultural Revolution" had a striking resemblance to this. People commented that the rectification movement in the Secretariat was a preview and experiment of the "Cultural Revolution".

The central document stipulated that the rectification movement should be: "Like 'a gentle breeze and mild rain', be kind to people, cure the illness to save the patient." He Zai felt that some people's practices were inconsistent with the spirit of the central government. He asked Comrade Yang Shangkun what to do. He replied: listen carefully to opinions and accept them humbly. From late June onwards, He Zai was preoccupied with writing examinations and introspection materials, receiving criticism, and was not allowed to attend any working meetings, making it difficult for him to carry out his normal work. In September, when the national struggle against the right came to an end, the leaders decided to transfer two comrades, Wang Gang (now deceased) and Li Dongye, from

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<sup>142</sup> Li Wanming (1927-1991) was a con-man who used the falsification of files, boasting, and fraud to rise from a poorly-educated Guomindang soldier to steal the high office of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry of the central government. Although arrested for fraud and sentenced to three year's jail in 1948, he continued his forgeries, including that of the seal of Deng Xiaoping, and rose in government circles. In 1955 he was rearrested in Xi'an and charged with political fraud. He was sentenced to 15 years in prison. During the Cultural revolution, his term of imprisonment was extended. In 1978, he was released and employed at a car factory in Xi'an. His success in conning people was based on portraying himself as a Red Army veteran, a hero who had been wounded for the revolution. His case exposed the serious paralysis and bureaucracy in the work of the Party and government organs at that time, many obvious loopholes in the work system of personnel organization, frequent changes in personnel, underdeveloped information exchange, and the blind worship of heroes and models.

the Second Office of the Central Secretariat to replace He Zai as head of the Secretary's Office and Secretary of the Zhongnanhai Party General Branch respectively.

During the 1957 rectification, some people in society were designated as "rightists" in the anti-rightist struggle because they wrote big-character posters and spoke out freely. In the Central Secretariat, however, it was Qi Benyu, Lin Ke and others who wrote big-character posters and made a big fuss about it, designating other comrades as "rightists". Practice has proved that the methods of the "Four Bigs" cannot be used to handle contradictions between the enemy and ourselves, and the methods of the "Four Bigs" cannot be used to handle contradictions among the people. In mid-January 1980, Comrade Deng Xiaoping pointed out in the report "Current Situation and Tasks" that the "Four Bigs" approach, as a whole, has never produced a positive effect.

### **The "Black Flag Incident" in Zhongnanhai is not true**

The movement in the Secretariat was "half a beat" slower than the whole country, as the nationwide struggle against the right had ended in the late summer of 1957, while the rectification of the Secretariat had only just ended, and a year-long debate began in September, focusing on the question of whether the issue surrounding He Zai is a contradiction among the people or an issue of a "rightist" nature.

Qi Benyu and others saw He Zai's transfer from the Central Secretariat as an achievement of the Rectification and Anti-Rightist struggle, and became more and more active, liaising and campaigning in all directions, setting off another wave of big-character posters in Zhongnanhai. In response to what Qi Benyu and others were doing, comrades who held opposing views also began to write big-character posters, questioning, "What on earth is Qi Benyu up to?"

It is said that when Comrade Liu Shaoqi saw that big-character posters were posted all over Zhongnanhai, he talked to the comrades of the rectification group of the Central Secretariat and pointed out clearly that: the influence of posting big-character posters in Zhongnanhai was not good (international friends often came to Zhongnanhai at that time), it was not conducive to the office of the leading organs, do not secretly string them together in Yingtai at night, where Chairman Mao often went for a walk, which would interfere and affect his work. It is normal to have views and opinions on leading comrades, you can write small-character posters, or you can use the evening or holiday time to meet in the Politburo conference room at the west gate to raise your opinions and reflect problems, but do not post big-character posters in Zhongnanhai, this is inappropriate.

The Party Committee of the Central Office saw that Comrade Shaoqi had taken an interest in the matter, and from the perspective of leading the rectification campaign, with the consent of Comrade Yang Shangkun, Secretary of the Party Committee, a working group was sent to the Secretariat of the Central Office in the name of the Party Committee with Liu Huafeng (Deputy Secretary of the Party Committee of the Central Office) and Xiao Lan (Director of Personnel of the Central Office) as its head and deputy head. The Party Committee carefully studied the issue of He Zai and proposed the "sixteen-character" policy of "treating the problem seriously, abide by its internal nature, criticise penetratingly and thoroughly, and cure the disease to save the patient". Despite the lack of scientific rigour and the "leftist" stamp on this formulation, the Party Committee made it clear that the nature of He Zai's problem was an internal conflict within the people and not a rightist error. The Working Group followed the Party Committee's instructions and assisted the successive leaders of the Central Secretariat in organising and guiding the Rectification Movement. The majority of the comrades in the Secretariat Office considered this instruction and practice to be in line with the

spirit of the Central Committee, the reality of the Secretariat Office of the Central Office and the objective assessment of Comrade He Zai.

On March 3, 1958, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China issued "instructions on anti-waste and anti-conservatism", and all fronts quickly unleashed the "double anti" campaign, and when the Central Secretariat implemented the spirit of the document, everyone consciously and unconsciously linked to the reality of the rectification campaign of the Secretariat. The vast majority of comrades supported the instructions and practices of the Party Committee of the Central Government, and believe that He Zai's mistakes at work can be criticized and educated, but are not a contradiction between us and the enemy. Qi Benyu and eight others, on the other hand, always insisted on the three problems listed, not only as struggles of class and line, but also insisted on designating He Zai as a rightist.

The controversy was so overwhelming that there were two distinct views. Qi Benyu and eight others likened the two different views to two different flags. Those who advocated the rightist view they believed to be holding the "red flag", while those who disagreed with the rightist view they believed to be holding the "black flag", and He Zai became the a representative of the "Black Flag".

Claiming to be holding the "red flag", and ignoring the instructions of the party committee of the central organ, they privately reported to Jiang Qing (using their special status) the developments in the Secretary's Office, saying that eight of them were being followed, their letters were being censored and their personal history was being scrutinized, and that they believed that the Party Committee of the Central Office and the leaders of the Secretary's Office were shielding and covering up He Zai. They worked across departments and in various ways encouraged the masses not to listen to the Party Committee of the organisation, and spread talk of removing the leaders. The two comrades, Zeng San, deputy secretary of the party committee and Wang Gang, head of the secretary's office, followed the instructions of Comrade Yang Shangkun and convened a meeting of the secretary's office staff to organize a study of Lenin's "'Left-Wing' Communism: An Infantile Disease" on April 14.

Comrade Li Dongye, the succeeding secretary of the General Party Branch, called a meeting of the party members of the Party Branch in the back building of Juren Hall, the Party Branch in the Security Bureau and the Party Branch in the Secretary's Office to criticise and educate them. The main content of the criticism was that they were welcome to make criticisms or suggestions to the leaders, but not to exaggerate the facts, not to go to an unlimited extent, to distinguish between Yan'an and Xi'an<sup>143</sup>, and so on. However, those who claimed to be holding the "red flag" did not admit their mistakes, arguing that the leadership was suppressing criticism, opposing the "leftists" and supporting the rightists.

Qi Benyu later recalled, "Many central leaders at that time considered it anti-party for young people to criticise the leaders of the Central Office, but only Mao Zedong said that young people could criticise the leaders of the Central Office, and if that was called anti-party, then I was anti-party too, and I was willing to be slapped with them."

During the meeting in Chengdu from 9 to 26 March 1958, someone reported the situation in the Central Secretariat to Mao Zedong, who, upon hearing this, said, "I never imagined that a new 'Eight Secretaries' incident had also occurred around me. During the period of Emperor Su Zong of the Tang Dynasty, eight people, including Liu Zongyuan, Liu Yuxi and Wang Shuwen, carried out reforms to change the law and were attacked by the big landowners and bureaucrats, and were dismissed

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<sup>143</sup> During the Third Civil War, Yan'an was held by the Communist Party and Xi'an by the Guomindang.

and removed from their posts, forming the famous 'Eight Secretaries Incident' in history. Because people like Qi Benyu have opinions about the right-wing errors of the leaders of the Central General Office and the Political Secretary Office, they have made some criticisms and they will label them as 'anti-Party'. This is simply outrageous! In my opinion, the Central Office Party Committee should be abolished, and the political secretarial office should also be abolished. It is not people like Lin Ke and Qi Benyu who are punished, but the people who rectify them! "

After returning to Beijing, Mao Zedong summoned Yang Shangkun, Liu Huafeng, Wang Gang (deceased), Xiao Lan, Li Jian, Qi Benyu and Lin Ke to a meeting on 3 May to hear the two different opinions. At this debriefing, Mao criticised the cadres of the Party Committee of the Central Government and the Zhongnanhai Party General Branch, saying that they suppressed criticism and that some young people who had raised some criticisms were not anti-Party! A comrade who had attended the briefing recalled that after Chairman Mao's criticism, if the comrades of the Party Committee of the Central Government Offices and the Zhongnanhai Party General Branch had admitted their mistakes and made self-criticism on the spot, the matter would have been over. But after Chairman Mao's criticism, Xiao Lan, a cadre of the Party Committee of the Central Government, was not convinced and confronted Chairman Mao head-on, saying: They attacked the Party Committee of the Central Government and opposed Director Yang Shangkun of the General Office of the Central Government, is this not anti-party? Hearing this, Chairman Mao was furious and said: "Yo! To oppose Yang Shangkun is not to oppose the Party! I think we need to set up an investigation team to find out what happened and then deal with it."

In the era when one word from Chairman Mao's carried such weight, although he said he would deal with the matter after investigation, his tendentious attitude towards the matter had already decided that the investigation and understanding was just a formality.

In July 1958, the Zhongnanhai Party General Branch convened a meeting of the Party members of the Party Branch of the back building of Juren Tang, the Security Bureau, and the Party Branch of the Secretary's Office in Chunjiuzhai, at which Chairman Mao's instructions on the Secretary's Office campaign to "pull up the red flag and plant the black flag" were conveyed. According to the memories of the comrades who attended the meeting, the head of the Party General Branch said at the meeting: "The original Party General Branch criticized and educated one of the comrades, Lin Ke, a cadre of the secretary's office, who was also the secretary of Chairman Mao's office and helped Chairman Mao study English. At that time, when Chairman Mao was visiting the south, he asked several times why Lin Ke did not accompany him, and Ye Zilong, the Chairman's secretary, found various reasons to explain, and finally the Chairman asked Lin Ke to immediately rush to the south (Changsha)." The head of the General Branch also said, "Lin Ke did not cut his hair and shave his beard during the process of 'being rectified', and he was in such a mess that Chairman Mao, who always cared about the staff around him, was very distressed when he saw him and asked him what had happened. He said that the leaders had sent people to spy on them, censor their letters, review their history, support the right and oppose the 'left', and so on. After listening to Lin Ke's report, Chairman Mao thought that Lin Ke, Qi Benyu and others were fighting for a red flag, not a black one."

Influenced by one-sided statements and one-sided reports, the one-sided attitude of the top leaders was exploited by Qi Benyu, Lin Ke and others, who carried out "cruel struggles and merciless blows" in the Central Secretariat. The "anti-Party error" conclusion and punishment were given to 18 comrades, including Zeng San, Liu Huafeng, Li Dongye and Wang Gang, and the judgment of "unstable position and right-leaning ideology" was given to more than 50 comrades, including Zhang Xizeng, Cheng Zhi, Zhang Dengke and Jing Wenhuan, and put in their files. Those who were wrongly dealt with in the "Black Flag Incident" accounted for about 80 per cent of the staff of the Secretariat

of the Central Office. Not a few comrades were implicated in the Party Committee of the Central Government, the Security Bureau and the units directly under the Central Office. Those who were disciplined or implicated were transferred or demoted. Some of them were separated from their wives, some became sick and disabled, some became mentally disturbed, and some left the world unjustly. A comrade who graduated from Yunnan University and worked in the secretary's office of the Central Office was sent down to work as a primary school teacher in a remote mountain village in Yunnan, but was not rehabilitated until the early 1980s, because the file contained a judgement of "unstable position and rightist ideology" in the secretary's office. Qi Benyu and Lin Ke took the liberty of including the "unstable position and rightist ideology" in their comrades' files, which was like putting a huge mountain on the political lives of these comrades and putting them under a long term "overload" of pressure.

The composition of the staff of the Secretariat was subject to a rigorous organisational procedure, and there should not have been people who were rightists, who made "anti-Party mistakes", who were "unstable and right-wing in their thinking", and indeed there were no rightists, none who made "anti-Party mistakes", none who were "unstable and right-wing in their thinking". After the test of history, the four comrades who were branded as rightists, the 18 comrades who were designated as having made "anti-Party mistakes", and the more than 50 comrades who were identified as "unstable and right-wing" are good Party members and cadres who have withstood the storms and hard trials. Although they clearly knew that the "Black Flag Incident" was an unjust case and were deeply aggrieved, they devoted themselves to their work and labour without resentment because of their love for Chairman Mao and consideration of the overall situation, which fully reflected the fact that those who had suffered injustice because of the "Black Flag Incident" had a strong party character and lofty party spirit.

Qi Benyu, the originator of the "Black Flag Incident" in Zhongnanhai, was promoted to "member of the Central Cultural Revolution Group" eight years later with the experience gained from the preview of the "Black Flag Incident" in Zhongnanhai. "In 1968, Qi Benyu was sentenced to 18 years' imprisonment in Qincheng prison and became a victim of the ultra-leftist ideology. In the description of the book "Mao Zedong's Human Face" published in Hong Kong on 1 March 1997 before the handover, Lin Ke mentioned that when the book was being drafted, he added a chapter on "The Rectification of the Secretary's Office of the Central Office - the 'Black Flag Incident'" after repeated consideration, and still insisted on writing about the "Black Flag Incident" from the extreme "left" viewpoint prevalent in 1958.

In October 1979, the General Office of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China announced that the "Black Flag Incident" was a major wrongdoing and would be completely vindicated; that the four comrades who had been wrongly classified as rightists, including Wang Wen and He Zai, would be completely vindicated; that all false accusations imposed on Wang Gang (deceased) and 18 other comrades would be overturned; and that more than 50 comrades, including Zhang Xizeng, who had been unjustly treated, would be rehabilitated. In 1980, with the approval of the Central Committee, the Committee of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China was restored and later renamed as the Working Committee of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China.

### **How can a bureau-level cadre create a "line"?**

In the dispute between the two different views, Qi Benyu and others took the opinion of the Party Committee of the Central Committee, the Central Office and the Secretary's Office that the He Zai issue was of an internal nature and infinitely overstated it to "implementing a He Zai line without He Zai". A person with a little common sense knows that a "line" is a goal set by the party in a certain

period of time and the basic principles and general policies it must follow, it is closely related to the party's major meetings and party representatives, and district bureau-level cadres are not able to talk about a "line ". The intention of such a reference is to attach the name of a "line" to He Zai, which can serve the purpose of killing two birds with one stone, aggravating the nature of He Zai's problem and at the same time hitting the leaders and cadres who sympathized with and supported He Zai.

Driven by this ideology, the leading group of the Central Secretariat, controlled by Qi Benyu and others, formed a 5,000-word "conclusion on He Zai's mistakes" in August 1958. The conclusion had four charges against He Zai:

1. "Defaming Chairman Mao". One letter reported that a carpenter had made a shrine to the Chairman's image and burned incense and prostrated three times a day, asking for praise. Comrade He Zai took a different view on the matter and presented it to Yang Shangkun and Comrade Deng Xiaoping, who instructed, "Please stop it in Hebei Province." Originally a matter of upholding the image of the leader, this was judged to be "defamation of Chairman Mao. "

2. "Smearing the 1942 rectification and saying that the 'Red Flag Party' incident was created during the 'Rescue Campaign'." One evening back in the summer of 1952, several of Qi Benyu's young people asked He Zai what had happened between the Yan'an Rectification and the Rescue Movement back then, and He Zai, as an eyewitness, told the story of the Yan'an Rectification and Rescue Movement, making it clear that they were two different things, deliberately stressing that the "Red Flag Party" was an incident created by Kang Sheng during the Rescue Movement.<sup>144</sup> They conflated the two events, but concluded that He Zai was "slandering the 1942 Rectification Movement".

3. "Sympathising with and supporting rightists". He Zai and Wang Wen were instructed to receive Lin Xiling at the west gate of Zhongnanhai; He Zai forwarded to the Ministry of Higher Education a letter from Luo Weizhi, a professor of the Petroleum Institute (designated as a rightist during the anti-rightist struggle in 1957), suggesting that universities should implement a system of responsible presidents under the leadership of the Party Committee, as required. This was a normal act of a staff member performing his official duties, but it was concluded that he was "sympathetic to and supportive of rightists".

4. "Framing activists and resisting the rectification and anti-rightist struggle". From the very beginning of the Rectification Movement (May 1957) He Zai was the subject of a call for release and was criticised, and in September he left the Central Secretariat and was designated as a representative of the "Black Flag", so he no longer had any power or strength in the Rectification and Anti-Rightist struggle. What power did he have to "frame" others and "resist" the movement? It

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<sup>144</sup> The Yan'an Rectification Movement began in February 1942. Its purpose was to diminish the influence of those in the leadership who took their cue from Stalin and the Comintern and neglected to apply Marxism-Leninism to China's circumstances. From the Movement come some of Mao's best-known works – his 1941 essay Reform Our Study, Rectify the Party's Style of Work, Oppose Stereotyped Party Writing and Talks at the Yan'an Forum on Literature and Art. There were various stages of the Rectification Movement, and the 1943 section included the "Rescue Campaign" in which cadres had to criticise others for their alleged mistakes as well as offer self-criticism of their own. This was prompted by Kang Sheng's handling of the case of a Guomindang agent, Zhang Keqin, who had been sent by them to Yan'an in 1939 as part of their "red flag policy". According to Zhang, the "Gansu underground party is playing the red flag against the red flag, it is the product of the Guomindang red flag policy, in fact, it is the Guomindang secret service organization." This "red flag party incident" was later used to condemn Kan Sheng for alleged cruelty and unjustified executions.

is precisely this conclusion of the leading group of the Central Secretariat that is reflected throughout the "slander" and "frame-up" of He Zai.

Through the "erroneous conclusions of the leading group of the Central Secretariat on He Zai", there is no trace of anyone or anything connected with the "line". He was expelled from the Party, demoted six grades, removed from Zhongnanhai and sent to labour.

The practice of elevating problems as struggles around class and line was also applied to the assessment of the Party organisation. On 26 August 1958, the Rectification Group of the Central Secretariat, under the control of Qi Benyu, summarised the campaign of the Secretariat: "The 'bourgeois black flag line' of the Secretariat Branch was directly instructed and supported by the head of the General Branch of Zhongnanhai and the Central Party Committee. This three-tier Party organisation had committed "an anti-Party error in its policy and line", and this was a "pro-right, anti-left black flag anti-Party incident". Based on this summary, the Central Committee withdrew its Party Committee and Yang Shangkun from his post as secretary. Wang Gang, the successor to the head of the Secretariat of the Central Office, and some comrades who insisted that the He Zai issue was an internal one, were severely criticised for "supporting the right and opposing the left", for "committing a mistake in the direction of the line", and for being an "Anti-Party black flag".

### **The "Plant the red flag, pull out the white flag" campaign originated from the "Black Flag Incident" in Zhongnanhai**

Chairman Mao Zedong's anger was still lingering, and at the second meeting of the Party's Eighth Congress from May 8 to 23, 1958, he used the topic of the rectification movement in the secretariats three times and derived the idea of "planting red flags and setting new standards". He demanded that all hills, villages, institutions, troops, factories and co-operatives should plant red flags and pull out white ones.

In the afternoon of May 8, Chairman Mao said: "We have to study Lenin, we have to dare to insert the red flag, the more red the better, we have to dare to create the new and different. There are two kinds of novelty, one is to plant the red flag, which is desirable; one is to plant the white flag, which is not desirable ..... The red flag is going to be planted, if you don't plant the red flag, the bourgeoisie will have to plant the white flag; instead of letting the bourgeoisie plant it, we should plant it for the proletariat. If the bourgeoisie has planted a flag, we must pluck it, and we must dare to do so." Thereafter, a powerful campaign of "plucking white flags and planting red flags" was launched throughout the country. In agriculture, industry, science and technology, education, culture, the army and other fields, those who insisted on seeking truth from facts and opposed pomposity, as well as those with so-called bourgeois academic views, were treated as "white flags". The opposite was the "red flag" and it had to be supported.

In the industrial field, the implementation of "inserting red flags and pulling out white flags" to complete product purchases and sales, meant that large product sales are "red flags", and low product sales are "white flags", prompting industrial and mining enterprises to resort to fraud and exaggeration. In schools, especially colleges and universities, ideological reform and ideological criticism are the centre, and famous professors, scholars and intellectuals who "despise labor and were self-serving" were removed as "white flags"; "inserting a red flag" meant criticising "participating in labour is a waste of human resources" and "the mystery of teaching materials". Teaching was changed to meetings and debates. In the military system, there was widespread "anti-dogmatism", and in the military academies, there was a purge of intellectual cadres. In the field of history, there was a "historical revolution", in which only class struggles and peasant wars were taught as the driving force of historical development, and historical research was deprived of free

and equal discussion. In the field of agriculture, cadres who opposed "dense planting" and production according to traditional farming methods were regarded as "white flags" and pulled out; cadres who studied "dense planting" and sowed several hundred pounds of seeds per acre of cultivated land were regarded as "red flags". The "planting of red flags and plucking of white flags" had created artificial tension in many places, and some places and units had deliberately searched for "white flag" targets among those who had not been branded as "rightists", causing a large number of people to suffer as a result. According to comrades who implemented the policy in 1978, according to incomplete statistics from Shanxi, Hunan, Hebei, Gansu and Shaanxi provinces alone, more than 200,000 rural party committee members and rural party branch secretaries were plucked out as "white flags" and either knocked down or expelled from the party. This bizarre campaign, which went against the basic laws of economics and society, came on swiftly but revealed serious problems, and the "plant the red flag and pluck the white flag" campaign came to an end with the first Zhengzhou meeting in November 1958, when the central government began to correct the "left" mistakes.

#### **Notes.**

Note 1: Ma Zhisun was Tian Jiaying's lover and later married Tian Jiaying's secretary Pang Xianzhi. After Tian Jiaying's accident, Pang Xianzhi was isolated and he wrote a pile of materials to expose Tian Jiaying, adding, "Tian Jiaying and I have a hatred because I took his wife." But after the Cultural Revolution, he then said mealy-mouthedly that Tian Jiaying was the most talented person and his mentor and friend.

Note 2: Once I went with Shen Dongnian to Shaoshan, the Chairman's hometown, and was fortunate that Zhang Boju's wife, Pan Su, was travelling with us. She was a painter and was going to Shaoshan to paint. Zhang Boju, a great collector, knew that the Chairman liked Li Bai, so he gave him a genuine handwritten painting of Li Bai from his collection. The Chairman later gave this genuine handwritten work of Li Bai to the Forbidden City Museum for its collection. Everyone only knows Li Bai as a great poet, but Li Bai was also a great calligrapher. We all respect Mr. Zhang Boju, and we also have great respect for Pan Su.

## Chapter 9 Chairman Mao sent us to Sichuan to plant experimental fields

1. In the Great Leap Forward, three small blast furnaces were also built in Zhongnanhai
2. From the "communist wind" and "pompous wind" to "high targets and high levies"
3. Chairman Mao did not believe in the "satellites" in the newspapers: 10,000 catties of grain per mu
4. Going to Sichuan to plant experimental fields
5. Talking with Luo Shifa, a model worker
6. Writing a report to Chairman Mao on the truth about immediate production in Xinfan County, Sichuan

Appendix: Report on the Truth about Grain Production in Xinfan County, Sichuan

### 1. In the Great Leap Forward, three small blast furnaces were also built in Zhongnanhai

After the Second Session of the Eighth Party Congress, the Great Leap Forward Movement was launched with great vigour throughout the country, and Zhongnanhai was no exception. We, who had just been liberated by Chairman Mao from the "Eight Secretaries Incident", were even more enthusiastic and energetic. We responded to the call of the Party Central Committee to make steel, and worked day and night in Zhongnanhai to build a "small blast furnace" for making steel. At that time, there were three small blast furnaces in Zhongnanhai, one in the Security Bureau, one in our secretary's office and one in the research room in the back building.

To be honest, at that time we had no basic idea of how to make steel, but we just wanted to respond to the call of Chairman Mao and the Party Central Committee to make steel. On the one hand, we read books and followed the ancient Chinese method of making steel; on the other hand, we asked comrades from the Metallurgical Research Institute of the Ministry of Metallurgy to come and give us lessons. After we had made a piece of steel, we immediately took it to the Metallurgical Research Institute of the Ministry of Metallurgy to have it tested to see if it passed the test. When they saw that it was sent from Zhongnanhai, they did not dare to be negligent and gave us the tests again and again. At that time, we did not even have the slightest idea of the cost.

Zhu De, Li Fuchun and other leaders of the Central Government had come to see our small blast furnace. They all gave us a thumbs up and praised us for the good job we had done.

Chairman Mao came to see it too. But I noticed that the Chairman just smiled at us after watching and didn't say anything. I thought to myself that the Chairman obviously did not approve of what we were doing, otherwise he would have praised us. But he didn't say a word, nor did he criticise us. He was unwilling to discourage us. The Chairman had always paid great attention to protecting the enthusiasm of the masses. To be honest, I can understand the anger that people felt towards Peng Dehuai at the Lushan Conference later: Others are working hard day and night, and you have nothing to do, but in the end, you came to pour cold water on everything.

During the day, we were still working in the secretary's office, handling letters from all over the world. At that time, most of the letters we received were good news for the Party Central Committee and Chairman Mao. There were very few objections in the letters.

I remember very clearly that a factory in Shanghai made China's first small car and drove it to Zhongnanhai for an exhibition. Before Liberation, we couldn't even build a complete bicycle in China, but now not only did they produce the Jiefang truck, but they even built a small car. People from Zhongnanhai all went around to see it. I saw that the shell of the car seemed to have been built by hand. Yang Shangkun also came to see it, and after the "Eight Secretaries Incident", his relationship with us had improved significantly, and he often came to visit us. He said to us, "In the future you can also buy a car and drive it to work". I couldn't even think about it at the time. But he said, "Look at the Soviet Union, where young people are driving their own cars to work". I said, "If you want to buy one, only people like Director Yang can do so". He smiled and said, "I don't need to buy one, I have a public car. Unless I wait until I retire, then I will buy one".

It should be said that the enthusiasm and energy of the masses that the Great Leap Forward aroused was rare in history. It did make great achievements for the economic construction of China. Although it should be said that there were a number of things at that time that would seem naive or even wrong today. But at that time, it did inspire people and created many unexpected miracles in many fields. Many things in our country (including the atomic bomb and missile business) were started at that time.

Nowadays, articles on the Great Leap Forward can be found in abundance, but most of them are aimed at finding something with which to attack Chairman Mao and the Communist Party. Not many, if any, are really respectful of history and comment on it in a factual manner, and most of them are not allowed to be published.

It is not surprising that there was blindness in the enthusiasm of the masses. The problem was that behind the enthusiasm of the masses lies the "pompous wind" that some leading cadres were whipping up for their own "political achievements". This was what was really killing us.

## **2. From the "communist wind" and "pompous wind" to "high targets and high levies"**

The history of Liu Shaoqi shows that he has always wavered from left to right, then back to the left and again to right. At the beginning of the Liberation period, his negative attitude towards co-operatives and his views on the so-called "establishment of a new democratic order" were criticised by Chairman Mao as being rightist and an obstacle to the development of the socialist cause. However, in 1958, when the Great Leap Forward and the People's Commune were launched, Liu Shaoqi was very enthusiastic again. This may have had something to do with the fact that he was about to assume the Presidency, and when a new official took office, he had to make some achievements. He jumped from rightism to the extreme left all at once. If you look at his speeches at the Second Session of the Eighth National Congress and his speeches in various places during the Great Leap Forward, you will find that many of them were simply nonsense.

From the second half of 1958 onwards, Chairman Mao focused a lot of his attention on the "shelling of Jinmen". So, Liu Shaoqi was actually in charge of the front line at that time, as he was about to become President of the country, so he had a lot of people behind him.

At that time, Liu Shaoqi made a lot of over-the-top remarks, for example, "a big step forward into communism" were Liu Shaoqi's original words, and as he was in charge of the front-line work, these words became the source of the "communist wind" at the lower levels. He also whimsically proposed "separate camps for men and women", splitting up good families so that couples could only live together on Saturdays and lived separately at all other times. In a number of places, his idea was implemented, but this led to a lot of discontent, which seriously affected the people's faith in communism and greatly weakened their trust in the Party. The family is a deeply ingrained way of

life for the common man, and who would embrace such a proposal if they didn't want it? In fact, it was something that even he himself would not really embrace. Chen Bingzhen told me that Chairman Mao was disgusted by this idea of Liu Shaoqi's, saying that Liu himself and Wang Guangmei were inseparable. According to Liu Shaoqi, a proposal for the cancellation of the family was also brewing in Zhongnanhai. They said that there were many large houses in Zhongnanhai, and that the men could live here and the women there. We were all on tenterhooks, worrying about whether our rooms would be taken away. If they were taken away, where would we put our personal things? If someone else had said this, we might not have been too concerned, but it was Liu Shaoqi's speech, so how could you not take it seriously?

At that time, Chen Boda also joined Liu Shaoqi and published an article in Red Flag magazine, saying that currency and commodities should be abolished and that communism could be achieved through the "transition through poverty"<sup>145</sup>. As soon as his article was published, he was immediately criticised by Chairman Mao. If money and commodities were abolished, then the commune could share the property of the brigade, the brigade share the property of the team, and the poor brigade share the property of the rich brigade. This is the so-called "one leveling and two transfers"<sup>146</sup>. Later on, at the Lushan Conference, Chairman Mao compared it to the "Green and Red Gangs"<sup>147</sup>.

However, the biggest problem in the Great Leap Forward was not the "communist wind" but the "boastful wind". The subsequent starvation of people was closely related to this "boastful wind".

An important sign of the "boastful wind" was the release of "satellites"<sup>148</sup> with high grain yields. The so-called "high-yielding fields" and "10,000 jins per mu" were first published in the People's Daily. Deng Tuo was the chief editor of the People's Daily back then, while Deng Xiaoping was in charge of the People's Daily as a division of labour within the Party. At that time, what Liu Shaoqi said, what Deng Xiaoping said, and what Chairman Mao said were all printed in the People's Daily and many other newspapers back then. Liu Shaoqi's speech was even printed as a book at that time and distributed nationwide.

Liu Shaoqi went down to inspect and said that he was not worried about what to do if there was less food, but what if there was too much food, and there was no place to put it. People reported that

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<sup>145</sup> "Transition through poverty" meant transition to Communism by means of the spirit of being poor and was an essential component of the ultra-left "communist wind" that blew through the Great Leap Forward.

<sup>146</sup> "One levelling and two transfers" is an abbreviation for "Equalitarianism" and "Free Allocation" which appeared in the early days of the rural people's commune movement. It denied the law of commodity production under socialism, promoting a free supply system and public canteens; and allowed the transfer of labour and production materials from the lower levels (teams and brigades) to the higher level of the commune.

<sup>147</sup> The Red and Green Gangs dominated the Shanghai underworld during the rule of the Guomindang. In saying that the Communes should return property taken from the production brigades and production teams, Mao said that they had behaved like criminals: "The things must be given back. You cannot say that what is yours is mine and just pick things up and walk off. No such rule has ever existed since ancient times. In another 10,000 years' time people will still not be able to pick things up and walk off. The Red and Green Gang behaved like this, stealing and robbing away in broad daylight, expropriating the fruits of others' labour without recompense, and violating the principle of the exchange of equal values". (See Speech at the Lushan Conference, July 23, 1959).

<sup>148</sup> The Soviet Union's Sputnik 1 was the first artificial Earth satellite. It was launched into an elliptical low Earth orbit by the USSR on 4 October 1957 as part of the Soviet space program. Its success was a humiliation for US imperialism which had believed that the Soviet Union was backward and incapable of such advanced scientific advances. In China, the euphoria engendered by Sputnik's success saw many high-yield industrial and agricultural units dubbed "satellites".

the yield per mu had reached tens of thousands of catties. Liu Shaoqi also asked if it could be more than ten thousand catties. Such remarks were all published in newspapers at the time.

Vice Premier Tan Zhenlin, who was in charge of agriculture, was also boastful. The secretaries of several other regions were also hot-headed. The three provinces of Henan, Shandong and Anhui were all "fighting" with each other. You report a few thousand jin per mu, and I must exceed you, to tens of thousands of jin. You got tens of thousands of jin, so if I do not get tens of thousands of jin, then isn't it my fault? So, I had to report an even higher amount. There was not even a little common sense anymore. I grew up in the countryside, and you don't even have so many wheat stalks to put together.

At that time, the Northeast region was relatively stable, and there were no false reports on output. In September 1958, Deng Xiaoping went to the Northeast for an inspection. The local leaders reported that the grain production plan for the second year would increase by 20-30%. Deng Xiaoping criticized them: "Others have increased production several times, but you are only increasing by 20%. It is like a turtle crawling". Scolded, the local leaders were shamed. His words were published in the "People's Daily" in October 1958. Deng Xiaoping took Tian Jiaying with him on that visit to the Northeast. Tian Jiaying was bitten by a bug of unknown origin while he was in the Daxinganling Mountains and his arm swelled up very badly. Tian Jiaying came back and told me that Deng Xiaoping had ordered the hospital to make sure that he was cured. Tian Jiaying was very grateful to Deng Xiaoping for this. However, Tian Jiaying also said that although Deng Xiaoping was born in the countryside, his was a big landlord family and he had never farmed, so he didn't know anything about agriculture.

According to what I know, there were many people in various places who opposed boastfulness at that time, but they were all considered conservative in their thinking and were criticized, and some were even punished. The most typical example was Zeng Xisheng, the provincial party secretary of Anhui province, who not only made great efforts to engage in boasting, but also said that no one under him could oppose him, and if anyone opposed him, he would say that they were right-ists and anti-Party, and he would knock them down. When a new group of people came up, and also opposed him, he beat them down again. After a few hits like this, who would dare to oppose him again. Chairman Mao began to believe in him. When Shu Tong's boastfulness in Shandong went wrong, Chairman Mao asked Zeng Xisheng to take charge of Shandong as well. However, when he found out later that Zeng Xisheng's boastfulness was even stronger than Shu Tong's, he told him not to take charge anymore. The opinions of Zeng Xisheng were also conveyed to the Central Committee. Liu Shaoqi said, "This man has made special contributions to the revolution, who can do anything about him except Chairman Mao?" Wu Zhipu of Henan also blew his bragging rights very hard, and he also screwed many people who opposed his bragging.

The "high targets" for grain production caused by the "boastful wind" led directly to the implementation of the "high requisition" policy for grain purchase in the autumn of 1958. You quoted that you could produce 2,000 jin of grain per mu of land, so the requisition was 50%, which was 1,000 jin. As a result, you couldn't even reach 1,000 jin, so after the requisition, the farmers were left with nothing.

### **3. Chairman Mao did not believe in the "satellites" in the newspapers: 10,000 jin of grain per mu<sup>149</sup>.**

Lin Ke had been following Chairman Mao on his visits to various places during the Great Leap Forward, and he knew a lot about the Chairman during this period. On that occasion, when he returned from a visit to Tianjin with Chairman Mao, I saw the picture that appeared in the newspaper of the little child standing on the stalks of wheat and went to ask Lin Ke whether he had actually seen the things mentioned in the newspaper or not. He said he hadn't seen it, but he said he could imagine pulling those sheaves of wheat together, and that they were so solid that a child could stand on them or sit on them. But that didn't grow naturally, it was artificially piled up. I asked Lin Ke if there were really 10,000 catties of grain there. The newspaper said that the Chairman had asked in Tianjin: Is it really 10,000 catties? What should we do if there is really so much that we can't even finish eating it? Lin Ke told me that when the Chairman said this, he did not believe in this 10,000 catties of grain and doubted it. After the Chairman said these words, he asked Lin Ke and the others to go and get to the bottom of this 10,000 catties of grain per mu. When Lin Ke and the others went down to find out, it turned out that it was the people who planted the experimental fields, and when the grain was almost ripe, they dug up the wheat and rice from several mu of fields in the middle of the night, gathered them all into one mu, then watered them and let them continue to grow. Lin Ke said that when this was done, the results weighed out were really several thousand catties per mu, but 10,000 catties had not been reached. He told the Chairman what he had learned, and the Chairman smiled and said, "So that's how it is". Lin Ke also told me that at that time, the Chairman was particularly concerned about the staff around him, saying that they must not follow this nonsense.

Chairman Mao did not believe in a per mu yield of ten thousand jin of grain, but the figures reported from the lower levels were higher than one another. Li Jingquan, secretary of the Sichuan Provincial Party Committee, said in his report that the highest grain yield in Sichuan Province was ten thousand jin per mu, and the average was more than two thousand jin per mu. In order to find out how much grain could be produced, in early 1959, the Chairman ordered Tian Jiaying to take his secretary's office staff to the countryside to plant experimental fields in person.

Tian Jiaying conveyed the Chairman's instructions to us, saying, "The Chairman said that when Anying came back from the Soviet Union, I told him to go and learn from the peasants and take them as his teachers. You should also go down and work with the peasants and learn from them. When you go down there, you have to find the best piece of land, measure the area, use the best seeds, use the best methods of the peasants, plant the seeds yourself, manage it yourself, don't let others interfere, do everything yourself from planting to harvesting, and see how much grain you can get. You must also weigh the grain you have sown yourselves, and you must not add a single jin more or less, and come back and tell me the result.

### **4. Going to Sichuan to plant experimental fields**

In 1959, just after the Spring Festival, Tian Jiaying, Pang Xianzhi, Li Xueqian, Luo Wenhui and I formed a group, with Tian Jiaying as the leader and me as the secretary of the temporary branch. Luo Wenhui, a girl from Chongqing, Sichuan, was a member of Section 2. Li Xueqian was a member

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<sup>149</sup> Readers of English will have seen "cattie" and "jin" used interchangeably. The latter is the standard Chinese word. Both refer to a measurement now equivalent to 500 grams. One mu is a Chinese "acre", but is substantially less than an English acre. It is 666.7 square metres, or 0.16 of an English acre.

of Section 3, from Henan, also a female comrade. Our group arrived at the Dafeng People's Commune in Xinfan County, Sichuan Province.

When we went down, we dispersed to different brigades. Tian Jiaying went to the first brigade, but because he often had to go to the province and other places for meetings, he lived in the commune and didn't have much time to go down to the lower unit. Pang Xianzhi was his secretary and went with him, running around every day. Luo Wenhui went to another brigade. She was better at farming than I was, but she was a female comrade after all, so she had difficulties in working on the experimental fields by herself. Li Xueqian was in another brigade and she did set up an experimental field, but it was not as large as one mu.

I had spent time in the countryside as a child, my grandmother was a poor farmer and I used to help her in the fields. Although I was still young at that time, I knew that a mu of wheat could yield more than a hundred catties, or at most two hundred catties would be very good. Now, I was very happy that Chairman Mao wanted us to come to the field to do research, and I was keen to find out how much grain could be produced in a mu of land. However, working on the farm was very hard, especially growing rice, and both legs were soaked black and often there were locusts crawling on your legs to suck the blood.

The experimental field I planted was in the sixth team of the fourth brigade of the Dafeng Commune, Chong Yi Township, Xin Fan County. Hearing that we had been sent down by the Central Government, the local cadres were very cooperative. I said I wanted one of the best fields to grow rice, and they gave me one of the best rice fields. They said it was one mu, but I was not sure, so I went to measure it myself and found that it was more than 660 square metres, which was just short of one mu. In addition, I also had a wheat field demarcated, which was also almost one mu. I explained that these were all my fields and no one else could touch them.

I grew up in the north and didn't know anything about rice, and even though I worked in the fields as a child, I really didn't know anything about farming. So I started learning by ploughing the fields, and the farmers taught me how to set the oxen, lead them, set up the plough and hold it. At first, I thought it was easy, much easier than finding materials for my articles. But when I actually did it, I made a fool of myself. The soil beneath the farmland is actually uneven and the hardness of the soil varies from place to place, so it can be deep or shallow. If you hit a hard spot, you have to press the end of the plough, cock the tip up a bit or lift the whole plough upwards to get through, otherwise you can't pull it. But I didn't know it at first. When I saw the cow in front of me stop and not go, I thought it was a lazy cow, so I waved my whip at it to scare it and make it go. When the cow was frightened, it charged forward with such force that it broke the plough at once. I was humming a little tune, looking very pleased with myself, when suddenly I fell into the field with a clatter and got a mouthful of mud. The children watching at the edge of the field were shouting and laughing at me making a mess of myself. When the old farmer saw me, he came up and pulled me up, and when he saw that I was covered in mud, he took me to the nearby river to wash me. When I came back, I saw that the plough was broken. The plough was a farmer's treasure, and at that time a pair of ploughs like that cost more than forty dollars. At that time, my salary was only about 100 yuan, so it was almost half of my monthly salary. However, a cadre from the commune said that there were rules from the top and that the commune would be responsible for paying for any damage to farm equipment by you cadres when you came down to work. I still feel guilty when I think about it.

I changed the plough and tried to put another one on the ox to continue ploughing. But the ox was vindictive and wouldn't let me do it. Then the old farmer said to me: "You have to kiss his ass". I asked, "How can I kiss the cow's ass?" He told me, "Go and get some of the young grass he likes to

eat and feed him, and make sure he sees that you are feeding him. As you feed it, you have to apologise to it and say, 'Sorry, cow, I've frightened you'". I did the same and it worked. It didn't take long for the cow to do what I wanted again. However, after that, the team leaders didn't let me plough much anymore, for fear that I might cause trouble again.

After ploughing the field, it has to be sown for a few days to allow the sun to shine on it, and then the whole field is smoothed out with a harrow so that the mud becomes fine and soft in the water, and only then can the rice seedlings be planted in the field.

At that time, the newspapers were full of propaganda about dense planting, saying that only dense planting would lead to high yields. Moreover, the provincial government (in Sichuan) also stipulated that the seedlings should be planted as densely as possible, using the method of "ants coming out of holes" or "double dragons coming out of the sea". But when I went to consult the peasants, they said to me, "Old Qi, if you believe in what the newspapers say, you won't be able to get much grain from your experimental fields". The farmers told me that they had already suffered from the propaganda they had heard. There were "ants out of holes", "double dragons out of the sea", seedlings up against seedlings, as dense as can be, but when the seedlings grew up they collapsed. When it comes to practical knowledge, ventilation, the relationship between pollination of rice seedlings and bees, the relationship with wind, the relationship between deep ploughing and dense planting, the relationship between soil fertility and harvest, the relationship between these factors and the role of management, they all talked about it in a very good way. They said that you can't set a rigid spacing between rows, you have to look at it on a case-by-case basis. I thought this was the same as what Chairman Mao always said, "We should analyse each case on its own merits". I said: "I will listen to you and do what you normally do". Later on, on the issue of dense planting, I also summarised the various situations according to the opinions told to me by the peasants and wrote a special report to the central government.

Next, the peasants told me that to increase yields, I would have to go to town to haul human manure. Human manure is the best for the crops. They also said that if they went to haul it, people would not give it to them. You are from the centre, you go to the city to haul it, and they will give it to you everywhere. Human manure is not worth much, but pulling it back is food. So I got some young men to go with me to the city to haul dung in a crate. This took almost a month. It was about 20 kilometres from Chongyi Township in Xinfan County to downtown Chengdu. Sometimes when it rained on the road, we would lie under the wagon for a while and wait for the rain to subside before we left. On one occasion, we had just set off from the city with the manure when it started to rain heavily. It was too rainy to go back. I thought I would stay at the provincial guest house for the night and leave the next day. The provincial party committee's guest house was in the old imperial city, which used to be a warlord's official residence. The guards at the guest house took one look at us and whatever we said, would not let us in. The peasant who was there with us pointed at me and told them that I was from the Central Government. They didn't believe him, how could anyone come from the Central Government to pull a manure cart? I told them to call a director of the provincial party committee, and when they did, they found out that I was indeed from Beijing and immediately received us warmly, arranging for us to have a hot bath and change our clothes. When the old peasant saw this, he said to me, "Old Qi, you are too greedy. In fact, it is not the case that more fertilizer is better, but a certain amount is enough. If you don't believe me, just take a few autumn seedlings home and do a test". I did as the old farmer said, and the next day the seedlings wilted, and within two days they were dead. I pulled them up and saw that the roots were rotten underneath. The soil was so rich that it had burned the roots of the seedlings.

When the seedlings had been planted, the old peasant told me that I had to inter-plant, that is, to pull out the seedlings that were not growing well. I said, "Won't there be fewer seedlings after that?" The old peasant said, "These weak seedlings will not bear fruit in the future, but if you don't pull them out, they will compete for fertiliser, which will affect the growth of the good seedlings and will affect the harvest". The old peasant also taught me to see what kind of seedlings were considered weak and to remove them.

The old peasant who has been helping me was called Lao Song, he was very close to me and I trusted him. From ploughing and harrowing the fields to planting, weeding, fertilising and inter-planting, I learnt the whole field management from him and then did it all myself. The peasants were so nice, if you made friends with them, they would tell you everything. When I went to Sichuan in 2012, I visited him and he was still alive and remembered me. He said he had never looked at me as a bad person. I asked him, "Where are the fields I planted back then?" He pointed to a group of buildings and said that they had all been built over. I followed where he was pointing and saw that it had become a residential area and there was no more farming land.

I was growing early rice. After a few months, when it was time to harvest, I had the team arrange for militiamen to guard my experimental fields day and night with guns, so that not a single grain could be brought in or taken out. Not a single ear of rice was allowed to be harvested, and all of it had to be gathered up. Then it was all put on the threshing floor and the kernels were dropped on a square bucket-shaped mat. The mat was so good that the kernels fell off as soon as they were dropped. I had to pick up all those rice grains that were scattered on the ground. When it came time to weigh it, I kept my eyes on the scales, not a little higher or lower, it had to be flat, and I ended up getting a yield of over 500 jin, but less than 600 jin. The old peasants said that my yield was not low and not many people could exceed it. The freshly beaten rice still contained moisture and when it was dried and put into storage the scales had to be dropped, but how much would be dropped, I didn't know. I would make adjustments based on the experienced ratio values that the old peasants told me. What I had in mind at that time was that this was a figure to be reported to Chairman Mao, and I had to get it right, not even a little bit false, otherwise I would be cheating Chairman Mao.

##### **5. Talking with Luo Shifa, a model worker**

Growing rice in the Dafeng commune took several months, from ploughing, harrowing and fertilising the fields to planting, irrigating and chasing the seedlings to weeding, inter-planting and other field management, all the way to harvesting, threshing and weighing. The whole process was carried out under the guidance and assistance of experienced veteran peasants, and I can say that I used the best land, the best methods, the best fertilizers and the most careful care, and I ended up with a rice yield of just over 500 jin. Also, I set aside a wheat field that was already being planted by people. I didn't go in for the management. But when it came time to harvest, I weighed it out one jin at a time, just as I did with the rice, and the total was about 300 catties. The old peasants also said that my yield was not low and that not many peasants could exceed it. I then asked them: So didn't your report say that the average was 2,000 jin? The farmers replied to me: That's what the cadres told us to report. If you don't report more, how will they get promoted? I also asked: What about the 10,000 jin per mu yield? They told me: The so-called ten thousand jins of grain was by digging out the fast-ripening rice from other fields and putting them together on one mu of land, which is a satellite test field. So much rice was stuffed into the field that children could stand on it and step on it. The situation was almost identical to what Lin Ke had told me he had seen in Tianjin.

At that time, there were two labour models on the agricultural front who were famous throughout the country, one was Chen Yongkang from Jiangsu and the other was Luo Shifa<sup>150</sup> from Sichuan. But before that, in the report that Luo Shifa sent to the Chairman, he also said that the yield of the land he planted was 2,000 catties per mu. But I heard from the local peasants that he was originally asked to report 10,000 catties, but he firmly refused and only reported 2,000 catties. I just thought, the yields I get are only representative of the grain production in my area, not from other places. You can't trust everything the local peasants say either. I had to hear what Luo Shifa himself had to say before I could draw any conclusions. So I decided to visit Luo Shifa in person.

Luo Shifa had a long list of titles at that time: model worker in Sichuan Province, national model worker, deputy to the National People's Congress and so on. He was overwhelmed by the number of people who came to him from all over the country. He didn't belong to my commune, so if I went there alone, I was afraid I wouldn't be able to meet him. So, I contacted Secretary Cao of the Xinfan County Party Committee, who was an old cadre of peasant origin, but he had great respect for intellectuals. I was also a small intellectual, and I was from the central government, so he also treated me with respect. I got on very well with him, and during the conversation I felt that he also wanted the plans made by the state and Chairman Mao's instructions to be in line with the actual situation down there. I told him that I had come down this time because Chairman Mao wanted to know the real situation. He told me, "Then you must do a good job and not let the Chairman down. From the few contacts I had with him after I came down, I felt that he was quite a driven man. And it was clear that he was willing to let me investigate the real situation. Although he reported that the yield was also two thousand jin per mu, he was practically reluctant to do so. In private, he told me that if he didn't report it that way, he wouldn't be able to be a secretary. He was even criticized for reporting it that way because the yield he reported was still the lowest among the reports from the counties.

I told him that I wanted to meet and talk with Luo Shifa, and once Secretary Cao heard that, he said he would accompany me. I said, "No, you are their senior official, they may not dare to talk when they see you, it's better for me to go and talk by myself. You can just give him a hello. Tell him that I am an intellectual who does not know anything about agriculture and would like to ask him for some advice about agriculture". Secretary Cao readily agreed and immediately greeted Luo Shifa by phone, and also asked Secretary Zhou of Chongyi Township to accompany me and show me the way.

At that time, Chen Boda's secretary Shi Jingtang happened to be in Sichuan on an errand, and he stopped by to see Tian Jiaying, who was away, so he came to see me. He also wanted to drop by to find out more about the actual situation in the countryside. I already had an appointment to see Luo Shifa, so I asked him to come with me. I also asked Li Xueqian to come with us too.

I was still very confident when I went to talk to Luo Shifa. I felt that he was a member of the Party and a representative of the people. He would tell the truth as long as I could explain what was at stake. I didn't ask for anything else, I just wanted to know what his real output was.

After we had met with Luo Shifa, I felt that this model worker was a very practical person who had not lost the nature of a peasant, and that he was completely different from some cadres who only wanted to eat and drink all day. I first talked to him and praised him for his contribution to Sichuan and the country as an agricultural expert, and then I described the details of how I had planted my own experimental field, adding that I had not done the dense planting as the newspaper had said.

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<sup>150</sup> Luo Shifa, a native of Xinfan, Sichuan, was a national model labourer. In 1954, he was elected a deputy to the First National People's Congress.

When he heard that, he said: "Old Qi, you don't have to say much, in fact, when you first started to plant the experimental field, I had already gone to see it. I was surprised to hear him say that and asked, "You, a model worker, really went to see my experimental field? When did you go there? I didn't know anything about it". He said: "I went to see it when you were planting rice. I have to go and see all the fields planted by people sent by the authorities. They said that Tian Jiaying had brought a team to plant crops, so I wanted to see if it was just a gesture, a nonsense or something. I also took a few people from the commune with me. When I saw it, I told them that this task force really seemed to have been sent by Chairman Mao, and that he was an insider in this experimental field planting. As soon as I saw it, I knew that your rice planting was not based on the 'double dragons out of the sea' prescribed from above, but on our peasants' opinions". He added: "We didn't actually follow the provincial requirements for dense planting, but we still had to write on our report that we did it according to the requirements of our superiors. If you really want to do that dense planting, it's going to kill the seedlings. Ours are all 7 or 8 inches apart, not double dragons out of the sea, because double dragons out of the sea is too dense, the seedlings will not grow much and fall over. You are doing it the way the people do it. This is the way the people sent by Chairman Mao should do it".

When I heard him say that, I asked: Why are you producing so much? And I only have so little? Only 500 jin? He looked a bit embarrassed, staring at me with wide eyes and not saying anything. But I could see that he didn't take offence at my words, but didn't know how to answer. I said, "Lao Luo, don't be awed by Chairman Mao's high status, his plans and his instructions are based on the real situation below. If the situation reported from below is not true, his instructions will be out of touch with reality. Chairman Mao is like a processing plant, if the material is not good, then the product that comes out is not good either. So, you must tell the truth. If they are all fake materials, how can Chairman Mao lead? You see, I have been here for a long time, and I have planted experimental fields using the same methods as yours, but the yield is only a few hundred kilograms, not a few thousand kilograms. What is this all about?"

It was only at this point that Luo Shifa said: "Old Qi, don't ask. I'll tell you the truth. Where can there be such thing as two thousand jin, ah? There is not even two thousand jin, so how can there be 10,000 jin, ah? My land is the best, the seeds used last year were also the best, but the result is only 800 jin. The cadres sent from the province are here all day long and they know the real situation. But when I go to various places to make reports, they all have thousands or tens of thousands of jin, but I, a model worker, only hit a few hundred jin, isn't that discrediting the leaders? In order not to discredit the leaders, I had to say two thousand jin. In fact, there was no two thousand jin at all, just eight hundred jin".

I asked him again, then all the other places are also nonsense? He said, I dare not say about the others. Chen Yongkang from Jiangsu, he reported a maximum of four thousand jin. I asked him, "How did you get that? We are all farmers, we all know it, no one can fool anyone". Chen Yongkang then told me, "Lao Luo, don't ask, you know everything, and yet you still come to ask me, where is the 4,000 jin?" I asked him, "Then how much did you actually hit last year?" He said, "only about eight hundred jin".

This was the truth about Sichuan's grain production at the time, and from it, the truth about the country's grain production. We were several people there together, and I was not the only one who was there to hear Luo Shifa tell these truths.

After talking with Luo Shifa, I told Secretary Cao of the county party committee what I had talked about. The cadres who came down did not dare to overturn the output reported by Luo Shifa, nor

could they. What method did you use? I told him that the grain production of this model worker involved the plans made by the state and the decisions of Chairman Mao. Perhaps my sincerity moved him to tell me the truth. I asked Secretary Cao again: I will report the situation to the authorities. In the future, what if you are criticised for this? He said, "Your investigation has nothing to do with me. Just don't mention me in your report. He was a good cadre, but at that time he had to tell some nonsense".

## **6. Writing a report to Chairman Mao on the truth about immediate production in Xinfan County, Sichuan**

After talking to Luo Shifa, I wrote a separate report on the results of the experimental fields I had planted and what I had learned from Luo Shifa. In the report on the grain yield of the experimental fields, I wrote truthfully about the yield of the experimental fields I planted, and I also highlighted that I used the best land, the best fertiliser and the most careful care. In the investigation report on the conversation with Luo Shifa, I included details of how I spoke, what Luo Shifa said, and what expressions Luo Shifa had used when he spoke. This is because Shi Jingtang also attended the whole conversation with Luo Shifa, and he took notes on the spot. When I finished the report, I told him that you had also heard what Luo Shifa said, and that this was a report to the Chairman, so you should also read it. After reading it, he said he agreed with the content of the report. I said, "Then you should also sign it together. Shi Jingtang was also in favour of telling the truth to Chairman Mao, so he signed it without hesitation. His rank was higher than mine, he was an old cadre during the anti-Japanese war, and he was Chen Boda's secretary, so his influence was greater than mine, so I had him sign his name in front. Li Xueqian also took part in the conversation and I had her sign it as well. So the report was signed by three people: Shi Jingtang, Qi Benyu and Li Xueqian. The title of the report was "Report on the truth about grain production in Xinfan County, Sichuan".

As soon as the report was written, I sent someone to send it directly to Tian Jiaying, who was attending the Lushan Conference. After reading it, Tian Jiaying added to the report that it was the result of a personal investigation by Shi Jingtang and Qi Benyu. The report was presented to Chairman Mao.

### **Appendix: Report on the Truth about Grain Production in Xinfan County, Sichuan**

Comrade Tian Jiaying.

We visited Luo Shifa's commune in Heteng Township, Xinfan County, Sichuan on 7 June. We visited their crops and canteens and talked for a while with Luo Shifa (who is now a deputy to the National People's Congress and a model agricultural worker).

Luo Shifa's commune was originally the Hodeng brigade of the Xinfan People's Commune, which was transformed into a commune after decentralisation. Luo Shifa came to this commune's first management area in concrete terms. The first management area has a total of more than 5,600 mu of land, a population of more than 3,400 people (862 households) and a labour force of more than 1,800. During our visit, we focused on issues such as obtaining grain production and merging fields and dense planting in this management area. Some of the issues we learned about and Luo Shifa's views on these issues are reported below.

#### *1. How much was actually produced last year?*

Last year, the CPC Xinfan County Committee collated materials on the selection of Luo Shifa to attend the National Agricultural Advanced Unit Representative Conference, said that the average per

mu yield of rice in the management area under Shifa's leadership was 1,929 jin (calculated in terms of rice, the city jin system, the same below), a 214% increase over 1957.

In March this year, Luo Shifa said at the provincial production mobilisation meeting of 10,000 people that the average mu yield of rice in their management area last year was 1304 jin after repeated checks by the local and county committees, an increase of 112% over 1957 (see "Sichuan Daily" of March 25, 1959).

However, none of these figures are true. In fact, the average rice yield last year was far from that high. Today he spoke from the heart. He said that, based on his own calculations from his team's participation in the harvesting and thrashing, the average per mu yield of rice did not break the 1,000 jin barrier. The real situation is: double-season rice: the two seasons combined yielded an average of more than 1,000 jin per mu.

Medium rice: first and second class fields, with an average yield of over 700 catties per mu; third and fourth class fields, with an average yield of only 500 or 600 catties per mu; and one of the best top quality white eel mud fields, with a yield of over 900 catties per mu.

Their double-season rice area last year accounted for 30% of the rice area. In this way, the average per mu yield is roughly 750 or 800 catties for the early, middle and late seasons when added up and calculated. Luo Shifa believes that "according to the above real production figures, last year's agricultural production is still a great leap forward, the achievement is great, and no one can push it over".

Luo Shifa also talked about the average yield of rice in their management area over the years, which is listed below.

Era	1955	1956	1957	1958
Yield (jin)	605	608	613	750

According to this yield increase figure, the rate of increase in rice yield was only 1.32% in the two years from 1955 to 1957, while in the year 1957 to 1958, the increase in rice yield reached between 22.34% and 32.12%, which is a rapid increase in yield in this management area.

Luo Shifa said, "Chairman Mao was right when he said that even if a mu of field could increase yields by two or three hundred jin, it would be a great achievement. Not to talk about last year's leap forward figures, whoever really achieves an average yield of 800 pounds per mu this year, is supposed to get the gold medal."

He added, "The fact is that last year it was not easy to really produce an eight or nine hundred jin. We peasants attending the National People's Congress were talking in private together, and the rice yield of Chen Yongkang, the most famous model worker in the country, averaged only eight hundred jin per mu, but it was reported as two thousand jin. This was discussed in private and you cannot hold a meeting about it. Hold a meeting and you will get people killed". All in all, Luo Shifa is a peasant party member of considerable style. But there was still a contradiction in his thinking when he talked to us about the real yield of rice. He said, "The yield issue is a big one, a struggle between two roads. If you say it's not right, then you are negating the Great Leap Forward. It is the rightists who negate it, how can I deny the results!"

Sometimes he said: "I am a member of the Communist Party. It doesn't matter if I am a national representative. What matters is the country. You produce 700 to 800 catties per mu, but you report 2,000 catties. The state said to pay a tax on 1,400 jin, which meant to pay 400 jin, and they let you keep 1,000 jin, a few hundred jin for rations, a few hundred jin for livestock, a few dozen jin for seeds and a few dozen jin for reserves, and sell some of the excess to the state. Isn't this a correct account? Good! When the four hundred pounds of requisitioned grain is really paid, you can show your face." "I listened to many reports at the National People's Congress, and if you misrepresent a leap forward in figures, the national plan will be affected, making the problem of feeding the community members more serious. This is a big thing, if you pay the tax and you cannot eat, what can you do? I'm anxious!" "The Chairman is right, we must tell the truth, and the peasants all agree when they hear it (note: their commune told the peasants about the spirit of Chairman Mao's communication to tell the truth, but did not convey Chairman Mao's communication in detail); so much was reported last year, but what about this year? We as cadres are anxious!" "Of course, our team can't represent others, they may be advanced ones." "I can't say what I have just said when someone else comes. The visitors, the reporters come and we lead them around, and they can't see anything. I can report it as two thousand catties, but it can't be spot-checked. When you come, I have to speak the truth and tell the truth, which is good for the party". "I don't dare to say anything when others come. When I say something, when there is a meeting, I would be denying the Great Leap Forward!"

The grain output of Xinfan County this year and last year has not yet been finally calculated. Luo Shifa said that the party committee has not done any research and dare not say anything. But from the spring wheat collection and delivery accounts this year, it seems this number is not enough. This year, Luo Shifa's management area has 880 mu of spring wheat this year, with levy collectors completing the task of expropriating 220,000 jin, leaving 17,000 jin of wheat seeds, and 30,000 jin of unthreshed wheat seeds. According to this calculation, the wheat yield is 340? 350 jin per mu. The actual amount is not quite accurate. This management area has a field of 1 mu of wheat, which was the best that was grown. The original plan was to produce 10,000 jin per mu. Experts rated it as 2,000 jin. Comrade Li Jingquan came to visit during the later period of growth, and said that he could at least hit 2500 jin, but the actual harvest was 788 and a half jin per mu. The high-yield experience of this wheat field is:

Adequate fertilizer (10,000 jin of mud fertilizer, 100 jin of commercial fertilizer, 100 shoulder-pole buckets of urine and water): 1 chi of deep ploughing, 35 jin of seed; dense planting specifications 3 x 7 cun<sup>151</sup>.

### *2. The satellite fields have caused a lot of waste*

Last year, there was also a push to merge fields and establish satellites here, which caused a great waste in terms of manpower and material resources. The entire management area was merged with more than 40 mu of fields, and more than 600 labourers were mobilized for three or four days. As a result, the seedlings composted, the stench was overwhelming, and no harvest was achieved. According to the average yield, the 40 mu of fields yielded more than 30,000 jin less grain, which could feed the whole management area for half a month. In addition, many bamboos were cut down for carrying tools in order to merge the fields. The masses are still unhappy about this matter.

### *3. The problem of dense planting*

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<sup>151</sup> *Chi* and *cun* are traditional Chinese units of measurement roughly equal to the English foot and inch (i.e. 1 *chi* = 0.32 metres, 1 *cun* = 32mm)

Luo Shifa has a lot to say about the dense planting specifications now being promoted.

The dense planting specification for rice summarised and promoted here last year was 3 x 7 cun. However, most of the farmers actually planted 4 x 7, 5 x 7, and a small number of them planted 4 x 8, 5 x 8, or 7, 7 x 7 cun. Not many were actually planted down to 3 x 7 cun. In addition, they experimented last year with planting some 1x2, 3x3, 2x5 and 3x3x7 cun double row strip plants (i.e. double dragon leaping out of the sea). From the results of the harvest, the overly dense planting of 1x2 cun yielded the lowest, with only a few dozen jin per mu. 3x3, 2x5 and 3x3x7 cun were also not very productive. The highest yield was 4x8 cun, with 800 or 900 jin per mu.

This year the superiors fully promoted the experience of 3x3x7 cun and 3x7cun dense planting, and the specification quality requirements are very high. Many members of the community and cadres are not entirely clear in their thinking, but are afraid to talk about it. Now that the seedlings are growing, they are starting to turn yellow again, and they are afraid of them falling over with additional fertiliser. The 3 x 3 x 7 cun early rice crop, in particular, looks very good but is actually of the worst quality. When Luo Shifa led us on a tour, he used his hands to pluck the seedlings in the field to show us that many of them had weak stems, withered seedlings, short hangings and only 30 to 40 percent of effective spikes. Luo Shifa said: "If journalists and experts come to visit, stand on the field to see, count the hangers on the edge of the field, knock on the abacus, they can knock out a couple of thousand jin. But at the end of the day, when you hit the grain, there are not a few hundred jin."

Luo Shifa heard that the Dafeng commune where we are located planted a lot of 6x7 cun and 7x8 cun of seedlings this year, he said, "Now 6x7 cun and 7x8 cun can't lift their heads, so the future harvest of grain may buckle." His reason is that although the number of seedlings per mu is relatively small for 6x7 cun and 7x8 cun, the seedling rate is strong, and a bunch of seedlings can top several bunches of 3x7 cun," says Luo Shifa. Some specifications have only been planted for a year, so you can't draw conclusions yet. After some specifications were planted, the yield was reduced, and dense planting cannot be blamed, because there are other reasons. However, according to current conditions, the large-area dense planting specifications are still 4x8 cun, 5x7 cun, and 7x8 cun, which is better. After calculating, the total number of ears is not necessarily less than that of 3x7 cun. Moreover, it is convenient to save autumn seedlings, swim seedlings, and top dressing. As long as the field is well managed, it is still safe to increase production.

Sincerely

Salute

Shi Jingshang, Qi Benyu, Li Xueqian

July 1, 1959

## Chapter 10: Some of what I know about the Lushan Conference

1. Li Jingquan was criticized by Chairman Mao
2. Peng Dehuai's "Opinion Letter"
3. Li Rui's account of the bulletin and the turn of events at Lushan
4. Tian Jiaying told us to withdraw from Sichuan to Beijing overnight
5. About Chairman Mao's rescue of Tian Jiaying, Hu Qiaomu and Chen Boda
6. The Real Lessons of the Lushan Conference

### 1. Li Jingquan was criticized by Chairman Mao

Tian Jiaying told me after the Lushan meeting that Chairman Mao had read the Report on the Truth about Production in Xinfan County, Sichuan, that we had sent up several times and instructed that it be issued as a conference document of the Lushan meeting. The report on our planting of experimental fields was also carefully read by Chairman Mao. Then the Chairman brought Li Jingquan to him. When Chairman Mao spoke to Li Jingquan, Tian Jiaying was also present. The Chairman asked Li Jingquan how many jin per mu of grain was produced in Sichuan. Without thinking, Li Jingquan replied to Chairman Mao that in some places it was more than 1,000 jin, in others more than 2,000 jin, and the average was 2,000 jin. The Chairman then asked him, "So how come Tian Jiaying and his group went down to plant the fields themselves and only got 500-odd jin?" The chairman said that and showed our report to Li Jingquan. When Li Jingquan read the report on the grain yield, he said, "This is impossible. They did not investigate correctly. The yields they said were false were influenced by the right-wing conservative thinking at the lower levels". He said, "I've been down there and seen it myself, and it's indeed more than 2,000 jin". Li Jingquan also said that the people under him must have deliberately withheld the output from them because they were sent by the Central Government. Tian Jiaying denied his claim on the spot. In this way, in front of the Chairman, Li Jingquan argued with Tian Jiaying, saying that Tian Jiaying had gone down to make a survey with the purpose of denying the Great Leap Forward. He also said that Tian Jiaying was deliberately trying to tear him down. The Chairman said: "You have read the report they have written, they went down and planted it themselves, threshed it themselves, and weighed it out jin by jin themselves. Have you ever gone down to plant? Have you ever planted it? The actual fact is that you'll be able to get a lot more than just a few of these". Li Jingquan said no. Then the Chairman said, "No, then why are you denying people?" But Li Jingquan continued to insist on his claim, saying that he would send his own people down to conduct another investigation.

Li Jingquan was prominent among the local leaders at that time. Among the provincial and municipal leaders, he and Ke Qingshi were the only two who were members of the Central Politburo. I met him many times, and when he came out, it was horrible, and there was no end of trouble. Our report actually showed that the output he reported to the Central Committee was false, and how could he accept this, which was a matter that involved his political status and future. And what the Chairman said to him, which seemed like just a few words, was actually a few words that carried a lot of weight. What really hit Li Jingquan hard was not the grain production we reported, but the words of Luo Shifa, a model worker who he himself had set up.

Li Jingquan immediately sent the United Front Work Minister of Sichuan Province to go to Luo Shifa personally to verify whether he had said these words to us. Normally, when Luo Shifa went to Beijing or other places for meetings, the provincial Minister of United Front Work would always inform him. Li Jingquan then sent such a leader, whom Luo Shifa dared not contradict, to verify the situation with him.

The Minister of United Front Work did not dare to be negligent and immediately took his men down to investigate. Later, when Secretary Luo and Secretary Zhou of the Dafeng Commune came to Beijing to see me, they told me what had happened. The Minister of United Front Work first went to the Dafeng Commune, and a group of them went there in several cars, making a great deal of noise. Then they went to the brigade where I was growing food and asked the peasants in the brigade if there was anything like that when Qi Benyu came down to plant the fields. Was the yield 500 jin? The peasants told him that yes, Lao Qi had grown it himself, beaten it himself and weighed it himself. The grain weighed out was just over 500 jin, less than 600 jin. The United Front Work Minister then went to Luo Shifa, and read to him the report we had written. And he said, not without hinting, whether what Qi Benyu and the others had reported to Chairman Mao was true. Qi Benyu said in his report that it was you who told him that your maximum yield was only 800-odd pounds per mu. Did you really say that, or did they remember it wrongly?

Luo Shifa was amazing! He resisted and he told the truth. Luo Shifa said to the Minister of United Front Work: Qi Benyu and the others did not deceive Chairman Mao, I told him so, and the yield was only 800-odd jin per mu, which is what I said. Luo Shifa was very influential on the agricultural front in the country at that time. He came to expose the lie that the yield was 10,000 jin of grain per mu, and I don't know how many Chinese people were saved by his truthful words at that time! And it saved me too.

When I was released from Qincheng prison in 1986, the first person I wanted to see was Luo Shifa. Unfortunately, he had passed away by then. I always thought to myself that posterity should really build a bronze statue of him to commemorate this great model worker who dared to speak the truth.

The Minister of United Front Work also reported what he had learned to Li Jingquan in a matter-of-fact manner. Only then did Li Jingquan admit his mistake in front of Chairman Mao.

Later, at the "7,000 People's Conference", Li Jingquan came to me and apologised to me in person.

## **2. Peng Dehuai's "Opinion Letter"**

The Lushan Conference was originally convened for the sole purpose of correcting the "leftist" mistakes that had occurred during the Great Leap Forward. Chairman Mao's approach was to calm down the entire party and to draw lessons from experience through careful reading, study and discussion. So at the beginning, Chairman Mao called the Lushan meeting a "meeting of the immortals". Chairman Mao himself took the lead in reading Stalin's "Economic Problems of Socialism in the USSR" and Soviet textbooks on political economy, and also made a list of books for the senior party leaders to study together, so as to guide the whole party to explore the objective laws of socialist economic construction.

In fact, from the autumn of 1958 onwards, Chairman Mao became aware of the wrong tendency of going too far to the left that had manifested itself in the Great Leap Forward and corrected it by holding various meetings and issuing a series of speeches. In order to stop the cadres below from hiding the truth from the top and forcing the masses to tell lies from below. Chairman Mao even

wrote a letter in the form of an "intra-Party correspondence" to all the leading cadres at all levels above the production team. I remember that when we were planting experimental fields in Sichuan, the General Office of the Central Government called and conveyed the Chairman's letter to us over the phone. Tian Jiaying personally broadcasted the Chairman's beliefs to the peasants through the commune's cable radio. However, Tian Jiaying's Mandarin was not standard and the peasants reported that they could not hear him clearly. Tian Jiaying then went and selected a female announcer from the commune radio station to read it out. The female announcer read it out so well that Tian Jiaying later tried to introduce her to the Central People's Broadcasting Station. This letter had a great effect at the time. Many people used the Chairman's letter as a powerful weapon to resist the blind command of the leaders above. However, there were also many places where the Chairman's letter was not conveyed to the people below, blocking the Chairman's voice.

At the Lushan meeting, Chairman Mao's criticism of Li Jingquan also gave the meeting a great shock. Some of the leaders who had boasted so much during the Great Leap Forward, such as Wang Renzhong from Hubei, Shu Tong from Shandong, Wu Zhipu from Henan and Zeng Xisheng from Anhui, all felt weak because they had all misrepresented grain production. Wu Zhipu, in particular, was the one who could brag the most during the Great Leap Forward, so no one was willing to pay attention to him at the meeting because everyone felt that they had fallen for his tricks and had been cheated by him.

But the Chairman's main aim for these comrades who made leftist mistakes in the Great Leap Forward was to raise their awareness through study and learning, so that they could learn from the mistakes they had made and work better, rather than trying to beat them all down. Not only that, the Chairman also affirmed their enthusiasm for practicing socialism. Chairman Mao said: It is of course bad to put up fake satellites, but if you can turn the fake satellites into real ones, then isn't it good? Even Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping, who said a lot of things that went too far in the Great Leap Forward, the Chairman did not criticise severely. He only said that Liu Shaoqi's talk of "communism" was "unjustified". He asked Chen Boda and his colleagues to compile a book entitled "Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin on Communist Society" for the whole Party to study, so that the Party would really know what communism was.

However, some comrades who opposed the "boastful wind" in the Great Leap Forward, or who were criticized or even wrongly attacked for putting forward different opinions, still felt indignant at this time. In fact, these people were quite powerful, but no one came forward to lead the way. For example, Zhou Xiaozhou, the first secretary of the Hunan Provincial Party Committee, was said to have planted the "white flag" during the Great Leap Forward because he did not boast much, while Wang Renzhong, the first secretary of the Hubei Provincial Party Committee, who was close to him, planted the "red flag" everywhere by falsely reporting grain production. However, when food became tight in Hubei later on, they asked to borrow grain from Hunan. At the same time as Tian Jiaying was sent to the rural areas of Sichuan to conduct a survey, Chairman Mao also sent Chen Boda to Fujian and Hu Qiaomu to the rural areas of Jiangsu to conduct a survey. As a result, both of them were resisted and rejected by the local leaders for criticising them for being boastful and telling lies, which made for a very unpleasant situation. However, if no one among these people came forward to take the lead, then they could only feel discontent and whine in their hearts.

It was at this time that Peng Dehuai brought together those who had opinions about the Great Leap Forward with a single speech at a group meeting. Peng Dehuai's actual position in the Party at that time was very high. Although he was not a member of the Politburo Standing Committee, his prestige rose at once because of his victories on the Korean front. When he visited the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe before the Lushan Conference, Khrushchev referred to him as an "international

hero" and received him with the same courtesy as a head of state. Probably at that time, no one else in the Party was in his sights, except Chairman Mao. And at that time, Chairman Mao had already announced his retirement and Liu Shaoqi had just become the State President not long ago. Peng Dehuai was again the one who presided over the army. Huang Kecheng<sup>152</sup>, who had replaced Su Yu as Chief of General Staff, had been with him since the Pingjiang Uprising and was particularly close to him. The fact that he had been with him since the "Pingjiang Uprising" made his performance at this time even more subtle. Later, Chairman Mao said to Peng Dehuai in front of the Standing Committee of the Central Committee that many comrades were worried that after my death, no one would be able to control you. This was indeed a true statement, not a false one.

Peng Dehuai's speech at the panel meeting was supported and responded to by many. However, the meeting was to have been closed after the adoption of the relevant resolutions in accordance with the original agenda. At this time Peng Dehuai wrote to Chairman Mao. After reading the letter, Chairman Mao approved it to the conference as "Comrade Peng Dehuai's letter of opinion".

Even if, as Peng Dehuai himself later said, his letter was mainly directed at Liu Shaoqi, in terms of the content of the letter, there were actually a lot of nails buried in it. The word he used, "petty-bourgeois fanaticism", as anyone who knows the history of the CPC knows, was actually a signal to wage a line struggle. That's why Chairman Mao called it a "declaration of war". Tian Jiaying later told me that the phrase "petty bourgeois fanaticism" was added by Zhang Wentian after reading it and suggesting it to Peng Dehuai.

In the meeting to discuss Peng Dehuai's "opinion", Zhang Wentian, Huang Kecheng and many other comrades spoke in support of Peng Dehuai's opinion at the group meeting, making the differences and struggles at the meeting even sharper.

There is also a very important background here, which is the change in relations between China and the Soviet Union. Before the Lushan Conference, Khrushchev's rash offer to China to set up a long-wave radio station and a nuclear submarine base in China was resisted by Chairman Mao, making Khrushchev very unhappy with Chairman Mao. Peng Dehuai, on the other hand, was ambiguous on the matter. During his presidency of the Military Commission, Peng Dehuai changed all PLA uniforms to Soviet-style uniforms. Khrushchev had always taken a hostile and offensive attitude towards the Great Leap Forward and the People's Commune in China. But he praised Peng Dehuai, and Khrushchev, who was visiting the United States at the time of the Lushan Conference, openly praised Peng in a speech he delivered there. And just after Peng Dehuai returned from his visit to the Soviet Union at the head of a military delegation, the Soviet Union announced that it would stop providing China with samples of the atomic bomb and stop cooperating with China in the nuclear field. This was clearly a sign of pressure on the Chinese Communist Party. Moreover, comrades who went with

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<sup>152</sup> Huang Kecheng (1902–1986) came from a peasant family who owned 6 mu of land. He left school early and joined the Guomindang National Revolutionary Army. He joined the Communist Party of China in 1925. In 1929, Huang was serving under Peng Dehuai in a Guomindang regiment stationed in northern Hunan. When Peng rebelled and took his troops to the Red Army in June 1928, Huang joined him. He became a senior general in the People's Liberation Army. In 1959, Huang criticized the "Great Leap Forward" and "People's Communes" and was denounced as a member of an "Anti-Party group" associated with Peng Dehuai when Peng was criticized at the Lushan Conference. He was deprived of all positions and was placed under investigation. He was partially rehabilitated, but was denounced and attacked by Red Guards when the Cultural Revolution began in 1966. In 1977, after Deng Xiaoping came to power, Huang was politically rehabilitated. After being recalled to service, he was appointed as adviser to the Central Military Commission, and executive secretary of the Central Commission for Discipline Inspection. He was selected as central committee member again in 1978.

Peng Dehuai to visit the Soviet Union reported to Chairman Mao that during the visit, the Soviet Union had ignored the Chinese interpreter and held talks with Peng Dehuai alone. This was clearly abnormal.

There was another incident reported by Chen Yi during the Lushan Conference. At that time, Chen Yi stayed in Beijing, equivalent to a caretaker cabinet, with the power of temporary deployment of troops. During this period the military attaché of the Soviet Embassy in China went to see Chen Yi and asked to talk to him individually, Chen Yi then called his secretaries away, leaving only the interpreter. The Soviet military attaché opened the door and said, "Your Central Committee is meeting in Lushan, you can take the opportunity to get the power in your hands in Beijing". When Chen Yi heard this, he was furious and immediately asked this military official to leave. Chen Yi immediately reported the situation to the Chairman. The Chairman said, "You should let him talk more, for it is not the first time that the Soviet Union has turned against us". The Soviet leaders had been trying to divide the upper echelons of the Communist Party of China and wanted to support the opposition to get rid of Chairman Mao. Later, when He Long<sup>153</sup> visited the Soviet Union, an attempt was also made to turn He Long, saying that they had gotten rid of Khrushchev with one marshal and you could get rid of Chairman Mao too. He Long lost his temper on the spot and reported it to the Premier. The Premier immediately protested to the Soviets, stopped attending the meeting and came back to our country. Peng Dehuai was later accused of "collaborating with foreigners" for a reason. At the "Seven Thousand People Conference" later, Liu Shaoqi said that all other people could be rehabilitated, but not Peng Dehuai, because he had "collaborated with foreign countries". During the Cultural Revolution movement, the main idea I articulated in my article "Patriotism or National Betrayal" was a critique of the proposition uttered by Consort Zhen to the Guangxu Emperor: to help him abolish Cixi and regain power with the help of the foreigners' power, the Eight-Nation Alliance. This kind of thinking is also what some people in the country are thinking now. To this day I understand more and more why Chairman Mao attached so much importance to the criticism of The Inside Story of the Qing Court. Chairman Mao was exceptionally wary of external forces trying to find opportunities to interfere in China's internal affairs at times.

Tian Jiaying also told me later that Peng Dehuai's bad luck at the Lushan meeting also had a lot to do with Li Rui's performance at Lushan.

### **3. Li Rui's account of the bulletin and the turn of events at Lushan**

After the Lushan meeting, Lin Ke, who had been working beside the Chairman during the meeting, told me about this situation that had occurred at the Lushan meeting. On Mount Lushan, Peng Dehuai, Zhang Wentian, Huang Kecheng, Zhou Xiaozhou, Zhou Hui, Chen Boda, Hu Qiaomu, Tian Jiaying, Li Rui and several others often got together at night. The guard soldiers standing guard on

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<sup>153</sup> He Long (1896 –1969) was from a poor rural family in Hunan, and his family was not able to provide him with any formal education. He began his revolutionary career after avenging the death of his uncle, when he fled to become an outlaw and attracted a small personal army around him. Later his forces joined the Guomindang, and he participated in the Northern Expedition. He rebelled against the Guomindang after Chiang Kai-shek began violently suppressing Communists, when he planned and led the unsuccessful Nanchang Uprising. He joined the Long March in 1935, over a year after forces associated with Mao Zedong and Zhu De were forced to do so. He met with forces led by Zhang Guotao, but he disagreed with Zhang about the strategy of the Red Army and led his forces to join and support Mao. In 1945, he became Peng Dehuai's second-in-command. In 1955, He's contributions to the victory of the Communist Party in China were recognized when he was named one of the Ten Marshals, and he served as China's vice premier. He did not support Mao Zedong's attempts to purge Peng Dehuai in 1959. During the Cultural Revolution he was one of the first leaders of the PLA to be removed. He died in 1969 from complications associated with his diabetes.

the hill noticed an unusual situation, that is, when they all entered the house, they turned off all the lights inside the house, and others thought that there was no one inside. After a few hours, people came out of the house one by one. The guards kept a record of the situation, recording when the lights were switched off, when they were switched on, who came in and who came out, and so on. Luo Ruiqing was in charge of security for the conference. Luo Ruiqing was not only the Minister of Public Security at the time, but he was also the head of the Central Committee's "Committee for the Prevention of Emergencies". When Luo Ruiqing saw the records of the soldiers on duty, he also found it strange. He went to the place to see for himself, observing from a small wood in front of the house. One by one, those men came out of the house. The one who walked at the end was Li Rui. Li Rui is a person who walks differently from others, other people walk looking forward, but he is always looking behind. It was probably similar to the fictional Sima Yi<sup>154</sup>. But when he looked back, he met the eyes of Luo Ruiqing who came out of the grove. This startled Li Rui. He thought that Luo Ruiqing had discovered what they had been up to.

Li Rui then ran to the Chairman alone overnight and asked to see him. After meeting the Chairman, he told him everything those at the meeting had said. Lin Ke was present when Li Rui confessed to Chairman Mao.

After hearing Li Rui's confession, the Chairman immediately sought out Luo Ruiqing to ask about the situation. Then he brought in Zhou Xiaozhou, Zhou Hui and others to talk to him. Li Rui knew that the Chairman had again approached Zhou Xiaozhou and Zhou Hui for a talk, and was afraid that they would say more than he did, so he went to the Chairman again to give an additional account and denunciation. He told them what they had said together, that Chairman Mao was worse than Stalin in his later years, and so on. Li Rui even disclosed that he had personally heard Peng Dehuai call the troops when they were having their little meeting. So when Li Rui said that they were the Petofi Club, Chairman Mao said, what Petofi Club, it was a military club.

Some years ago, Zhou Hui, then secretary of the Hunan Provincial Committee, wrote his memoirs in which he told the story for the first time. What Zhou Hui wrote was almost the same as what Lin Ke told me at the time.

The problems disclosed and accounted for by Li Rui created a huge uproar at the Lushan meeting. As soon as everyone heard it, it turned out that Peng Dehuai and the others did not just have a problem with some of the mistakes that had occurred in the Great Leap Forward, but they were targeting the leadership of Chairman Mao and the Central Committee. Peng Dehuai was the Minister of National Defense and Huang Kecheng was the Chief of the General Staff, and the seriousness of the problem was obvious.

The conference immediately turned from overcoming the mistakes in the Great Leap Forward to a critique of Peng Dehuai's right-leaning opportunist mistakes. In this way, the Lushan Conference took a complete turn. It was not only Peng Dehuai and a few others who led the way who were criticized. Even Tian Jiaying was criticised at the panel meeting.

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<sup>154</sup> Sima Yi (179 - 251), was a politician, military strategist and powerful minister of Cao Wei during the Three Kingdoms period, and one of the founders of the Western Jin dynasty. He was involved in various conspiracies and attempted coups, and the Book of Jin records that an emperor who was suspicious of Sima Yi was told that he looked like, and behaved like, a wolf. The emperor first asked Sima Yi to walk in front of him and then deliberately called out to him, only to see that Sima Yi's body did not move, but his head turned to look back. His movement was shown to be wolf-like.

#### 4. Tian Jiaying told us to withdraw from Sichuan to Beijing overnight

It was still during the Lushan Conference, and I was still in rural Sichuan. One day I suddenly received a phone call from the deputy director of the secretary's office, Chen Bingzhen, from Beijing. Chen Bingzhen said to me on the phone: "The National Day is coming up, you should pack up and come back to Beijing immediately to participate in the preparatory work. There are other important tasks, so you can't delay for a day - just leave for Beijing immediately". I said, "It's so urgent, but it's hard to buy train tickets, what should we do?" He said, "You say you're from the Centre and you still can't buy train tickets?" I told him that the train station was crowded with people and that tickets were really hard to buy. He said, then you will take the soft sleeper and come back, and the money for the soft sleeper would be taken out of his own salary and given to us. Because I was only a section chief at the time, I was not allowed to take the soft sleeper according to the rules<sup>155</sup>.

I put down the phone and immediately informed Pang Xianzhi and Li Xueqian. At that time, Luo Wenhui had gone back to her hometown in Sichuan to visit her relatives. Then I hastily packed my luggage and went to the commune to ask them to help me carry it to the railway station. I met Pang Xianzhi at the railway station. Li Xueqian couldn't make it, she said she would only be able to leave tomorrow at the earliest. We couldn't wait for her either. We caught the train back to Beijing that night.

When I returned to Beijing, I found out that something had happened at Lushan. Chen Bingzhen told me that Tian Jiaying had called and said that he had been criticised at Lushan. He was afraid that if you stayed in Sichuan, you would also be fought against. So, he told you to hurry back. As a matter of fact, later on, the secretary of the Dafeng Commune, Zhou and Luo, came to Beijing to see me and also told me that it was fortunate that you had left quickly, otherwise, once the spirit of the Lushan Conference came down, you were likely to be seen as right-wing and they were afraid that we would not be able to leave. Journalists from the Sichuan branch of the Xinhua News Agency, for example, were given a dressing down. Both Secretary Luo and Secretary Zhou were fought against, saying that they were following Tian Jiaying in his rightist tendencies. But later on, the fight couldn't continue because I was planting experimental fields there, and neither Secretary Zhou nor Secretary Luo was directly involved. When I went to talk to Luo Shifa, Secretary Zhou just took me there. In the end, Secretary Zhou was made to write an account of himself for showing me the way.

After Tian Jiaying returned to Beijing from the Lushan Conference, he cursed Li Rui repeatedly in front of me, calling him a villain, a villain, a despicable and shameless villain. Hu Qiaomu also said how could Li Rui say out of context what we had said in our private chats? Chen Boda, Hu Qiaomu and Tian Jiaying announced that they would henceforth sever ties with Li Rui.

Li Rui had a habit of taking notes, and Chen Boda was always worried that Li Rui had written down everything he said in his notes. During the Cultural Revolution, he asked me to go and raid Li Rui's house and copy out his notebooks. I said that I was afraid it would not be appropriate for the Central

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<sup>155</sup> At that time, Chinese long-distance trains generally had 4 classes of seating: hard seater, hard sleeper, soft seater and soft sleeper. Hard seater was crowded and uncomfortable and even so, tickets were often difficult to buy.

Cultural Revolution Group to organise someone to raid Li Rui's home. Later he asked Ye Qun<sup>156</sup> to arrange for Wu Faxian<sup>157</sup> to send someone to raid Li Rui's home. When Chen Boda got Li Rui's notebook, he immediately tore it to pieces.

### **5. About Chairman Mao's rescue of Tian Jiaying, Hu Qiaomu and Chen Boda**

Tian Jiaying, Hu Qiaomu and Chen Boda all attended Peng Dehuai's "little meeting". The Chairman asked Tian Jiaying to take us to Sichuan to plant experimental fields to investigate grain production, and he also asked Chen Boda and Hu Qiaomu to go down to conduct investigations. As soon as they went down to investigate, they found problems and had to report the real situation to the Chairman. This would all involve conflicts with the local leaders. Tian Jiaying offended Li Jingquan, the "King of Southwest China", because he gave the Chairman the report of my survey in Sichuan and exposed the exaggerated grain production in Sichuan, which led to criticism from the Chairman. Li Jingquan would of course have thought at that time: You, Tian Jiaying, came to Sichuan to investigate. I treated you so well, invited you to all the meetings, and served you as a guest. Originally Sichuan was a model of good work, it produced so much food for the country, but in the end, in your survey .report, you said Sichuan engaged in falsehoods, Isn't this stabbing me with the Chairman? Li Jingquan had never received such a blow before. You can imagine what Li Jingquan's attitude towards Tian Jiaying would be after this incident. Tian Jiaying also scolded Wang Renzhong for engaging in boastful behaviour. At that time, Li Jingquan and Wang Renzhong were the most powerful among the various provincial leaders, and Ke Qingshi<sup>158</sup> was also counted as one. Of the three great lords, Tian Jiaying offended two, so he had a hard time. Hu Qiaomu too, he was also criticising and accusing people everywhere in Hunan, and of course his days were just as bad. Chen Boda was in Fujian, and both were unpopular with local leaders for similar reasons. When Peng Dehuai stood up against Li Jingquan and the others and launched a criticism of the boastful faction, they all naturally ran to Peng Dehuai's side, but they were probably unaware of Peng's intentions.

What exactly they had said about Chairman Mao at the "little meeting" is still a matter of opinion. At that time, Li Jingquan said that Tian Jiaying had called Chairman Mao a "late Stalinist", and Tian Jiaying was surprised to hear that. He also said, "I didn't". Li Jingquan then said that Li Rui had said it. Only then did Tian Jiaying realise that Li Rui had confessed everything. Li Rui later changed his story:

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<sup>156</sup> Ye Qun (1917–1971) was the wife of Lin Biao. She was a member of the 9th Politburo of the Chinese Communist Party. She died with Lin Biao and their son Lin Ligu in a plane crash over Mongolia on September 13, 1971.

<sup>157</sup> Wu Faxian (1915–2004) joined the Chinese Red Army in 1930, and two years later he joined the Communist Party of China. He participated in five Counter-Encirclement Campaigns, the Long March, and the various battles conducted by the PLA. In 1955 he was granted the military rank of lieutenant general. Wu was a subordinate of Lin Biao, and in 1965 he became the commander of People's Liberation Army Air Force. In 1981 he was declared guilty as a member of the Lin Biao group and sentenced to 17 years in prison.

<sup>158</sup> Ke Qingshi (1902 – 1965) joined the Chinese Socialist Youth League in 1920 and the Communist Party of China in 1922. In October 1954, he became the first secretary of the Shanghai Municipal Committee of the CPC and in November he became the secretary of the Shanghai Bureau of the CPC Central Committee. In September 1956, he was elected as a member of the Central Committee at the Eighth Congress of the Communist Party of China. In May 1958, he was elected as a member of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee at the second meeting of the Eighth CPC Congress and became the Mayor of Shanghai in November. At the Nanning Conference in 1958, Mao Zedong criticised Zhou Enlai and Chen Yun in harsh terms for their conservatism. He took out Ke Qingshi's "Ride the Wind and Wave, Accelerate the Construction of a New Socialist Shanghai!" and asked of Zhou Enlai "Can you write such an article?" According to Li Rui, Ke Qingshi became the "number one standard bearer" of the Nanning Conference, and the 65-year-old Mao repeatedly referred to the 56-year-old Ke Qingshi as "Ke Lao" in his speeches.

"I made a mistake, Tian Jiaying didn't say it, I did". Li Rui was seeing that the situation was not right and wanted to take it all on, but by this time no one believed him.

It was said that "Tito killed many people who opposed him" and that "Chairman Mao was not as authoritarian as Stalin". This statement should be true, as there are several sources that corroborate it, but it is impossible to clarify who actually made the first statement. In fact, the Chairman did not kill a single person who opposed him, not even the likes of Wang Ming. There were rumours that Wang Ming had taken drugs and was poisoned, and a whole bunch of doctors came out to prove that it was nonsense. Zhang Guotao looked down on the Chairman, but when Zhang Guotao wanted to leave, the Chairman even made it easy for his daughter to leave too. When Zhang Guotao wanted to come back, the Chairman also agreed, as long as he made a self-criticism. Zhang Guotao was reluctant to make a self-criticism, so he did not come back. So, Wang Ming condemned the Chairman for being too powerful. The Chairman had always advocated that most of them should not be arrested and that none should be killed. In this regard, the President was the most enlightened leader in history and no one else could match him. How could he be compared to Tito?

After returning from Lushan, Tian Jiaying cursed Li Rui in front of me as "a villain, a villain, a shameless villain"; he said that Li Rui was jumping up and down, talking the most at small meetings, but blaming everything on others; he said that Li Rui confessed to the Chairman, not about himself, but about others, and biting people and making false accusations. Li Rui said that Tian Jiaying had told the Chairman to his face somewhere that "the Chairman will leave a bad name after a hundred years". However, from what I know about Tian Jiaying, he would never dare to make such a statement. He is usually very scared and cautious when he sees the Chairman, so where would he find the guts to say such things? This remark of Li Rui's cannot be trusted. Tian Jiaying and Li Rui cursed the Chairman behind his back together. Tian Jiaying's original words were like this: Whenever I leave the Chairman, I would die to see him again. He was whining, whining without naming names. Chen Boda also hated Li Rui, saying that he had become a traitor. Hu Qiaomu also scolded Li Rui because he had betrayed him too.

A few years ago, Zhou Hui discredited everything about Li Rui's performance back then, and Li Rui refuted Zhou Hui. I can testify that at that time, Tian Jiaying and the others all thought that Li Rui, as a person, was a villain. Those words of abuse against the Chairman were spoken in private, as if he had an opinion about a leader, and that was fine, we were all the same. None of us dared speak like that. But when he went to the Chairman and confessed, he changed its nature. In fact, we have great respect for the Chairman and have never spoken like that. Chairman Mao later criticized Peng Dehuai, quoting several sentences from the meeting of their group, some of which were not spoken by Peng Dehuai, but by Zhang Wentian. Zhang Wentian played a big role in it. According to their own words later, Zhang Wentian had made prior arrangements with them as to who would speak at the group meeting, what they would say and how they would say it. They also said that they turned off the lights at the meetings because they were afraid of the heat.

Regardless of what the three of them said, the Chairman did not make Tian Jiaying write a self-criticism, nor did he do anything to Hu Qiaomu or Chen Boda. When the provinces and cities attacked the three of them so hard, the Chairman said, "They are all our great scholars", and rescued them. In fact, at that time, it was not about these few people at all. There was support in Peng Dehuai's army, and these big secretaries got involved with Peng Dehuai. If they had not been separated from Peng Dehuai, there is no telling how far things would have gone. Back then, after the Battle of Guandu, Cao Cao seized many books and volumes from Yuan Shao, some of which were private letters from people in Cao Cao's army and Xudu to Yuan Shao, testimonies of some wavering elements who were pulling strings, staying back, and even accepting surrender before the victory

between the two armies was decided. Just as those letter writers were getting restless, Cao Cao unexpectedly burned all these letters in public, and the military and political hearts of Cao's camp were immediately settled. The Chairman did not lose sight of Cao Cao in the slightest and let the matter of several major secretaries pass with a single sentence, that is the art of struggle and the art of unity<sup>159</sup>. So, after the Lushan meeting, Tian Jiaying came back to give us a report to convey the spirit of the instructions of the Lushan meeting and criticize Peng Dehuai very fiercely. I still have the record of that report. He said how Peng Dehuai was anti-Party and ambitious, and that Peng Dehuai had to be brought down and criticized within the Party. He spoke even more strongly than the big-character posters that the Chairman had said about Liu Shaoqi during the Cultural Revolution.

It was Li Rui who should have been dealt with severely. The Chairman saw through Li Rui and said that he was Jiang Gan. Jiang Gan was in the service of Cao Cao and was used by Zhou Yu. What the President meant was that Li Rui was sent by Peng Dehuai and he ended up giving it away. This is what I heard from Lin Ke. The Chairman was even lenient in dealing with Li Rui. He agreed with Chen Boda and did not include Li Rui in the "military club", nor did he expel him from the Party, but only gave him a disciplinary action within the Party. The Chairman has always been like this: if you confess, report and admit your mistakes, he will be lenient. If the Chairman had treated Li Rui the same as Peng Dehuai, then Li Rui would have been in serious trouble. Liu Shaoqi said, "He is not a member of the Central Committee, so it is nothing". In fact, he was not a member of the Central Committee, but he was a central figure who played a very bad role and had violated organizational discipline so seriously that he should also have been dealt with seriously. The most powerful attacker on Chairman Mao and the one who has been most active in falsifying the facts of the Lushan Conference is actually this Li Rui. It is really easy to change one's nature.

## 6. The Real Lessons of the Lushan Conference

After the Lushan Conference, the struggle against "right-wing opportunism" was launched within the Party. Some people who had been criticized for the "boastful style" and false production reports in the Great Leap Forward were also vigorously opposed to the Right at this time. As a result, not only were some people who supported Peng Dehuai's views criticized, but some comrades who had put forward correct views on the wrong practices in the Great Leap Forward were also said to be sympathetic to Peng Dehuai's views and were dealt a blow. At that time Hu Qiaomu concluded that it was better to make a leftist mistake than a rightist one. For the former was only a matter of method, while the latter was a matter of position. This became popular within the Party for a while.

However, some of the serious consequences of the "communist wind" and "boastful wind" of the Great Leap Forward period were already evident in 1959. The "high requisition" caused by the "false declaration of grain production" had deprived the people of food in some places. Even then, the central government was already trying to find ways to transfer grain back to the areas where it had been taken from. The so-called "communist wind" and the "one level, two adjustments" also seriously dampened the peasants' enthusiasm for productive work. The situation was made worse

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<sup>159</sup> Cao Cao (155-220) was one of the central figures of the Three Kingdoms period. He was one of the military generals providing support for Yuan Shao in the battles that raged across China until their relationship descended into rivalry for control of a unified China. Yuan Shao controlled most of China north of the Yellow River; Cao Cao controlled most of the south. They fought at Guandu in 200 AD in the late Eastern Han dynasty. Cao Cao's decisive victory against Yuan Shao's numerically superior forces marked the turning point in their war. The victory was also the point at which Cao Cao became the dominant power in northern China, leading to the establishment of the state of Cao Wei in the Three Kingdoms period. Mao cited the Battle of Guandu to support his thesis that the weak can defeat the strong. Here Qi Benyu compares Cao Cao's skill in defusing internal opposition to Mao's.

by three consecutive years of widespread natural disasters throughout the country. At this time, the Soviet Union stopped all aid to China and demanded that China pay back the debts it had incurred as a result of its resistance to the US. The country entered a period of hardship.

Several people have attributed the main reason for the difficulties that arose to the criticism of Peng Dehuai's right-wing opportunism. This is not in line with historical facts. The criticism of Peng Dehuai at the Lushan Conference had a profound international and domestic background. Imagine what would have happened if Peng Dehuai had not been criticised but had been fully embraced. I am afraid that the Party would have split and the whole country would have been plunged into chaos.

It is also historically incorrect to describe Peng Dehuai as the representative who corrected the "leftist" mistakes of the Great Leap Forward. Chairman Mao said at the Lushan Conference had the "opinions" put forward by you, Peng Dehuai, ever superseded the correction and criticism of the "leftist" mistakes we were already making at that time? Not a single point. Peng Dehuai only wanted to use these mistakes made in the Great Leap Forward to achieve what he wanted to achieve.

However, in criticizing Peng Dehuai's right-leaning mistakes, it is also true that the criticism of the "left" mistakes was overshadowed, and even the "left" mistakes were described as correct, which allowed these mistakes to develop further and thus caused further harm. This is exactly what Chairman Mao later said during the Cultural Revolution, that "one tendency conceals another". This situation has repeated itself many times in the history of the Party.

In 1962, when I was editor-in-chief of "Reflections of the Masses" in the Secretary's Office, I compiled a report based on the views reflected in the letters from the masses at that time. The theme of the report was that Peng Dehuai's behaviour at the Lushan Conference had in fact seriously interfered with the Party's criticism and correction of the "leftist" mistakes made at the time of the Great Leap Forward. Therefore, Peng Dehuai was largely responsible for the difficult situation that arose later. The report was addressed to Premier Zhou. After reading it, the Premier agreed with the views I had expressed in the report and sent the report I had compiled wholesale. In my "diary scraps" which I still have, this incident is still recorded. However, the original report was later copied and its whereabouts were lost.

It is worth noting that some of those who led the "left" during the Great Leap Forward, and who were most vocal in criticizing Peng Dehuai at the Lushan Conference, gradually changed their tune later. They made Peng Dehuai into a sad figure of "great righteousness" and "someone who represented the people" by various means. It should be clear by now that their real aim in doing so was to put all the blame on Chairman Mao and to use it as a major weapon to deny him.

There are countless articles and books on the "Lushan Conference", most of which, sadly, disregard historical facts and authentic documents and take the so-called notes of Li Rui, who performed poorly on Lushan, as the most authoritative basis.

There is also a popular legend from the diary of Yang Shangkun, who says that Chairman Mao said to Peng Dehuai, when he asked him to come back out to work, that perhaps the truth is with you. I think this is untrue. Chairman Mao had never said anything of similar meaning on any other occasion. And in no way did Peng Dehuai ever tell anyone that the Chairman had ever said that to him. The Chinese government has also been working on the issue of the Cultural Revolution, and is now organising the writing of a critique of Hai Rui's dismissal, so I don't think it is possible to say such a thing. What I heard conveyed to me at that time was that the chairman said to Peng Dehuai, "I was sincere in opposing you at first, and I am equally sincere in supporting you to work now". This remark was entirely in line with Chairman Mao's consistent attitude and practice in dealing with

comrades who had made mistakes. It reflects the temperament and boldness of a proletarian revolutionary. This is something that no one else can learn.

It seems that although half a century has passed, this historical event of the "Lushan meeting" has been obscured. I believe that future generations of historians are sure to restore the truth to the "Lushan meeting".

## Chapter 11 Work at the Erqi<sup>160</sup> Rolling Stock Factory

1. Chairman Mao and the people went through difficult times together
2. Working in factories with people who used to make me suffer
3. Mingling with workers
4. An Investigation into "Investigation and Research"
5. Friendship forged through joint work

### 1. Chairman Mao and the people went through difficult times together

When I was still in rural Sichuan in the second half of 1959, I found that the supply of food was already very tight. I found that even in Sichuan, the land of the heavens, there were problems with the food supply. But I thought that the people of Sichuan were really great, even though their own food was very tight, I saw with my own eyes that they used "chicken carts"<sup>161</sup> to carry loads of food to railway stations to support other provinces that were even more short of food than they were.

Back in Beijing, the Secretary's Office received a large number of letters from people all over the country every day, complaining about the lack of food. Some of them even sent in their food, mixed with something unknown, something black and gooey. We wrote reports on all these situations and submitted them to the Central Committee and Chairman Mao.

Chairman Mao also asked his staff and guard soldiers around him to take the opportunity of their visits home to find out the living conditions of the people in their places and come back to report to him. On one occasion, a guard soldier brought back from his hometown a bran ball that the local people ate, and we all looked at it; it was black and hard. Later this soldier took it to the Chairman, and Chairman Mao took this bran ball and struggled to eat it. As he ate it, the Chairman shed tears. The soldier later told us about this, and we all blamed him for showing it to the Chairman. From then on, Chairman Mao instructed those around him to send all the meat and eggs allocated to him to the large canteen in Zhongnanhai, and that he would no longer eat these things. He said that he would not eat them until the peasants of the country could also eat them. When the Premier found out about it, he was so anxious that he thought of many ways to prevent it from affecting the Chairman's

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<sup>160</sup> "Erqi" is a combination of the numbers "2" (er) and "7" (qi). It refers to a massacre of striking workers on February 7, 1923. After the founding of the Communist Party of China, it was committed to organizing and leading the labour movement. In August 1921, the head office of the Chinese Labor Union was established. With its support, on Feb 1, 1923, the Beijing-Hankou Railway Union's inaugural meeting in Zhengzhou was banned by warlord Wu Peifu. On Feb 4, 20,000 Beijing-Hankou railway workers went on a general strike to demand workers' rights and freedom from the oppression of northern warlords. Wu Peifu mobilised more than 20,000 soldiers and suppressed the strikers, resulting in the February 7 Massacre. Many were killed at Changxindian, near Beijing, and more at Zhengzhou, capital of Henan Province. Casualties were heavy, and strike lasted until Feb 9. A 14-storey Erqi Memorial Tower in Zhengzhou was completed on September 29, 1971. The twin tower was the tallest structure in Zhengzhou until 1976.

<sup>161</sup> A type of wheelbarrow constructed entirely of wood, usually with a flat surface for transporting goods, or with two planks either side of the wheel on which passengers sat.

health. Yet the Premier himself sent what was allocated to him to the canteen and ate very little himself.

At that time, many international friends and overseas compatriots knew that the supply in China was tight, so they sent a lot of food and nutritional products to Zhongnanhai to give to Chairman Mao. There were all kinds of high-class things in there. After receiving these items, our secretary's office asked Chairman Mao for advice. Chairman Mao told us to send all these things to the Great Hall of the People to be used for foreign guests. An overseas Chinese from Indonesia sent several catties of fine bird's nest to the Chairman. The Chairman also asked that it be sent to the Great Hall of the People. Later, the Chairman once had a very bad cough. A staff member heard that bird's nest could cure coughing. He went to the Great Hall and asked if there was any more bird's nest left, and the people there said that there was only a little bit left, about two or three taels<sup>162</sup>. He took the bird's nest and quietly made it into soup for the Chairman to eat. I am afraid that this was the greatest treat in Chairman Mao's life, and it was done without his knowledge.

It wasn't until the Spring Festival of 1961, when I was working at the Erqi rolling stock factory, that I asked the workers around me to find out what they ate when they went home for the New Year, and what the local people ate. When they came back, they informed me that things were much better now, that the village even killed pigs during the New Year and that they were able to eat dumplings. I wrote a brief report on the situation and sent it to the General Office, which then put it in the "Information Bulletin". The Chairman read the news and underlined it.

Nowadays, when some people talk about this three-year difficult period, they talk about it in a dark and gloomy way. In fact, it was during this difficult period that our people and their leaders showed the courage and spirit to overcome the difficulties, which could have touched heaven and earth and cried out to the gods. Had this been the case in any other country, or in any other period in our country, there is no telling what kind of human tragedy would have occurred.

Of course, not all Communists and Party leaders in difficult times have the true communist spirit that Chairman Mao and Premier Zhou have shown.

## **2. Working in the factory with people who used to make me suffer**

After the Lushan Conference in 1959, the Party began to criticise Peng Dehuai's "right-wing opportunism". The Beijing Municipal Committee reported to the General Office of the Central Committee that those cadres who had been sent down to work in the suburbs of Beijing because of the mistakes they had made during the Zhongnanhai "Eight Secretaries Incident" were complaining a lot behind the scenes, and some even showed their sympathy for Peng Dehuai. When Tian Jiaying found out about this, he called them back to rectify the situation and conveyed to them the grain gods of the Lushan Conference.

When Tian Jiaying reported the results of this rectification to Chairman Mao, Chairman Mao said to Tian Jiaying, "You let those who made mistakes go down to work by themselves and did not care and look after them very well, so of course they will have mixed emotions. Even though what they did before was wrong, those of you who are active should go down with them to work and exercise together and reform their thinking together. And you should set an example and be a role model for them, so that they can slowly realise their mistakes and turn their thinking around.

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<sup>162</sup> A tael ("liang" in Chinese) is the equivalent of an ounce and weighs 31.25 grams.

Tian Jiaying conveyed this instruction from the Chairman to us. Then Tian Jiaying asked, "Which of you would like to take them down to work?" But no one answered for a while. Originally, Tian Jiaying did not consider letting me go. I had been there for almost a year in 1959 and had just returned from the countryside. But I thought that the Chairman had called us activists and asked us to take the wrongdoers to work with us, so if no one signed up, it would be a shame. So I signed up, and Tian Jiaying was delighted. Tian Jiaying asked me to choose another person to be my assistant and go down with him. I chose Jiang Dejiu from Section 5.

Tian Jiaying thought that the food in the countryside was very tight and some peasants were in a bad mood, and that their growing complaints brought about negative effects on the minds of the wrongdoers. Tian Jiaying also asked us to choose a factory. Some people proposed to go to Shougang or Beijing Machinery Factory, but I chose the Erqi Rolling Stock Factory in the suburbs of Beijing, which used to be called Changxindian Railway Factory and was renamed to commemorate the "February 7th" strike of the workers of the Beijing-Hanzhou Railway. The workers of this factory were rich in revolutionary traditions. Chairman Mao had also visited the factory in his youth, and many of his revolutionary predecessors, such as Cai Hesun and Deng Zhong and others, had worked in this factory. Everyone thought it was a good idea, so they chose to go to this factory.

In the summer of 1960, Jiang Dejiu and I took Wang Gang, Cheng Zhi, Zhang Daojing, Zhang Yiping, Ma Zhijiang, Yuan Xilin, Zhang Wanxiang, Zhang Tianke, Wu Yunsheng and a total of more than a dozen people to the Erqi locomotive plant. Tian Jiaying designated by me as branch secretary.

When I arrived at the factory and came into contact with the master workers, it was a good feeling. The workers had their own views on all kinds of things, but there were very few complaints or grievances. They were active and worked day and night. They probably heard that we had all made mistakes and started to think that I had made mistakes too, so they told me that it was a good idea to learn from our mistakes and that it was no big deal to make mistakes, we could change! They were very good at reasoning, and they could tell us how to understand our mistakes and how to reform ourselves. They also took care of us in life. So we all felt very comfortable. We were honestly apprenticed to them, and when we saw that our work would soon bear fruit and that the parts we had machined would soon be put to use, we were very happy and felt that we had done our bit for socialist construction. The workers were very straightforward, and there was very little fighting between them, unlike amongst the authorities.

When they arrived among the enthusiastic workers, the depression of those comrades who had made mistakes soon disappeared, and they worked together all day and slept in the same dormitory at night, talking and laughing. All those things that had happened in the past, such as what was right and what was wrong, and who was personally wronged, were put to the back of our minds.

Wang Gang was the head of the secretary's office at the time of the "Eight Secretaries Incident" and was criticised by the Chairman in person for implementing the "He Zai Line". When he was sent down to work, he was in a very low mood. As his health was not good, I arranged for him to do some light work such as inspection. He was very grateful to me and felt that not only did I not take revenge on him, but I also took care of him.

Just as Wang Gang was delegated to labour, he heard that Liu Huafeng (who was formerly the Secretary of the Party Committee of the Central Committee) was transferred to be the Deputy Director of the General Office of the Northwest Bureau; Li Dongye (who was formerly the Secretary of the Party General Branch of the Zhongnanhai Organ) was transferred to Liaoning Province as the Secretary of the Provincial Party Committee. He became very opinionated and told me that they had

sent him to the Secretariat in the first place, and he had followed all their advice to deal with us. As a result, he made a mistake and was sent down to work. And how they were promoted instead. I reported Wang Gang's opinion to Tian Jiaying, who also had a strong opinion on the matter, and he reported it to the Chairman. The Chairman also read in the newspaper at that time that Li Dongye was the Secretary of the Liaoning Provincial Party Committee. The Chairman criticised how he had made mistakes but had been promoted. He wanted to know what was going on, and asked Deng Xiaoping to look into it. Later on, both of those people were demoted. So those two people later hated Tian Jiaying with a passion.

Gradually the relationship between Wang Gang and me improved gradually. He told me all about how they had discussed fixing us at that time. After the Cultural Revolution, Deng Xiaoping recalled all of Yang Shangkun's original team to Zhongnanhai, with Liu Huafeng still secretary of the Central Party Committee and Wang Gang back as head of the secretary's office. At that time, my wife was still working in the secretary's office. After I was released from prison, I heard my wife say that Wang Gang treated her well and did not take revenge on her. On the contrary, he took care of her and even quietly asked her if she wanted to visit me in Qincheng prison.

When I was released from prison, Zhang Wanxiang was the first to come and see me, and he didn't care what anyone said. Wu Yunsheng later became the director of the provincial party committee office in Liaoning. When he found out I was going to the Northeast, he sent a car all the way to pick me up, arranged good food and accommodation for me, and accompanied me every day. I asked them, "Didn't you complain about me originally?" They said that at first they complained, but when they saw me working with them all day, they knew in their hearts that I was also suffering because of them. They were afraid that I would retaliate for what they had done to me, but I didn't. So, their resentment slowly subsided and they had no more problems with me.

Ma Zhijiang was a 38-year-old cadre, originally from Peng Dehuai's "First Field Army". Before he was transferred to the secretary's office, he was engaged in intelligence work in the army. After the Lushan meeting, at first he showed sympathy for Peng Dehuai. After we became acquainted with each other during our labour, he told me something from the bottom of his heart, saying that Peng Dehuai was in fact a very brutal person himself. When we fought in Baoji, it was Peng Dehuai who was in command. By then, Yan'an had been recovered and the Chairman had crossed the Yellow River. At that time, we suffered a lot of casualties, and the troops complained to him that it would not work to continue fighting like this. But he still insisted that we must fight like this, and as a result, I don't know how many people died.

### **3. Mingling with workers**

The Erqi Locomotive and Rolling Stock Factory is a 10,000-person factory. It mainly repaired locomotives and developed internal combustion train engines. The factory was well equipped, from steel making and forging all the way to developing new products.

I was working in the tool shop. The tool shop was one of the more important workshops in the factory and much of the new technical equipment was in this workshop. Several teachers there were very kind to me, teaching me hand in hand to learn to master various techniques and crafts. Over time, I built up a deep friendship with them all. I used to ride my bicycle to their homes on my days off. But it was the time when food supply was the tightest, so when I went to the workers' homes, I always brought my own food or brought food stamps for them.

The year 1960 was the most difficult time. The rations for the rural peasants were insufficient and the Central Government decided that the ration standard for the cities should be reduced to support

the countryside. The cadres and workers were to be reduced, each reporting their own rations and everyone commenting on them. The situation in the factories was complicated. The types of work were different and the labour intensity was different, like those who made steel and turned sand, which was physically demanding. I tried to work for a few days, but when I was working, I was sweating profusely. After I finished my work, I lost a little energy. I couldn't support my stomach without eating. I usually ate a bowl of rice, but eating five bowls of rice was not enough. The average food allowance for a worker was more than 40 catties, with 35 catties for light work, more than 40 catties for heavy work, and up to 50 or 60 catties. In addition to considering the type of work, we had to also consider the individual situation. Some people are born with large stomachs, and their meals are one or two times larger than those of ordinary people, and they scream when they are not full. As for the female comrades, they had to give way. According to my type of work (machine worker), I could have claimed thirty-five pounds, but I only claimed twenty-eight pounds, because I did not participate in labour every day. In fact, even thirty-five catties was not enough to eat. But if each of us could save five or six catties of grain per month, we would be able to feed many people in the countryside. Ma Zhijiang, who was tall and strong, was assigned to work on sand tossing, and he usually ate 50 or 60 catties, but the ration was 50 catties according to the type of work. He asked me how much should I claim, I said you are from the central government, take the lead, just reduce two catties. After he had lost two catties, he was always screaming that he was hungry. When I was farming in rural Sichuan, I learned a lesson that if you can't get enough rice, you can get by with some sugar water, so I told Ma Zhijiang to drink some sugar water when he was hungry, and that's how he dealt with it.

Later we tried to help ourselves by going to the mountains on holidays to pick some edible wild leaves, and in the evening we came back and washed them and steamed them for dinner. There were a lot of bitter lettuce leaves and dandelions along the road, so we dug them up and ate them. The leaves were washed, kneaded and mixed with salt.

Despite the hardships, the workers' motivation to work did not wane. After Khrushchev fell out with us, he withdrew all the Soviet experts. At that time, the Erqi factory was trying to produce a 3,000 horsepower internal combustion engine, which the Soviet experts had been helping with. Some of the Soviet experts had a good relationship with us, so when they left, they deliberately left the design drawings for the internal combustion engine, saying that they given them out earlier and now they could not get them back. Later on, under such circumstances, the workers and cadres of the Erqi factory managed to build the internal combustion engine train. I reported this happy news to Zhongnanhai as well.

Since I had been in the factory for a long time, I had slowly found out some problems. The main problem was that some grassroots cadres were using the power they had to make use of some privileges. At that time, a grassroots branch secretary was quite powerful, and the workshop he led was a small independent kingdom, all the people in the workshop had to listen to his orders, and had to do whatever the secretary told them to do. The secretary had the final say on such matters as job transfers and wage increases. And after the anti-rightist movement, if anyone complained to the secretary, he could seriously say that you were anti-party. I knew of a shop branch secretary who had been suppressing a worker who had given voiced his opinions for a long time, and people in the same situation had been promoted, but he was not given a promotion or a raise in salary. Everyone could see that this person was the best worker and had the best qualifications, but everyone else had been given a raise, but he was not given a raise, and no one dared to say anything. There was also a workshop secretary, and several beautiful girls in the workshop were given to him to monopolise. The two of them were called East Palace and West Palace by the workers. These two

girls, who had not made any outstanding achievements, were the highest-ranking workers in the workshop. This was told to me by an old worker, who also said: "You are always up there, so you don't know what's going on down here. You can't say that there is no such thing. The people don't just say what they don't know. But I haven't seen anything". This old worker's meaning was clear, but the words were very circumspect. I said, "Isn't that the same as not saying anything?" He said, "Then you can find out for yourself".

#### **4. An Investigation into "Investigation and Research"**

From the end of 1960 to the beginning of 1961, the Central Committee reissued an article written by Chairman Mao in his earlier years, "Oppose Book Worship"<sup>163</sup>, calling on the whole Party to promote the style of investigation and research, asking cadres to go into the factories and the countryside to help the masses overcome their difficulties and solve the problems they encountered. The Central Committee held several consecutive working meetings to implement this matter. Tian Jiaying, Hu Qiaomu and Chen Boda also followed Chairman Mao's instructions and each took a team down for work, and all the central organs and ministries also took part.

At that time, many investigation teams came to the Erqi Rolling Stock Factory, because it was a large factory with many authorities above it. They came from the Ministry of Railways, the State Planning Commission, the Beijing Municipal Committee and the Federation of Trade Unions. But some of the investigation teams came down, not to solve the problem. They came because none of them wanted to go to the countryside because life there was so bitter. So, they all came to the factories. But when they came to the factory, they didn't take part in the work either, and the factory had to invite their guests. Some of the factory leaders were also happy to accompany these people who came down to investigate to eat and drink together. At that time, although the state supply was very tight, in order to protect the needs of front-line workers, the state still stipulated that a certain amount of oil, meat and eggs should be supplied to workers on the front line. For example, workers working in high temperatures were given half a catty of meat per day, and heavy labourers were given five or six catties to more than ten catties of meat per person per month, as well as oil, eggs, soybeans and peanuts. In addition, there were certain special provisions for skilled workers and those who were not in good health. Now, in order to entertain the investigation team coming down from above, these things that the state had stipulated for front-line workers were withheld and given to the investigation team. The workers had a lot of opinions about this practice. Two of our comrades who came down with us were working in the canteen, and they kept a record of what people were served in the canteen every day, what they ate and how much they ate. They kept a record of who came to the canteen to have a small meal. At that time, the canteen had a small dining room like a private room in a restaurant now, and every time the factory cadres accompanied the investigation team for dinner and had meat, fish, and wine. And once the investigation team came down, there would be a meeting, and after the meeting, they ate and ate for an hour or two. Then they stayed in the factory's guest house for two days to write a report, even if the investigation had been completed. If a minister or vice-minister came down, it would be even worse, eating and drinking until after ten o'clock at night. The two cadres who worked in the canteen told me that at least half of the special and dedicated provisions for heavy and skilled workers were eaten in this way. At that time, the

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<sup>163</sup> Written by Mao Zedong in May 1930 to oppose the dogmatism in the Red Army at that time. The original title was "Investigation Work". Later, the article was lost. After the article was rediscovered in the early 1960s, Mao Zedong made some revisions and supplements to the content, and the title was changed to "Oppose Book Worship." In 1964, it was included in the first edition of "Selected Readings of Mao Zedong's Works" published by People's Publishing House. It is included in Selected Work of Mao Tse-tung Vol 6 published by the Foreign Languages Press, Paris, 2020. See also: [OPPOSE BOOK WORSHIP \(marxists.org\)](https://www.marxists.org)

Party Secretary of the Erqi factory, surnamed Wu, was an anti-Japanese cadre during the war, so he was fine and did not accompany them to eat. But the factory manager, whose surname was Guan, was a Long March cadre who had lost an arm during the war. He was not afraid of the sky or the earth, and often accompanied people from above to eat and drink in the small dining room of the canteen.

After hearing and reading more about these things, I had an idea: You are here to investigate, but you don't go to the grassroots, you don't engage in the "three sames"<sup>164</sup> with the workers, you just eat and drink, what kind of investigation and research is this? I decided to report this situation to the Central Committee, so I wrote a report on the investigation of "investigation and research". In the report, I wrote that Chairman Mao had advocated the promotion of investigation and research, and everyone said it was good and responded in droves. However, some investigation teams did not go down to the lower levels properly, nor did they talk to workers and cadres, but just listened to the reports of a few leaders and then wrote their investigation reports, regardless of the fact that some of the contents were not in line with the actual situation below. Thus, the investigations had become a disaster, more than a dozen higher departments had sent people down to conduct investigations, filling up the factory guest house, eating and drinking there all day, and eating a large part of the meat and fish allotted to workers. In the report, I summarised the problem as "ten more and ten less", such as "more people looking up to the sky, less people going down to work; more people eating and drinking, less people eating and working with the workers (in fact, not less, but not at all)" and so on.

This report was written in early May 1961, and then handed over to Tian Jiaying. After reading the report, Tian Jiaying thought it was well written and he was also angry at the situation I had reflected in the report, that even good policies were all distorted when they were sent to the lower levels. He also attached a text message he had written to the front of the report.

The report reached Chairman Mao. Chairman Mao wrote three criticisms of this report in quick succession.

(The following are excerpts from The Chronology of Mao Zedong published by the Central Literature Publishing House).

On May 28, he read the material submitted by Tian Jiaying, "An Investigation into "Investigation and Research"", written by Qi Benyu on May 12, and the letter from Tian Jiaying submitting this material. Tian Jiaying's letter said: "Qi Benyu, a staff member in the secretary's office, was sent to work at the Changxindian Rolling Stock Factory in June last year. Recently, he sent me a document reflecting the situation of some people from institutions and schools who went to the factory to conduct investigations. This material raised some issues worthy of attention in the midst of the great promotion of investigation and research. According to Qi Benyu's material, they spent their spare time mapping out the situation of the leading organs at all levels doing research at the Changxindian rolling stock factory and he concluded that the problem of 'ten more and ten less' existed more generally in the work of the 20-odd investigation teams". Mao Zedong drafted a title for Qi Benyu's material, "An Example of Investigation Becoming a Disaster". Approved: "This document is issued to all comrades of the working conference. It is also issued to all party groups in all departments of the Central Committee and state organs. When sending investigation teams down, no matter how many people there are in the city or countryside, no matter how few there are, they should first have

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<sup>164</sup> Refers to cadres and intellectuals who eat, live and work with workers and peasants.

training and explain their policies, attitudes and methods, so that the investigation will not fail to achieve its purpose and cause the grassroots comrades to resent it, making such a good thing as investigation a disaster instead." On the 30th, Mao Zedong again gave instructions on this material: "This document should be discussed by the Party groups of the Central Committee and all departments of the state organs, the Central Bureaux, the provincial, municipal and district Party committees, all the way down to the Party committees at the county and community levels, the grassroots Party committees of urban factories, mines and transport, the grassroots Party committees of finance and trade, the grassroots Party committees of culture and education, and the regimental Party committees of the army, so as to draw their attention to it and help the people who go down to investigate. The Party Committee will discuss the matter with them, draw their attention to it, and help the people who go down to investigate to strengthen the ten less and avoid the ten more. If the same bureaucratic and disgusting methods of investigation are applied as those who went to the Changxindian railway rolling stock factory, the Party Committee has the right to educate them. If the dead bureaucrats do not listen, the Party Committee has the right to expel them. In the meantime, please take this document and use it as one of the teaching materials for training investigation teams".

But the editors of the Central Literature Publishing House deliberately omitted the following paragraph of approval written by Chairman Mao.

"I am sending you Qi Benyu's report. Qi Benyu is a good comrade, a cadre in the General Office of the Central Committee who resisted the Party Committee of the Central Committee's efforts to support the right and oppose the left. In his report to me, you will see what has become of the present investigation and research."

## **5. Friendship forged through joint work**

In June 1961, we finished our labour training at the Erqi Rolling Stock Factory and I returned to work in the secretary's office. As soon as I returned to the secretary's office. I made a report to Tian Jiaying, saying that Wang Gang and the others who had gone down to the factory with us had all behaved very positively during the labour, and that they had all changed their thinking and had all made great progress. Therefore, they should be assigned jobs after they returned from the factory labour, and their previous mistakes could be cancelled or their original punishments reduced.

The original punishment for Wang Gang was expulsion from the Party. Through working together at the Erqi Factory, we got to know each other better and developed feelings for each other, and he realised his previous mistakes. When we returned from the Erqi Factory, we asked if we could change his punishment to a "suspended sentence". Tian Jiaying reported this to the Chairman, who agreed. Tian Jiaying conveyed to us that the Chairman had said that this was a successful experience. The Chairman also said that we could try this article on "suspended sentence" and if it worked well, it could be written into the Party constitution. During the Cultural Revolution, our Central Cultural Revolution Group also discussed the idea of using this article to deal with some cadres who had committed capitalist mistakes. Wang Gang was overjoyed and said, "Thanks to Qi Benyu, who else would have spoken to the Chairman on our behalf?"

The others were also assigned jobs and some remained in the secretary's office. Zhang Yiping came to the Secretary's Office from the Central Bureau of Guards and went back to the Central Bureau of Guards. He later became the Director of the Chairman Mao Memorial Hall Administration. I visited him after I was released from prison and we talked about Wang Dongxing together. He said with contempt that it was only a dog that bit its master. He also told me that after I was arrested and

investigated in 1968, Wang Dongxing sent all of them to me in order to alter my materials, asking them to expose and criticise me. Wang Dongxing originally thought that they all had a grudge against me because they had all been disciplined for the "Eight Secretaries Incident". It turned out that they couldn't come up with anything other than the fact that I was a bit arrogant and criticised people too much. On the contrary, some of the people who were with me during the "Eight Secretaries Incident", and who were later reappointed after I joined the Central Cultural Revolution Group, were probably talking nonsense about me after my arrest in order to clear themselves and draw a clear line between themselves and me.

Through my work at the Erqi Rolling Stock Factory, I have come to realize how wise and great Chairman Mao's thinking was regarding the participation of cadres in production work and the correct treatment of erring comrades!

## Chapter 12: Investigations in Tianjin and organising “Reports from the Masses”

1. Accompanying Chen Boda and Tian Jiaying to Tianjin to conduct industrial surveys
2. The relationship between Chen Boda, Hu Qiaomu and Tian Jiaying
3. Organising the “Reports from the Masses”
4. Chairman Mao hates corruption and supports the "Report from the Masses" in revealing the specialization of bureaucracy within the party

### 1. Accompanying Chen Boda and Tian Jiaying to Tianjin to conduct industrial surveys

In 1961, the restructuring of the national economy had already achieved very good results, and the "Sixty Rural Articles"<sup>165</sup> formulated under the auspices of Chairman Mao himself had played a great role. As a result of correcting the mistakes of "one leveling, two transfers" and the "communist wind", a basic economic accounting system of "three levels of ownership, with the team as the basis" was established, and the healthy development of the people's communes was ensured. The situation in the countryside gradually improved. At this time, Chairman Mao wanted to tackle the problem of industry. In order to formulate the "Seventy Articles of Industry"<sup>166</sup>, he asked Chen Boda and Tian Jiaying to organise an investigation team to conduct an industrial survey in Tianjin.

The investigation team was headed by Chen Boda, with Tian Jiaying as its deputy head. There were three groups, one to the steel factory, one to the machinery factory, and one to the public transport unit. Chai Mo, director of the Central Policy Research Office, and Ma Zhongyang, deputy director, were the team leaders of the two teams. The other group was headed by me. Both Chai Mo and Ma Zhongyang were cadres who had joined the Party during the war, and were both at the rank of bureau chief, the same level as Tian Jiaying. And I was still only at a section chief level at that time, and was reappointed on an exceptional basis.

The team I led went to the Tianjin Machine Tool Factory to conduct an investigation. When we first started the investigation, we couldn't find out anything about the problems in the factory. Everything was normal from the accounts. I was a bit puzzled, and when the other two teams went down there, they were in a similar situation to me, and could not find out what was wrong. At this point I thought I should go down and work with the workers, so that I could get some real insight into the situation. I had been an apprentice at the Erqi rolling stock factory, and although I couldn't

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<sup>165</sup> From 15 to 23 March 1961, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China held a working conference in Guangzhou to discuss and adopt the Regulations on the Work of Rural People's Communes (Draft). Based on three years' experience of the rural people's communes, the Regulations made more systematic provisions to rectify the problems of the large size of the communes and teams, egalitarianism and inadequate democratic and management systems. In February 1962, the Central Committee issued an official instruction, determining that the production team (i.e. the squad) should be the basic accounting unit of the people's commune. The Regulations on the Work of Rural People's Communes (Draft Amendment) was abbreviated as the "Sixty Articles on Agriculture".

<sup>166</sup> The Seventy Articles of Industry is a synonym for the Regulations on the Work of State-run Industrial Enterprises (Draft) issued by the Central Committee in September 1961. The document provided clear regulations and explanations on such important issues as planning management, technical management, labour management, wage management, rewards and employee welfare, economic accounting, enterprise finance, production cooperation, the responsibility system, the system of factory managers under the leadership of the Party Committee, trade unions and workers' congresses, and the work of the Party.

do any work that was too technically demanding, I could still do general work. I drove a lathe and could operate a grinder independently, but the milling machine was too difficult for me to do. The machine tools used at the Erqi rolling stock factory were all imported and were relatively sophisticated, while the ones used here were still domestically produced and were relatively simple to use. The master workers took a look, "Hey, you're a pro!" That's how the workers became very close to me. When I was at the Erqi factory, I was also the branch secretary of the workshop, so I knew how to get along with the workers, especially the older workers. This experience came in handy at this time.

I befriended an accountant in the workshop and soon the two of us became like brothers. Once we were having dinner together and when he saw my distressed look, he asked me what was wrong. I said, "I really can't figure out what the real situation of this factory is, and I'm afraid I won't be able to complete the task of coming down to investigate". The accountant whispered to me, "If you want to know the real situation of the factory, you should go to the bank". I asked, "What do you need the bank for?" He said, "The bank knows exactly how much profit or loss the factory is making, otherwise how can it lend you money?"

Hearing the accountant's words, my mind lit up. The bank was in charge of the money, the factories turned in their profits and paid their salaries, all of which had to go through the bank. I later learnt that the main business of a bank at that time was to manage the money of enterprises and institutions, and a bank did not just manage one or two factories, it managed many units in its area. The deposits of the people were just a small matter of piggybacking. The procedure for handling the people's deposits was complicated and less profitable. In contrast, if you lend money to a company, you can lend the state's money to the company, and you can earn interest on it, and you can make high profits.

I went to the city and obtained a letter of introduction and went to the bank to investigate, and that cleared up all the problems. I found out where the profits of the factory were generated; how the losses of the factory were caused; what the factory did after the losses were incurred: what was done in the accounts. The bank told me everything. For example, if there was a problem with the quality of a certain batch of products, and there are defective or scrap products, the factory would discuss with the bank how to write off the account and spread the losses elsewhere. But in this way, it was actually the country that suffered the loss.

Once I had sorted out the problem from the bank, I went to the factory manager and I asked him what he had done with one batch of products and why it didn't show up in the accounts. The factory manager was stunned to hear this and looked at me half-heartedly. He had long known from the workers that I often worked with them and that I could run the machine tools. But he thought that there was no way that I could have learned this from the workers. I didn't tell him that I had been to the bank either. So he couldn't figure out exactly how I had found out about their losses. Seeing that it was no longer possible to hide things, and knowing that I was from the Centre, he simply stopped hiding things and he told me how he had written off the accounts and made false profits. After he finished, he said, "Since you already know, I'm probably at the end of my rope and will be removed from my job". I said to him, "I am only a small cadre, but since you have told me the honest truth, I can guarantee that you will not be dismissed at least during my working life. If you are removed from your job in the future, I will go to the secretary of the municipal party committee to intercede on your behalf".

I later learned that there were many industrial companies back then that were making blind statements about their achievements. It all looked good on the books, but many of them were false.

I looked up the relevant information and found that our wastage rate at that time was high, even when compared with the Soviet Union and Eastern European countries, we were no match. Many products were scrapped and the country lost a lot of money, but this was not reflected in the accounts, and what was reported was still a great achievement. This situation was not just a problem for individual factories.

I reported what I had investigated to Chen Boda. When Chen Boda heard that we had investigated the real situation, he praised us. He asked me how I had investigated it and I told him the process before and after. Chai Mo said, "Why didn't you tell us earlier, we could have investigated like this". I said, "We didn't have a meeting together, so I didn't have a chance to tell you, and I didn't know if I could find out the problem before I went to the bank to investigate". He said, "Then you should have informed us first. I said, "I didn't know where you were either". In fact, I thought at the time that they were old cadres and big cadres, so they must be more experienced and resourceful than me. I was only worried about what to do if I couldn't find out the problem myself. I didn't even think of informing them. Chen Boda thought my idea of finding a breakthrough from the bank was a good one, and after that he also had to go to the bank when he went to investigate the factories himself. This is nothing new now, everyone knows that banks are important, but at that time the relationship between enterprises and banks was not really well known.

The Tianjin investigation lasted several months, and by the end of 1961, we had concluded our investigation and returned to Zhongnanhai. Chen Boda asked me to draft a report on the Tianjin industrial investigation, and I wrote about all the problems I had found. This report was also approved by the Chairman. The "Seventy Articles of Industry", which was later formulated, also referred to our report on the Tianjin industrial survey. Bo Yibo said that we had investigated many things that no one else had investigated, and he admitted that some of the achievements announced at that time in the industrial crossroads had been exaggerated.

But I felt then that when Chairman Mao was formulating the Seventy Articles of Industry, his main concern was the question of how to make the workers really be the masters of their own house in the factories. And in no way did he want to work out a set of methods to regulate the workers. He did not want to make the workers' labour too stressful, as he said later when he gave the "May 7 Directive"<sup>167</sup>. At that time, a cadre of the East China Bureau wrote a letter to the Chairman, saying that a system of monitoring and corresponding institutions should be set up in factories with the participation of workers, and that if the factories were run well, they should be linked to the interests of workers. The Chairman attached great importance to his opinion and instructed that someone should be found to study it. At that time, Chen Boda also initiated a criticism of the "piece-rate wage", which he considered to be the "Tyro system"<sup>168</sup> of capitalist exploitation of workers. This caused some controversy, but it was later dropped.

## **2. The relationship between Chen Boda, Hu Qiaomu and Tian Jiaying**

During this period, I had more direct contact with Chen Boda, as he was in charge of all three groups and I was often asked to report to him on my work. However, I inadvertently found that whenever I went to report to Chen Boda, Tian Jiaying was not happy. By then there was already a great deal of conflict between the two of them. I was caught between them and was in a difficult position to deal

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<sup>167</sup> Mao Zedong's instruction to Lin Biao of May 7, 1966 – see [Notes On The Report Of Further Improving The Army's Agricultural Work By The Rear Service Department Of The Military Commission \(marxists.org\)](https://www.marxists.org/notes-on-the-report-of-further-improving-the-armys-agricultural-work-by-the-rear-service-department-of-the-military-commission/)

<sup>168</sup> This refers to the system of low wages and poor conditions for apprentices and novice workers that is common under capitalism.

with. Tian Jiaying had always been good to me before, but in this investigation he kept picking on me, saying that I had done a bad job whenever I was acknowledged and supported by Chen Boda.

Chen Boda, Hu Qiaomu and Tian Jiaying, as secretaries to Chairman Mao, were all subjected to verbose comments at the Lushan meeting because they all sided with Peng Dehuai, but the Chairman bailed them out. Chen Boda immediately turned around then, and he wrote a critique of Peng Dehuai at Lushan, which was even quoted by the Chairman. Hu Qiaomu also wrote a critique of Peng Dehuai. But from the Lushan meeting onwards, Hu Qiaomu's health had been poor. He also had trouble sleeping all the time, probably because he was frightened and agitated. He used to be a fast writer, but at that time he found it hard to write even small things. He remained in this state until after the Cultural Revolution. The Chairman, however, was very concerned about him and even wrote to him to comfort him, telling him to put down his work, get well and rest. Hu Qiaomu and Tian Jiaying had a very good relationship. However, both of them were not on good terms with Chen Boda, and they always talked badly about Chen Boda when they bumped into each other

Chen Boda was a small-minded man, and his initial conflict with Tian Jiaying was due to the fact that the Chairman had originally asked Chen Boda to draft his closing speech for the Eighth National Congress, but Chen Boda quoted from the scriptures and wrote a long speech, which the Chairman was not satisfied with after reading it several times. As a closing speech, an outline would have been sufficient. Later, the chairman asked Tian Jiaying to rewrite it, and the chairman was satisfied with the closing speech drafted by Tian Jiaying. In this way, Chen Boyda became very jealous of Tian Jiaying.

Tian Jiaying told me that Chen Boda treated the people under his command very badly, like slaves. Yao Yi and Shi Jingtang, Chen Boda's secretaries, were scolded by him day in and day out. When they were finally transferred, Chen Boda wrote very bad appraisals of them. Chai Mo also belonged to Chen Boda's leadership, but his relationship with Chen Boda was not good either, as he always ran to Tian Jiaying, with whom he got along well. Chen Boda also held a grudge against Chai Mo for this reason.

## **2. Organising the “Reports from the Masses”**

At the end of 1961, after my participation in the Tianjin survey, I returned to the secretary's office in Zhongnanhai. When discussing my work arrangements, Tian Jiaying said that since Qi Benyu had been to the countryside, and had learned about the factories, and Chairman Mao had said that he was a good comrade, he should be allowed to do some heavy work, something more comprehensive in nature. Gong Ruying, a subordinate of Gong Zirong, the executive deputy director of the Central Office, told me that Gong also suggested that Qi Benyu was a very good person and that he should be given more responsibilities.

The secretary's office at that time still had to collate the letters and visits from the public every day as usual, summarise them and submit them to the Chairman in a report. In the past, when I was in the secretary's office, I usually did the summarising work. However, at that time, we often encountered a problem. After reading the reports we sent to the Chairman relaying the views of the public, he would often give his direct instructions on them. The more we sent them, the more comments the Chairman would make. In this way, not only did Liu Shaoqi and Yang Shangkun and the others have opinions, but even Premier Zhou sometimes had opinions. This was because many things they did not know yet were already known to the Chairman, and once the Chairman gave his instructions, this made them feel very passive. This was especially true after the Chairman

announced his retirement to the second line in early 1959. This contradiction became even more obvious.

At this time, Tian Jiaying and his team discussed the idea of having a publication in the secretary's office, in which all the opinions expressed by the masses in their letters and visits would be collected and reflected in a comprehensive manner, and then the publication would be distributed to the main central leaders.

Tian Jiaying reported his idea for the publication and the person he proposed to run it to Chairman Mao, who immediately agreed to it.

After discussion between Tian Jiaying and several leaders of the secretary's office, it was decided that the name of the publication would be "Reports from the Masses" and it was decided that I would be responsible for running the publication.

At that time there were two other publications in the Central Office, one was called "Situation Briefing", which was mainly a summary of the important contents of reports from various regions and central ministries to the Central Committee. That was compiled by the Rear Research Office; the other publication was the "Security Bulletin" compiled by the Security Office, which was mainly a list of important messages received and sent every day. They all had a special team and a special staff to work on the publication. But when Tian Jiaying asked me to run this "Report from the Masses", I was the only one from start to finish. I was the editor-in-chief, the editor and the reporter, and I even did the proofreading myself. As for what to publish, Tian Jiaying also left it up to me to decide. He and I had a tacit agreement. He said, "You have to give me a heads up on important matters, and you can issue the rest on your own". He said to me, "You are now an important person in the secretary's office. Because of the "Eight Secretaries Incident", the Chairman called you a good comrade, you have become very famous in Zhongnanhai". In fact, I knew in my heart that the reason he asked me to issue the document was that he would have room to manoeuvre in case anything went wrong. Sure enough, when Yang Shangkun later criticised Tian Jiaying several times over the matter of the "Reports of the Masses" (as mentioned in Yang Shangkun's diary), Tian Jiaying blamed it all on me. I was regarded as a "prick" by Yang Shangkun at that time, and I had confronted him during the "Eight Secretaries Incident", so I was a bit of a headache for him, and since I was not his direct subordinate, he could not come to me directly. Yang Shangkun had proposed many times that he should review the manuscript, but he had only paid lip service to the idea and had not made a formal decision, so I had not bothered with it. I didn't bother with it, because if it was reviewed by him, what else could be published?

I asked Chen Bingzhen (who was by then the Deputy Director of the Secretary's Office) to inscribe the title, but he said that it was a publication for the main leaders of the Central Government and that it would be inappropriate for him to do so, and he suggested the use of a collection of characters from ancient inscriptions. As a result, he chose a collection of characters in clerical script for the title.

It was an irregular publication, usually four pages long, and was published when it was full. Sometimes the content was not full, so I put in some "zero news", which was just one or two sentences. Sometimes it added up to eight pages when there was more content. And when there was an important situation, I could publish it immediately. So, usually, one issue was published in three days, or sometimes in a week. If there was a concentration of letters from the public, an issue could be published in a day or two, or even a few issues a day.

The publications were printed by the "Security Printing Factory" of the Office of the Premier, which was located right next to Zhongnanhai. Tian Jiaying had contacted the printing factory and as long as my signature was on it, the factory would start printing. Once the factory had finished printing, it was handed over to the Secretariat for dispatch.

The publications are divided into two types, numbered and unnumbered, with the numbered ones stating: Mainly to: Chairman, Liu Shaoqi, Zhu De, Premier and other members of the Standing Committee of the Central Politburo; Submissions: Members of the Central Politburo; Secretaries of the Central Secretariat were not all sent a copy. Those that were not numbered were sent to the Chairman only, or to the Chairman, Liu Shaoqi and the Premier only.

After the Chairman and other key central leaders had read the report, if they had given instructions on it, the General Office of the Central Government would immediately copy the instructions, together with the report in the publication, and send it to the corresponding ministries or provinces or municipalities. The ministries, provinces and municipalities would quickly deal with the matter and solve the problem after receiving it.

After the first few issues came out, I approached Lin Ke and asked him to tell the Chairman that instead of sending letters from the public, I would now send them to "Reports from the Masses". Unexpectedly, the Chairman gave three instructions in a row on the first few issues of the "Reports from the Masses". This instantly made the publication very influential. Later, I asked Lin Ke if the Chairman often read "Reports from the Masses". Lin Ke said, "You don't have to ask, you can't even send one issue less, or the Chairman will come to remind you". During the Cultural Revolution, Ye Qun also told me that Lin Biao also read every issue of "Reports from the Masses", not missing a single issue. If he didn't see it for a few days, he would ask: "Where is "Reports from the Masses"?"

Since the publication of "Reports from the Masses", various sections in the secretary's office would send me letters they received from the public that they considered important; sometimes Tian Jiaying would also forward me some letters that he considered important; even Yang Shangkun used to ask his secretary to send me materials to be published in "Reports from the Masses". Even though Yang Shangkun was very critical of the publication I was running, when he saw that Chairman Mao often gave instructions in the publication, he knew that it would be quicker to solve problems through this channel than any other.

At that time, I also used to go around to the various sections of the secretary's office to see what was important. Sometimes, in order to better understand the problems reflected in the people's letters, I even went alone to the people reporting the problems to find out what was going on in the field.

On one occasion, tanners from the Benxi area wrote to me, complaining that the price of raw materials was now rising very sharply, but the authorities were controlling the price of leather products very tightly, making their production and livelihood difficult. I learnt that they were all living in an inn. I went alone to that hostel and stayed with them to understand their situation. I later put the situation in the "Reports from the Masses" and the problem was soon solved. Those tanners all expressed their great gratitude to me.

### **3. Chairman Mao hates corruption and supports the "Report from the Masses" in revealing the specialization of bureaucracy within the party**

As I said earlier, before the launch of the publication, there was already a "Report on the Situation" in the rear building of the Central Office, which was hosted by Yang Shangkun and his team, and the Chairman often read it. However, when Tian Jiaying sent up the recommendation on the "Reports from the Masses" he wanted to start, the Chairman immediately gave his approval. Moreover, after the publication, Chairman Mao read every issue, and he gave more instructions to "Report from the Masses" than to "Report on the Situation". This shows that the influence of this small publication soon surpassed that of the "Situation".

Tan Zhenlin's wife, Ge Huimin, was so powerful that no one dared to mess with her. Tan Zhenlin was the Vice Premier in charge of agriculture at the time and enjoyed special provisions from the head of the government, but Ge Huimin was not satisfied with the special provisions and used the head's special military plane to go to the countryside to purchase live chickens. When she was not allowed to take live chickens on the plane, Ge Huimin insisted that it was the chief's request and they had to be transported. The live chickens were transported in a basket, and when they got off the plane, they had to return the basket to the people, but when they were taking the chickens out of the basket, they lost their grip and they flew all over the airport. This was a big problem, because airports are most afraid of flying things, and if a chicken got into the engine of a plane, the plane would be in trouble. She told the security guards to go and catch them, and a large group of people ended up catching the chickens inside the airport, making a big joke of it.

A letter from the airport brought the matter to the attention of the Central General Office. When the letter reached me, I checked it out and found that it was Tan Zhenlin's wife, Ge Huimin. She was a petty person who hid good things at home from the waiters and refused to let them eat the good food, and even scolded them. The waiters wrote a letter to Chairman Mao, and the secretary also wrote a letter to her, telling her that she had strayed too far from Chairman Mao's words about hard work and the need for cadres to be role models. In fact, Ge Huimin had long been famous for her chattering and chirping, and the leaders of the Central Committee knew about it, as did Chairman Mao, who said that "Tan Zhenlin was under the dictatorship of his wife".

I put together the materials reflecting on Ge Huimin and wrote two sheets of paper under the heading "People's views on Comrade Ge Huimin". I also had a problem with Tan Zhenlin. What kind of agriculture had he managed? He was the one who wrote the reports on the thousands and tens of thousands of kilograms of output. First of all, he should come out and take responsibility. When there are difficulties, he himself avoided hard work. I'm afraid his wife went to get chickens and ducks, and he agreed to that too. Is that right? Even if he didn't agree to it, he should have taken the initiative to take charge of it.

Because a specific person was involved, higher-level approval was required before posting it. I first contacted Tian Jiaying and told him that if this thing is to be posted, Boss Tan might have a problem with you (in those days, you didn't call him Tan Zhenlin, you called him Boss Tan). Tian Jiaying said he was also concerned about this, but he also had strong feelings about Ge Huimin, and he was willing to publish it because she had created so many unseemly things. I said, then it is registered? He hesitated for a while and said it was a good idea to find Gong Zirong again, and he did not approve it. Gong Zirong was the party secretary of the General Office at that time, and was transferred from the Premier. Yang Shangkun was in charge of the major issues in the office, but Gong Zirong was in charge of everything else. The first thing you need to do is to get a good idea of what you are doing. When I thought about it, I said forget it, I won't ask, I'll just go ahead.

Within a few days after it was published, word spread, and Zhongnanhai all knew that the public had denounced Ge Huimin, and they all clapped their hands and raised their thumbs up when they saw

me, meaning: you dared to touch Ge Huimin, good job! At that time, I had to report to the central government about any provincial party secretary who had done something out of the ordinary, and it was not uncommon to see it published. But this Ge Huimin's husband was Boss Tan, higher than a provincial party secretary, and although the people in Zhongnanhai had opinions about her, no one had dared touch her. Tan Zhenlin was the Secretary of the Secretariat and had a copy of the "Reports from the Masses" himself. According to others, Ge Huimin bawled when she saw it and made a scene in the courtyard, saying that what had been published in the "Reports from the Masses" was untrue. But the adults and children in Zhongnanhai were all happy, and even those who brought food to her house and cleaned it all knew about it and felt breathless.

At that time, some very senior leaders of the Gongjiaokou often ate and drank a lot, and talked nonsense when they were drunk, so the public wrote to Chairman Mao about it and we also published it all. Some provincial leaders gambled, lost money and borrowed money from their secretaries. These reflections of privilege and seeking privileges were particularly shocking to everyone. Looking at these examples, one can see why the top echelons of the Central Government were eager to read the "Reports from the Masses", and people like Lin Biao did not miss a single issue.

Gong Zirong was a supporter of opposing privileged corruption at that time, and was very kind to me, telling me to emulate Black Old Bag (Lord Bao)<sup>169</sup> and to be iron-faced when I saw something unreasonable. He said that in this country of ours now, an institution just like this for reporting all these things is missing, and this thing that you run has taken on such a role. Because of this, I had a good impression of him. However, it was during the Cultural Revolution that I learned that Gong Zirong had a lot of dealings with Liu Shaoqi, and that many of the things that happened to bring down Liu Shaoqi involved him. Wang Dongxing wanted to bring down Gong Zirong, and he stepped down.

At that time, Xi Zhongxun<sup>170</sup> was the Vice Premier and Secretary General of the State Council. He was very much in line with the Chairman's thinking and Chairman Mao valued him so much that he was specially transferred to head the Central Propaganda Department. Xi Zhongxun was also supportive of my boldness in running "Reports from the Masses", and not only did he support it, he also sent people to me to learn from my experience.

In my work diary, I have recorded two other incidents:

On May 9, 1962, Xu (Xu Ming, then Deputy Secretary-General of the State Council) telegraphed: Comrade Xi Zhongxun thought that "Reports from the Masses" was well run and he read every issue.

He reads every issue. He circulated it to the Secretary General and the Deputy Secretary General. The last report to the Premier, the Premier has read and circulated among the comrades of the Central Committee. .... A phone call from the State Council in the afternoon: they are sending three directors to find out how we are doing with "Reports from

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<sup>169</sup> The Black Old Bag refers to Bao Zheng in the Song Dynasty. He was known for his strict law enforcement and people respected him as Lord Bao. In traditional Chinese opera, Lord Bao used black facial makeup, so "black old bag" refers to people who enforce the law impartially and are selfless.

<sup>170</sup> Xi Zhongxun (1913- 2002) was one of the main founders and leaders of the revolutionary base area in the Shaanxi-Gansu border area, the former vice premier of the State Council, the secretary of the 11th Central Committee of the Communist Party of China, the 12th Central Committee Member of the Politburo, Secretary of the Secretariat, and Vice-Chairman of the Standing Committee of the Fifth and Seventh National People's Congress. He is Xi Jinping's father.

the Masses". .....5 On 11 May, the State Council Secretary's Office came to see Chen, the deputy director, and three other people to find out how we were doing with "Reports from the Masses", and talked about five points.

Chairman Mao was also discerning when he transferred Xi Zhongxun specifically to manage the Central Propaganda Department (CAC). At that time, before the "Liu Zhidan" novel thing happened<sup>171</sup>, Xi Zhongxun managed the CAC so well that even Hu Qiaomu admired him and discreetly told Tian Jiaying that Xi Zhongxun's level was a notch higher than others. On the cultural front, he was a marshal and we were only generals.

Chairman Mao strongly hated corruption within the Party and supported the "Reports from the Masses" in exposing the seeing after of privileges within the Party. When Chairman Mao saw the briefing on Tan Zhenlin's wife Ge Huimin's use of a plane to buy live chickens, he immediately made a note on it to the effect that Comrade Tan Zhenlin must read it, and asked Comrade Tan Zhenlin to pay attention to its impact. Chairman Mao was asking Tan Zhenlin himself to educate Ge Huimin.

In a few days, Tan Zhenlin called Tian Jiaying and told him to "speak up if you have an opinion, you can't make people suffer like this". Tian Jiaying said he had been out of town and didn't know about it, and that he hadn't given the approval for its publication. From then on, Tan Zhenlin and I had a falling out. Later, during the Cultural Revolution, there was the "February Backlash" in 1967. Tan Zhenlin scolded me and the Central Cultural Revolution Group, and a large part of his scolding was to seek revenge from me.

Chairman Mao hated corrupt people all his life, so I can imagine why Chairman Mao supported the publication "Reports from the Masses", and read every issue, and often approved some articles. As we all know now, before entering the city in 1949, the Central Committee held the Second Plenary Session of the Seventh Central Committee, and Chairman Mao proposed that "we must maintain a modest, prudent, non-arrogant and non-impatient style, and we must maintain a style of hardship and simplicity" (the "two imperatives"). Chairman Mao also proposed that birthday celebrations and naming places in one's own name should not be allowed. All this was to prevent the Communist Party from becoming corrupt. All Chinese peasant revolutions in the past have failed because the peasant leaders metamorphosed into new landlords after the revolution was successful. The

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<sup>171</sup> This refers to a long biographical novel "Liu Zhidan" written by his sister-in-law Li Jiantong. She began writing it in early 1958 and when she had finished drafting it, asked Xi Zhongxun, who served as the chairman of the Shaanxi-Gansu Soviet government and then vice premier of the State Council, to review the manuscript of the novel. He objected to one part of the book where a proposal from Gao Gang was said to be correct, even though it had been opposed at the time by Mao. At the same time, the author also sent it to Zhou Yang, the vice minister in charge of literature and art of the Central Propaganda Department, for review. Zhou Yang believed that the novel was well written, could be published, and could also be made into a movie. In July and August 1962, the Central Committee held a central working meeting in Beidaihe, and further objections were raised to drafts of the novel, parts of which had begun to be serialised by "Workers Daily" and several other publications. In September, at a meeting of the Tenth Plenum of the Eighth Central Committee, Mao referred obliquely to the draft, saying "Writing novels is popular these days, isn't it? The use of novels for anti-Party activity is a great invention". When the Cultural Revolution ended and the capitalist-roaders seized power, "Liu Zhidan" was approved for publication and appeared in 1979. However, many of the old cadres who were still alive at that time thought that the novel was not in line with the facts and wrote to the central government to object to it. The central government entrusted Xi Zhongxun, who was born in the northwest, to handle it. In 1986, it was systematically reviewed at a symposium of historical scholars who recommended that it be withdrawn from circulation. This was done under instruction from Party General-Secretary Hu Yaobang. However, there were still people who wanted to use the novel to discredit the history of the Party under Mao's leadership. In 2009, Jiangxi Education Press republished the novel, with the words "First Large Public Offering" written on the cover.

peasant revolution led by Li Zicheng was typical. When this revolutionary peasant army entered Beijing, it turned itself into a new landlord and a new feudal ruling class. Li Zicheng himself was not corrupt, but he did not restrain the great generals Niu Jinxing and Liu Zongmin who were. These men were corrupt and went around robbing beautiful women and gold and silver treasures. It is said that Chen Yuanyuan was robbed by Liu Zongmin, while Niu Jinxing took many concubines, occupied a large house and sat in a palanquin, which was the behaviour of a landlord, while Niu Jinxing was originally from the landlord class. Although Chiang Kai-shek's senior Guomindang officials all seemed to be bourgeois, educated, cultured and sensible, they also followed the old path of Li Zicheng. After the end of the war, the Guomindang entered Shanghai and Nanjing, and everywhere they went, they engaged in the "five sons of Deng Ke"<sup>172</sup> (cars, houses, votes, women and positions), and as a result, the hearts of the people were lost, and they were driven to Taiwan by the clean and self-disciplined Communist Party. Therefore, Chairman Mao said that going to Beijing was to take a test, that we had to do well and pass the test, and never follow the old path of Li Zicheng and Chiang Kai-shek. At that time, he repeatedly reiterated this issue at many talks.

Chairman Mao was constantly referring to it, but there were always cadres who forgot all his calls as soon as they entered the city, or who actively relaxed their requirements and became corrupt, or who succumbed to the sugar-coated bullets. As mentioned in Chapter 4, Chairman Mao ordered Luo Ronghuan to deal with a group of army generals who had become "Niu Jinxing" and "Liu Zongmin". Soon afterwards, Chairman Mao launched the "Three Anti's and Five Anti's" campaign in late 1951 and early 1952. The "Three Against" campaign was against corruption, waste and bureaucracy within the Party; the "Five Against" campaign was against "bribery", "tax evasion", and "theft of state property", "cheating on government contracts", and "stealing of state economic information" in private enterprises, which all directly and explicitly reflected bourgeois wrongdoing. In the three counter-attacks, Chairman Mao resisted all kinds of pressure and executed Liu Qingshan and Zhang Zishan, two big cadres and two meritorious officials. In the Five Anti-corruption Campaigns, the masses were mobilised and the bourgeoisie was dealt a severe blow to all kinds of wrongdoings, with some of the most serious criminals being executed. The two campaigns did purify the Party, but the corruption within the Party did not die out; the corruption and degeneration of Gao Gang, which was exposed in 1954, is a typical example, but of course it was only incidental to the Gao Gang case, not the core of it.

In fact, there was not just one "Gao Gang" in the party, but many. These "Gao Gangs" did not take the initiative to restrain themselves either, just because Gao Gang was corrupt and lost his reputation. As I see it, Ye Jianying also had the same problem as "Gao Gang". Gao Gang was highly credited and the Chairman valued him; Ye Jianying saved the Central Committee and was also highly credited and the Chairman thanked him. However, Ye Jianying was the pampered son of a wealthy family, and he was constantly having affairs and changing wives too much. Gao Gang played with women illegally, a purely moral issue, while Ye Jianying played with women legally, covering up the moral issue. Ye Jianying had been divorced more times than he could remember. In 1957 during the party school rotation, his lover was also in the party school, and was my classmate, her surname then was Wu, and at that time was still beautiful, but he did not want her. Her birth name was Ye Xiangzhen, and she then cursed Ye Jianying "*laobuside*"<sup>173</sup>, playing with women, old immodest<sup>174</sup>,

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<sup>172</sup> A Song Dynasty idiom for the pursuit of extravagance and material gain.

<sup>173</sup> Literally, "old not dead", a derogatory term to describe an old and useless person.

<sup>174</sup> The term "old and immodest" is often used to describe older people who are not in behaving properly in old age, including old people who are flirtatious, cheeky and cranky, and so on. It can be used in either a derogatory or positive sense, but she was using it to attack him.

good at words<sup>175</sup>, he is very good ..... He is very good at it.". There were many more unpleasant words! Chairman Mao wouldn't have heard a thing about Ye Jianying, so as no one came forward to expose him, Chairman Mao couldn't do anything about him. Otherwise, wouldn't some people now say that there is another case of Chairman Mao persecuting an old revolutionary? Ye Jianying's family did not have a family portrait, and he later divorced and messed around, so he was probably all mixed up and muddle-headed. The Premier always supported Ye Jianying, and this is what I can't understand.

In times of hardship, the darker side of society and people are more likely to come to light. It is now generally known that during the three years of hardship, the Chairman himself did not even eat meat. This was supposed to be an exemplary act, requiring the Party's leading cadres to be strict with themselves and to share the hardships of the people. Moreover, one of the objectives of Chairman Mao's survey at the end of 1960 was to make Party cadres more concerned about the lives of the people. But even after the Chairman's demonstration and the rise of the style of investigation, many people still took advantage of their privileges and tried desperately to find ways to enjoy themselves. Things like the gorging and drinking by cadres of the Gongjiaokou, the secretary of the provincial party committee asking his secretary to bill the public after losing money on gambling, and Tan Zhenlin and his wife transporting live chickens by plane, as published in the "Reports from the Masses", were only the cases reported by the masses, and the actual situation was more or even worse than these. Of course, realistically speaking, as Chairman Mao had always been firmly opposed to corruption within the Party and was constantly fighting corruption of all kinds since he entered the city, it is true that corruption and specialization within the Party at that time did not appear to be very serious on the whole. The use of privileges by Tan Zhenlin's wife, Ge Huimin, to get a few chickens and bring them back in a plane may seem like a trivial matter worth nothing compared to the seriousness of corruption in the Communist Party today among many officials of all sizes. But under the historical conditions of the time, in the eyes of the common people, it would have been almost as serious as the embezzlement of tens of millions of dollars now, that is, a very big thing. Preventing corruption is why Chairman Mao did not condone such things.

Ye Zilong was one of the five major secretaries of the Chairman, and was the head of the Secretary's Office. At that time, he often used the Chairman's reputation to get women in the Chairman's name. When he wanted to get a woman, he would tell her that "Chairman Mao wants to talk to you" and trick her away. This is what Li Yinqiao told me. I am not sure if this was the case, but based on various events at the time, I believe that Li Yinqiao was not talking nonsense. A chance incident brought all those things about him to light. A very beautiful girl was transferred from his security room, and he took possession of her for himself. When he returned, his car broke down on the road and he asked a passing truck to tow him, not daring to say that he was from the Central Government. The central government had asked him to deliver documents, but he could not be found, and when they checked the fleet's records, he transferred his car and left, saying that he had gone to Tianjin to deliver documents. The central government called Tianjin, which said Ye Zilong had not come to deliver the documents. Ye Zilong, who was the director of the Chairman's Office, had disappeared. This was a big deal. Was it the work of a Guomindang agent? The Central Committee and Tianjin were alerted, and a large number of police officers were sent from Tianjin to Beijing to search for them. It was verified to be Ye Zilong and his partner. He did not deliver the documents and the girl went out without an assignment, and things just fell apart. Later on, the Chairman asked for them to be investigated, and when other people revealed it, they found out a lot

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<sup>175</sup> It refers to people who always use a friendly appearance to conceal that they are really evil and dirty inside. Being good at deceiving others, in fact they always hurt others.

of things about Ye Zilong in terms of men and women. The Chairman was of course very unhappy about these things, so he left Ye Zilong out in the cold, and did not even look for him very much when he had something to do, but for Li Yinqiao and Xu Yefu.

Ye Zilong also once stole and sold a senior Zeiss camera, which was a gift from a foreign guest to the Chairman, and the Chairman did not take photographs, so he asked Ye Zilong to give it to the Xinhua News Agency, instead of giving it to the Xinhua News Agency, Ye Zilong took it out and sold it to an auction house. At that time, the auction house had very strict procedures for registration, and no one could use a false identity. A very famous senior photographer took a fancy to the camera, perhaps thinking that the owner was also a photographer and could tell him about it, so he checked who the owner was and found out that it was Ye Zilong from the Central General Office's Office of Security. Ye Zilong was not a photographer, so how could he have such a high-end camera? He brought the matter to Yang Shangkun's attention. Yang Shangkun was one of the famous "twenty-eight and a half Bolsheviks"<sup>176</sup>, but Ye Zilong never took Yang Shangkun seriously, so Yang Shangkun used this opportunity to mess with Ye Zilong's name.

In the spring of 1962, Chairman Mao sent him to Xinyang, Henan Province, to investigate the starvation of the people there. He went there, but the investigation was perfunctory; however, he was always there for the big meals and drinks. Worse still, he was so excited at night that he was looking for girls and having parties. These situations were reported to the Chairman by Lin Ke, who could no longer tolerate them. Ye Zilong was still just a lifestyle problem when he was messing around with women, and he didn't force them to do it, it was all voluntary. The things he did in Xinyang were typical of seeking special privileges and a big problem; taking out public property and selling it for money was a serious act of embezzlement, which was also a big problem at the time, and if it was an ordinary person, he would at least have been given a serious warning within the party or even detained. But after all, he was a Long March cadre, a veteran, and the Chairman was mindful of old times, so he was just transferred away from his side. Ye Zilong also had his memoirs published, but he only wrote about others, and did not mention anything about himself. There are still people who say that Ye Zilong was persecuted when he was transferred out of the Secretariat in 1962. If there was persecution, it was Yang Shangkun who persecuted him. Ye Zilong never took Yang Shangkun seriously, but this time he made a big mistake and was kicked out of the office by the Chairman. He went to Yang Shangkun in the Central Office and tried to find a position as deputy secretary of the Beijing Municipal Committee or a minister of a certain ministry. As a result, he was given a position as deputy director of the Beijing Light Industry Bureau. When Ye Zilong complained that he was a minor official, Yang Shangkun said, "It's good that you were not dealt with, but you still think you are small fry". If there was anyone who persecuted Ye Zilong, it was Yang Shangkun and no one else.

These things about Tan Zhenlin, Ye Jianying, Ye Zilong and the rest of them, I knew then. There are not many people and things I do not know about. Even people like Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping were seeking privileges during the difficult times. Liu Shaoqi moved three times in Zhongnanhai. The first time, he said not good enough when it was well restored; the second time, he said not good enough when he built a small villa in a hutong in Zhongnanhai; the third time, he was satisfied when he made a big courtyard behind Huaren Hall with a brand-new big garden. It was very luxurious, which is what the big landlords used to be like. Wang Guangmei was so happy to live there that she had to change into three sets of clothes every day, one each in the morning, midday and evening,

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<sup>176</sup> This refers to a group who met at the "Ten Day Conference" held at Sun Yat-sen University in the summer of 1929. They were led by Wang Ming and Zhang Wentian and opposed Mao Zedong's line on the development of the Chinese revolution, supporting the Comintern and Soviet Union instead.

and the couple often went out for walks. Liu Shaoqi just didn't understand Marxism-Leninism, or maybe he did, but he was just engaging in verbal Marxism-Leninism and didn't want to engage in real Marxism-Leninism because real Marxism-Leninism doesn't allow for privileges. During the Cultural Revolution, Liu Shaoqi's secretary revealed: "..... During the difficult period, Liu Shaoqi ate crabs, a little bit of yellow, and threw away the rest. He didn't eat it, but it was not good for us to eat it. If we didn't eat it, we had to throw it away." Liu Shaoqi's whole family lived this life, it was hard times! As for Deng Xiaoping, he was indeed very capable, but many guards in Zhongnanhai knew that he always talked about enjoying himself. This side of him was unknown to Chairman Mao. His family were large landowners who, according to legend, he had to leave home. It is said that this was such a big deal at the time that he could not return home and went to France. The Communist Party "talks about the theory of class status, but not only about class status, but also about individual performance". What about Deng Xiaoping's personal performance? Zhang Yunyi revealed that at the critical moment of the Youjiang River Uprising<sup>177</sup>, he left the army without saying anything, putting the success or failure of the revolution and the lives of many uprising fighters at risk, and now he defends himself by saying that he went to the Central Committee to report on his work. How can such a person possibly share the suffering of the common people? In 1952, when the Chairman transferred the "Five Secretaries" to Beijing and made Deng Xiaoping the General Secretary, many people underneath him were not convinced and thought he was no good. I was also skeptical, but after attending one of his meetings, I realized that this man was very powerful and could grasp the outline of issues. At that meeting, Li Fuchun chaired and I was the recorder of the meeting. The issues to be addressed at the meeting were so confusing that I could not even record them, but the few issues that Deng Xiaoping grasped in outline were the key issues. This took me by surprise. He was new to the Central Committee and was able to outline and focus on key issues, one of which was the scissors problem<sup>178</sup>. He said he knew that the peasants were losing out, but the problem could not be solved now. He made the case for why it couldn't be solved. After that meeting, I had a very good impression of him. Little did I know that he had corrupted and deteriorated so much in his life. In 1959, when the country was entering a difficult period, Chairman Mao and the Premier were very frugal, but Deng Xiaoping was still in the bee-keeping road<sup>179</sup> where there was a constant supply of big fish and meat, mountainous delicacies and seafood, and there were all kinds of entertainment facilities, rubbing, touching, washing and soaking everything, and the meeting hall that came out after the reform was built on that model of the bee-keeping road. Deng had actually degenerated into a corrupt bureaucrat at that time, but Chairman Mao did not know it yet.

In September 1962, Chairman Mao repelled the capitalist backlash of the "Three Freedoms and One Guarantee", and soon afterwards began promote the Socialist Education Movement (the Four Clean-

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<sup>177</sup> The Baise Uprising, also known as the Youjiang Uprising, was on December 11, 1929, when Deng Xiaoping, Zhang Yunyi, Lei Jingtian, and Wei Baqun held an uprising in Baise, Guangxi. They established the Youjiang Workers and Peasants Government, and the Seventh Army of the Chinese Workers' and Peasants' Red Army.

<sup>178</sup> The scissors problem refers to the difference between the price of industrial products and the price of agricultural products. When the latter is higher than the price of agricultural products then the shape of a graph plotting that difference has the shape of the scissors being opened. It shows the unequal exchange of the value of industrial and agricultural products. If the difference between the two becomes larger and larger, it is called expanding the scissors; otherwise, it is called narrowing the scissors.

<sup>179</sup> The beekeeping road is an ordinary alley among countless alleys (hutongs) in Beijing. It is located on the opposite side of the Houmen (Rear Door) Road in Zhongnanhai, on the west side of the Beijing Library (Old Library). In this alley, there is a large courtyard. There are no signs or other signs at the door, and there is no name for both inside and outside. It was a place approved by the State Council in 1958 for central leaders to meet, meet guests, and rest and relax after intense work. Since only cadres at or above the deputy ministerial level could enter at that time, in people's minds, this courtyard was also covered with a veil of mystery. Since there was no name, "beekeeping" became the folk name for this mysterious courtyard.

ups)<sup>180</sup> and oppose the capitalist road. This was closely related to the fact that cadres at all levels in the Party were still engaging in seeking special privileges at a time when the country was at its most difficult. The President raised the issue of preventing corruption when he was rectifying the situation in Yan'an, drawing on Guo Moruo's "The 300 Years' Sacrifice of Jiashen"<sup>181</sup>, and he said it again and again when he entered the city, and even the guards knew it and remembered it: we are entering the city to take a test, don't be Li Zicheng or Liu Zongmin, engaging in corruption will get you thrown out. Li Zicheng's army entered the city to rob beautiful women and gold and silver treasures and were driven out. I studied this history later on, but Guo Moruo did not actually go into much detail about it. The Chairman was playing on his title, warning "don't engage in corruption and be driven out". But not many Party cadres understood the Chairman's deeper meaning. At that time, the Chairman had not yet developed the theory of "continuing revolution under the dictatorship of the proletariat", but he was acting in accordance with this idea, and he had already started to think about this issue in his mind. The Chairman once said that there were not many people in the Party who understood Marxism-Leninism, but at that time I thought the Chairman had gone too far and did not think he was right. Liu Shaoqi, Zhou Enlai, Deng Xiaoping, Chen Boda, Hu Qiaomu, Tian Jiaying and so many other members of the Central Committee, so many people, how could there be no one who knew Marx and Lenin? It was only later, after the Cultural Revolution, that I really realised the profundity of this teaching of the Chairman. This too was an afterthought.

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<sup>180</sup> The Socialist Education Movement was a broad propaganda campaign aimed at practically the whole population. It was ideologically based on the writings of Mao Zedong and thus initiated a novel type of general campaign in which altruism, courage, perseverance and confidence in the building of socialism were highlighted. The movement was initiated in 1962 and lasted until the beginning of the Cultural Revolution. It was also known as the Four Cleanups Movement, meaning that bourgeois influence had to be removed from politics, economy, organization, and ideology.

<sup>181</sup> Guo Moruo published "The Three Hundred Years Sacrifice of Jiashen" on March 19, 1944 to tell the story of, and explain the reasons for, the demise of the Ming Dynasty for future generations to learn from.

## **Chapter 13: The 7,000-strong conference and the struggle between the two paths that emerged within the party after the conference**

1. The Address to the General Assembly of the 7,000-person conference
2. Participating in a panel discussion
3. Survey of deaths from starvation in various places
4. On the timing and causes of the deaths from starvation
5. Disagreements within the Party after the 7,000 Cadres' Conference
6. The struggle between the two paths within the Party over the issue of "the household contract responsibility system"

### **1. The Address to the General Assembly of the 7,000-person conference**

In January 1962, shortly after I had organized "Reports from the Masses", the Central Government convened a conference of 7,000 people, and Gong Zirong informed me that I would be present at the conference in my capacity as editor-in-chief of "Reports".

The main venue of the conference was Huairen Hall in Zhongnanhai. On the first day, Liu Shaoqi was the one who spoke at the conference. However, Liu Shaoqi only made an oral address to the congress that day. The report he made to the congress on behalf of the Central Committee was issued to the congress delegates beforehand and was not read out at the congress.

In his speech, Liu Shaoqi did not talk about what he himself had done and said during the Great Leap Forward. Instead, he said, under the pretext of remarks by people of a certain place, that the cause of the "three years of economic difficulties" was "three parts natural disaster and seven parts man-made disaster". When it came to the responsibility, he only said that the central government should bear all the responsibility, but did not say anything about his own responsibility. This gave a clear impression at the meeting that he had put the blame on Chairman Mao. In particular, when he spoke excitedly, he looked impassioned, as if the mistakes were all someone else's and he was the one to correct them. I was there to hear this and I felt very uncomfortable. During Liu Shaoqi's speech, there was a lot of whispering and noise everywhere in the conference hall.

As Liu Shaoqi's speech was oral, later after the 7,000-strong congress there was a document from the central government in which the speeches of the central leadership at the congress were compiled, and when I looked at it, all the harsh words Liu Shaoqi said at the congress were no longer there.

I later learnt that Liu Shaoqi's behaviour was consistent. During the period of Wang Ming's left-wing opportunism, Liu Shaoqi also behaved in a similarly "left" manner. In the nine articles written by Chairman Mao to criticise Wang Ming's "left" opportunism, Hu Fu (that is, Liu Shaoqi) was named. But when it came to the Yan'an Rectification, he was just as happy as if nothing had happened to him, and he did not mention his own mistakes at that time. Later, after the adoption of the May 16 Circular, he said that the "ambitious man like Khrushchev who is sleeping beside us" mentioned in the May 16 Circular was Zhu De, and criticized him at a meeting of the Central Committee.

Immediately afterwards, Lin Biao spoke at the conference the next day. I was very impressed by Lin Biao's speech that day. At that time, Lin Biao was holding a few pieces of scripted paper in his hand,

but he did not read from the paper, but spoke off the cuff. Lin Biao's voice was very loud and he did not look sick at all. After he had said a few words, he immediately said that it was not Chairman Mao who had made mistakes, but we ourselves who had made mistakes. Do you think there was anything that Chairman Mao had not warned us about beforehand? It was all because we did not follow his advice that we made mistakes and encountered difficulties. He said that Chairman Mao was the first to tell us to correct the "communist wind", and it was also Chairman Mao who first discovered and corrected the misrepresentation of grain production. He then went on to say that history had proved that where we had followed Chairman Mao's instructions, we had made achievements and won; where we had not followed Chairman Mao's instructions, we had made mistakes and encountered difficulties. He spoke these lines so powerfully that the whole audience was silent. The effect I felt when I was there listening to it was much stronger than when I later saw it printed in a document, which was in contrast to the atmosphere in the room when Liu Shaoqi spoke. From then on, Lin Biao's prestige in the Party was greatly enhanced.

A few days later, Chairman Mao addressed the conference. As usual, Chairman Mao's speech was high-minded and erudite; his language was vivid and humorous. The mood of everyone at the meeting rose and fell with his speech, sometimes with laughter and sometimes in silence. Chairman Mao said that he was the first one to take responsibility for all the mistakes made by the Central Committee because he was the Chairman of the Party Central Committee. All those present were moved to listen. The theme of Chairman Mao's speech was the need to strengthen democratic centralism within the Party.

Why did Chairman Mao emphasize this issue at this time? It had been more than ten years since the founding of the country, and the first few years had gone smoothly. The key leaders at all levels of the Party and the State at that time had basically fought out of a long war, and many of them were highly decorated and ideologically enlightened. But many of them were inexperienced in the running of state power and in organising large-scale economic construction, and had no knowledge of economic management or science and technology, and some even had a very low level of education. What they did have was battlefield experience and experience of managing troops, and at best experience of working with the masses in the base areas. But with such revolutionary enthusiasm and drive, they managed to achieve great things. When Chairman Mao asked Tian Jiaying to draft the opening speech of the 8th National Congress in 1956, the central message was that we should not be proud of our achievements. After the climax of the Great Leap Forward and the trough of the Three Years' Difficult Period, these problems of inexperience and lack of knowledge in management and technology were fully manifested. Like the "commandism" and "arbitrariness" during the Great Leap Forward, some of these manifestations were not only naive but even ignorant. But you can't say he was deliberately trying to spoil things, but that's what he'd always done before on the battlefield. On the battlefield, you go against the objective laws, and that is where you will see victory or defeat immediately, and you will see the consequences immediately. But in economic construction, if you go against the objective law, you will not know the result immediately, and it may take some time before you can taste it. Therefore, the "Great Leap Forward" and the "Three Years' Natural Disaster" were a serious lesson for the whole Party, including Chairman Mao. However, regarding the mistakes made during the Great Leap Forward, Chairman Mao always believed that all of us had good intentions, that we wanted to do socialism, and that we were eager to get the country out of its economic backwardness. Therefore, when Peng Dehuai wanted to elevate it to a "line struggle" at the Lushan meeting, Chairman Mao considered it a right-wing opportunist line that sought to split the Party. Therefore, at the meeting of the 7,000 people (the vast majority of whom were either Red Army commanders or veteran anti-Japanese cadres), Chairman Mao mainly stressed the need to strengthen democracy within the Party, to overcome

bureaucracy and to strengthen democratic centralism within the Party. Chairman Mao took the initiative to assume personal responsibility on behalf of the Central Committee, mainly in order not to hold those under him responsible, but to allow everyone to draw lessons from mistakes and failures.

## 2. Participating in a panel discussion

I was present at the meeting in my capacity as editor-in-chief of "Reports from the Masses". At the same time, the Zhongnanhai Rear Research Office's "Situation Briefing" sent an editor named Wang Qinglin to sit in on the meeting with me. The two of us were allowed to go to each group at will and participate in observing their group discussions, as this would facilitate us to reflect what we had learned to the central leadership in a timely manner.

Because Anhui had so many problems, when times were difficult it suffered the most deaths and sent the most letters from the public. That is why I paid special attention to the discussions of the Anhui group and went to their group discussions the most often. At the discussions of the Anhui group, I saw with my own eyes that the local party secretaries and county party secretaries who attended the meetings were furious with Zeng Xisheng<sup>182</sup>, accusing him of misrepresenting the achievements of the Great Leap Forward and persecuting the cadres who resisted his "boastful style"; and that when there was a famine later, and the masses had no food to eat and were starving to death, he was very angry with them. When there was a famine and the masses had no food to eat and were starving to death, he ordered the news to be blocked from being reported; and if anyone told the truth, he dealt them a brutal blow, not only by forcefully reprimanding them, but also by branding some of them as anti-Party groups or anti-Party elements. It is impossible to describe the excitement of those county party secretaries when they criticised Zeng Xisheng. A few of them almost rushed to fight him when they got so excited, as if they wanted to eat his flesh. Decades have passed, but that scene is still as clear in my mind as it was then.

After I attended the panel discussion, I reported what I had heard through the "situation report". Liu Shaoqi was also aware of the reports, and he heard that some people were afraid to speak at the meeting because Zeng Xisheng himself was present at the group's discussion. Later, when the Anhui group met again, Liu Shaoqi did not allow Zeng Xisheng to attend. This led to more heated speeches at later group meetings. Some even proposed to expel Zeng Xisheng from the Party and send him to reform through labour. This demand was made in all the localities and counties, and no one raised

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<sup>182</sup> Zeng Xisheng (1904 –1968) joined the Chinese Socialist Youth League in 1922. In July 1925, he participated in the Northern Expedition and served as regiment instructor of the Eighth Army of the Guomindang's National Revolutionary Army. In April 1927 Chiang Kai-shek began his massacre of the Communists, and this was followed on July 15 by his rival for GMD leadership in Wuhan, Wang Jingwei. Following the latter event, Zeng Xisheng joined the Communist Party of China and secretly engaged in military movement in Hankou. In the winter of 1931, he entered the Jiangxi Central Soviet Area and served as the reconnaissance section chief of the Red Army Command. He was the first Communist Party of China Committee Secretary of Anhui Province and also its 1st governor after the founding of the People's Republic of China. In 1956, he was elected as a member of the Eighth Central Committee of the Communist Party of China. After the start of the "Cultural Revolution" in 1966, he was severely criticized. He died of illness in Beijing on July 15, 1968. On July 18, 1978, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China held a memorial service in Beijing to rehabilitate him. After the Third Plenary Session of the Eleventh Central Committee of the Communist Party of China, the "responsibility field" was further developed and promoted in rural China in the form of a household contract responsibility system, which opened the prelude to China's institutional reform.

any objections. When Liu Shaoqi found out about it, he said, "Don't talk about this issue, Zeng Xisheng has done special merits to the Party, so he cannot be so casually expelled from the Party".

I learned from some old comrades that Zeng Xisheng was in charge of the radio station during the Long March, and that he was the leader in breaking the codes for the telegrams sent and received by the Guomindang army. He was a very clever man, and he was often able to break codes that others could not. At that time, some people even joked that this Zeng Xisheng must have been sent by the Guomindang, otherwise how could he know everything? Zeng Xisheng was later transferred from the intelligence department of the army to become the secretary of the provincial party committee. He was such a smart man and an old revolutionary, how could he not care about the starvation of so many ordinary people and brand those who opposed his arrogance and boastfulness as an anti-Party group? It is evident that once one's status changes, people are prone to change.

At the 7,000 Cadre's Conference, an important part of the meeting was tracking down the deaths from starvation during the "Three Years of Difficulty". Chairman Mao said at the conference that provinces and cities where people had died of starvation should be inspected, and they should be instructed to report on the implementation of living arrangements for the masses. If any place where people were starving to death did not report it, or if they saw people starving to death and did not care, they would be severely punished. He also re-emphasised that it has always been our policy not to allow a single person to die of hunger.

During this meeting, Chairman Mao personally sent Ye Zilong and Lin Ke, who were working beside him, to Xinyang in Henan Province to investigate the situation of the deaths from starvation. The Central Committee sent Dong Biwu (Dong was then the Secretary of the Central Supervisory Commission) to personally lead a mission to Anhui to investigate how many people had actually died of starvation. However, Zeng Xisheng tried to cover up the truth by all means. The delegates from Anhui who attended the meeting revealed that the local government had gathered all the starving villagers from the places where the Central Committee's investigation mission was likely to go into a few remote villages and supplied them with some thin rice to drink every day, before letting them go back when the Central Committee's investigation mission had left. The starving villagers had no problem with this as they could still get some food to eat after being gathered together. The investigation team sent by the Central Government was not able to find out the whole truth.

As soon as the 7,000 Cadres Conference was over, the Central Committee decided to transfer Zeng Xisheng out of Anhui, leaving him to become the second secretary of the East China Bureau, effectively sitting idle. The Central Committee decided to transfer Li Baohua to become the Provincial Party Secretary of Anhui. Li Baohua was a man with communist ideals who was determined to follow the socialist path and insist on a collective economy. Chairman Mao was very attached to Li Baohua's father, Li Dazhao<sup>183</sup>, and he told us personally that Li was his teacher. Later, during the Cultural Revolution, I had a conversation with Li Baohua and he said that he was working on "responsible land"<sup>184</sup> in Anhui at that time, not on the "household contract responsibility

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<sup>183</sup> Li Dazhao (1889 –1927) was a Chinese intellectual who participated in the New Cultural Movement in the early years of the Republic of China, established in 1912. He co-founded the Communist Party of China with Chen Duxiu in July 1921. He helped build a united front between the CPC and Sun Yat-sen's Nationalist Party in early 1924. During the Northern Expedition, Li was arrested and then executed by the warlord Zhang Zuolin in Beijing in 1927.

<sup>184</sup> "Responsible land" refers to the farmland that was collectively-owned by the village and which was contracted to peasants who were responsible for its farming and management by themselves, but which could not be bought, sold or diverted for use at will.

system"<sup>185</sup>. The land he was working on was a collective one. He had restricted and resisted the "household contract responsibility system". During the conference, once Li Baohua took office, he dealt with some of the people originally underneath Zeng Xisheng. Li Baohua's style of work was completely different from that of Zeng Xisheng, and there were many people who supported him. When the Cultural Revolution came, a strange phenomenon emerged in Anhui: Li Baohua was defended by the "conservatives", and the "conservatives" in Anhui were very powerful. But many of the rebels in Anhui were the former people of Zeng Xisheng's who had been dealt with by Li Baohua, and they joined the rebels in rebelling against Li Baohua during the Cultural Revolution, but the rebels in Anhui were still very small. Chairman Mao also defended Li Baohua during the Cultural Revolution.

I also went to a few group meetings in Sichuan. In 1959 I went to Sichuan to grow grain, although Sichuan was also "boastful" during the "Great Leap Forward", misrepresenting grain production and starving people to death during difficult times. However, during the most difficult times, Sichuan also sent out a lot of grain to support other provinces and cities.

During the Conference, Li Jingquan<sup>186</sup> came to my office specifically to see me, and he said to me: In 1959, the survey you made in Sichuan was right, and I was wrong. At that time, I even argued with Tian Jiaying and was criticised by the Chairman. Now I have apologised to Tian Jiaying. Since you wrote that report, I have to apologise to you too. Li Jingquan was an old comrade, and his hair was already white by then. I was very touched by his kindness in coming to apologise to such a small cadre like me, and I had a very good impression of him. During the Cultural Revolution a few years later, I didn't say anything bad about him either.

### **3. Survey of deaths from starvation in various places**

The issue of how many people died of starvation during the three years of hardship was already being worked on before the Seven Thousand Cadres' Conference, at which tracing the issue of starvation was also a major topic. There were many contributions at the meeting, and many people were paralysed by hearing the reflections. The Chairman's security guard said that when the Chairman was reading the briefing of the meeting, he read the local statements with tears in his eyes and could not eat. Chairman Mao asked that the details of these starvation deaths be traced. At that time, there was a preliminary count that more than three million people had died of starvation. The Chairman said that no one should hide the figure or else they would be severely punished. Later, he

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<sup>185</sup> The household contract responsibility system essentially dismantled collective farming by making individual farmers into independent production units. Farmers contract the collective basic means of production (mainly land) for self-management, and pay various fees due to the state and the collective, and the rest of the products or income belong to the contracting households. This system was first implemented briefly in Shandong and other places in 1962, but was vigorously promoted only after Deng Xiaoping seized power following Mao's death. It led to the dismantling of the People's Communes and the spread of capitalism in the countryside.

<sup>186</sup> Li Jingquan (1909-1989) joined the Chinese Communist Youth League in 1927 and participated in the Nanchang Uprising in the same year. He participated in the Long March in 1934. He was a political commissar in the Red Army and a general in the PLA. He served as the first governor of Sichuan Province, the first secretary of the Sichuan Provincial Party Committee, and the Southwest Bureau of the Communist Party of China. A large number of people died of hunger in Sichuan during the Three Difficult Years and was criticised for running an "independent kingdom" during the Cultural Revolution. In 1973, he was elected as a member of the Tenth Central Committee of the Communist Party of China. Served as Vice Chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress in 1975. In 1982, Deng Xiaoping established the Central Advisory Committee of the Communist Party of China, with Li Jingquan as a member; in 1985, under pressure from Deng, he resigned. He died four years later.

told everyone to put aside their burdens and tell the truth, and some more were reported, adding up to four million. The highest number was in Anhui, 800,000.

The Seven Thousand Cadres' Conference was the first time that the figures for the number of people who died of starvation were summarised. After the Seven Thousand Cadres' Conference, the related investigations were carried out in greater detail.

At that time, the comprehensive team of the Rear Building Research Office compiled materials on the starvation deaths of people throughout the country during the Three Years of Difficulties. This was the specific responsibility of Chen Qizhang, who was assisted by Wang Qinglin, and I also assisted in this area when I first went to the Rear Building Research Office, and a journalist surnamed Zhou, who was also an old cadre, also took part in this work. Our task was to find out how many people had died of starvation in the country during the difficult period. As this was just before I wrote my article "Commenting on Prof. Li's Autobiography" in 1963, and as the matter was particularly significant, it made a deep impression on me.

The Seven Thousand Cadres' Conference was a national conference of cadres at the fifth level, and all the county party secretaries of the country came. After the 7,000-strong conference, all cadres in the country were no longer afraid to tell the truth; starvation was a thing of the past, and they all knew that there was no point in hiding it. The Chairman said at the 7,000 Cadres' Conference that anyone who concealed information would be severely punished; we also made it a point to tell all places that statistics must be true and that anyone who did not tell the truth would be held responsible. At that time, Zeng Xisheng had already been transferred out of Anhui, and one of the major reasons he was transferred out was because of false reporting of figures. Anhui was the province with the most starvation deaths, and with Zeng Xisheng gone, the figures reported in Anhui were more truthful. The reported figures from other places were also more realistic. Therefore, the figures reported by various places in 1963 are reliable and credible. It is just that individual places are really difficult to count and are using estimates.

The figure we have arrived at was another increase from the 7,000 Cadres' Conference, close to 6 million. We intended to report 6 million to the Chairman and the Premier. But a local party secretary surnamed Cao said that he was afraid it was actually more than that, because there were some remote areas that might not have been counted and were estimated. We accepted his suggestion and added 20 per cent to the 6 million, which brought it to 7.2 million. In fact, by that time the atmosphere had completely all changed and everyone was afraid of being disciplined for under-reporting. It was proposed to add some more to the 7.2 million, up to a maximum of 8 million. So, the final total reported was 8 million. This 8 million was a terrible figure, and we felt very bad about it at the time. In the great famine at the end of the Han Dynasty, 20 million people died; the total number of deaths in the war against Japan was over 30 million. And in peacetime, 8 million people died in three years, that's something too!

I think that the survey report at that time was made by the comprehensive group after repeated collective verification and research based on the data and materials reported by various places, and it was very strict. If there are still inaccuracies in the data, then 8 million would only be more, not less. The reason is that in remote areas, where people are sparsely populated and there are many animals and plants that can be used as food, the number of people who died of starvation was on the contrary less. The 20 per cent correction is actually too wide, not to mention the 800,000 added to this increase.

One of the people who took part in the investigation back then, a man called Jin Yaonan, was a local party secretary in Shandong. I was very close to him and I had transferred him over to be my secretary after the dissolution of the Rear Building Research Office. He was also an important witness, but unfortunately he has now passed away. It is likely that his descendants will know something about it, and if so, it is hoped that his descendants will come forward to speak one day.

#### **4. On the timing and causes of the deaths from starvation**

Many people have been under the mistaken impression that people died of hunger because of the Great Leap Forward in running public canteens. In fact, running canteens does not kill people by starving them, it only kills them by over-feeding them. Of course, it was causing a certain amount of waste, but this waste was simply not enough to cause the famine that occurred later.

In the spring of 1959, I went to Xinfan County in Sichuan to plant experimental fields. Whenever I had free time, I rode my bicycle to the surrounding countryside to conduct surveys, and I covered almost all of the 200 miles around Xinfan County. I interviewed many peasants, and they all said, "It was good in '58. In '58, when we had a canteen, we had a competition to see who ate more". I have heard of this happening at least three times. That is to say, death by over-feeding is not an isolated occurrence.

In fact, it was Liu Shaoqi who first advocated the idea of running canteens. Of course, the Chairman did not oppose it and also came out to speak in support of it, which was the actual situation. The key was not the canteens. Canteens save time and are convenient. But at that time, they also caused a lot of waste and some negative things, which is also true. In order to find out whether the canteens were good or not, the Chairman especially asked Tian Jiaying to conduct a survey report on the canteens, which was the only report Tian Jiaying had made independently. I once asked him what his attitude towards the canteen was, and he said he was a "maintenanceist". The reason was that instead of letting some cadres embezzle the grain, it would be better to let the canteens manage the grain in a unified manner, and with unified management, the peasants would still have something to eat. At the Lushan meeting, Chairman Mao approved the investigation report on the canteens that I wrote together with Tian Jiaying's report to the General Assembly.

The famine during the hard times did not appear all of a sudden, but began to show its first signs in early 1959. At that time, when I went to plant grain in the Dafeng Commune in Xinfan County, I ate dry rice on the first day, and then it became increasingly thin. It was not that the peasants treated us badly, but there was not that much food for us to eat, not just for one team, but for all the teams. The peasants said that before we went there, they all ate vegetable porridge, which was also very thin, and only when there were sick people in the family did they go to the commune to get some grain back. This means that the first signs of a food shortage began to appear at that time. When we went down, we were allocated food from above to the commune, and we ate better than the people, so the people ate better and were fuller. So, the villagers welcomed us very much. But the small amount of food allocated to the team was not much of a solution, and I never had enough to eat in the brigade. At that time, the team had a rule that you could not bring your own biscuits and other dry food, so we smuggled in some sugar or something for emergencies.

Some of the local peasant youths enjoyed listening to my stories, especially the historical ones, which they thought were better than the stories they had heard. When these young people came to listen to the stories, they would always bring us some of their family's goodies to eat. I remember

one girl, whose family was in very difficult circumstances, who brought us something to eat every time, but she didn't eat anything herself. When we found out, we couldn't bear to eat her food.

Chairman Mao called shortly after we went down there, and I guess Tian Jiaying reported to the Chairman on the phone all that we had seen, and he also told him about the serious misrepresentation of grain production down there in 1958. The situation was similar throughout the country, with the beginnings of grain shortages in the same period. By the summer harvest of 1959, there was widespread under-reporting of production and private distribution of grain throughout the country. This was a sign that things were changing and that there was a real shortage of grain throughout the country. Those in the Party Committee of the Dafeng Commune in Xinfan County were more resourceful, as they had given some grain to the state during the Great Leap Forward and put some in the commune's warehouses for safekeeping. They knew that the grain production was not as high as reported and that some farmers had handed over all their grain seeds. By the beginning of spring, if the farmers did not even have the seed grain, then the production would not be maintained into the next year. Some of the grain they had hidden away was to be used as seeds to be distributed to the peasants in the spring; the other part was to be used as communal grain reserves to deal with the shortage. We saw soon after we arrived at Dafeng commune (we were not told this by the commune) that the commune had asked the brigade to come to the commune and bring down the commune's grain stock, which was basically seed grain, and after the summer harvest in 1959 they had a private reserve, which is probably what is called concealment and private distribution. In this period, although there was a food shortage, it did not reach the level of starvation. The key to not having enough to eat and not starving to death was the reserve food that the commune had secretly created! The commune's distribution of food to the peasants at the most critical time helped, and some peasants with sick members of the family could go to the commune to receive a little food for their care. In addition, the food grown by the peasants on their own stalks was not handed over to the commune, but was given to them, like fenugreek beans (broad beans) and pumpkins, which also worked well.

Once I was running around Daxian on my bicycle and I was really tired so I went to a small shop to buy a bowl of noodles to eat. As I was eating the noodles, I noticed two men waiting for me, as if they were looking for me for something, and they looked like proper peasants, not vagrants. As I ate, I asked them if they wanted to see me for something and what it was about. They said, "When you've finished eating, we'll have some soup". When I heard that was the case, I said, "I've eaten all this, it's not hygienic". They said, "As soon as you came, we paid attention to you, you're not sick". I felt embarrassed and, at that time, I still had a few food stamps with me, so I bought them a bowl of noodles and told them to share it, and asked the shopkeeper to give them a little more soup. As I was making this arrangement, other people came from the back. I saw that the situation was not right and I did not have that many food stamps or money, so I rushed off on my bike. This was all happening at the beginning of 1959. This means that by this time, the peasants were already struggling. According to people I asked later, peasants like this, who went to restaurants to drink people's leftover soup, did so mainly out of frugality, and were not already starving. Also, this was an isolated case, it did not happen in many places.

But at the same time, I also saw that although food was already very tight in Sichuan, and the people could not even feed themselves, they still pushed a lot of food to railway stations and docks in "chicken carts" (a kind of hand-pushed wheelbarrow) to deliver public food to support the whole country.

When I returned to the Secretariat from Sichuan, I received a large number of letters and visits from people complaining about people who had died of starvation. There were also letters from some cadres who had been delegated from the Central Office to Henan and Shandong, as well as from some local cadres, saying that there were many people there who were suffering from puffiness due to starvation. These situations were immediately summarised by the secretary's office and reported to Chairman Mao. After reading these messages, Chairman Mao immediately discussed with the Premier about taking urgent measures to transfer food to the masses and to use military vehicles for places that were cut off.

In the summer of 1960, when I went to the Erqi rolling stock factory, I often went to their homes on Sundays with the factory workers and saw that the workers were all in a rather difficult situation, eating corn and sorghum and still not getting enough to eat, but I didn't hear of any deaths from starvation, only that some individuals got oedema. At that time, everyone was rationed, rationing meant not enough to eat, and I went down with the Ma Zhijiang who also had oedema. I heard that there were starvation deaths in other places, and I knew that Sichuan was the worst hit by the boastfulness. I had planted experimental fields there, and the farmers were very good to us, so I was attached to the place, so I called Song Decheng and asked him if there were any deaths from starvation in Sichuan. He told me, "There were deaths from starvation elsewhere, but we didn't have any deaths here. It was thanks to you, Lao Qi and Tian Jiaying coming here that we were taken care of". I didn't see starvation deaths with my own eyes when I was in Sichuan, and Lao Song now says they didn't have any deaths from starvation there. I believe what Lao Song said.

One of the reasons for the food crunch after the spring of 1959 and the subsequent famine was that a lot of grain had not been harvested in 1958, and the bumper crop was not abundant because many strong rural labourers had gone to take part in the great steel-making, and there was not enough manpower in the fields, so many crops were rotting in the ground. This situation was also confirmed by the peasants when I was working on the Four Clean-ups in Tong County, Beijing, in 1964. But this was only a secondary reason. One of the main reasons was the natural disasters and the "boastful wind".

Nowadays, many people do not acknowledge natural disasters. In fact, at that time, a major drought in the north and a major flood in the south were both objective reality. Liu Shaoqi said, "Three parts are natural disasters, seven parts are man-made disasters". If this "seven points of man-made disasters" were not used to shirk his own responsibility and blame others, then he should have referred to the "boastful wind". But he himself and Deng Xiaoping were the ones mainly responsible for this "man-made disaster".

Chairman Mao was the first person in the Party to propose correcting and stopping the "boasting style". In the spring and summer of 1959, he wrote a letter to the Party and sent it directly to the production brigade branches, asking the brigade cadres to speak directly to the peasants, asking them to resist high targets and the "boastfulness". But I know that many places in the country did not pass on Chairman Mao's letter, because once it was passed on, Chairman Mao's criticism of them made it very difficult for them to do their work, as was the case in Sichuan Province. I reckon we were the only ones in Sichuan province to reach the communes and brigades in Xinfan County, and it was our task force that went to convey this. I remember that at that time, we pulled the various production teams on line, hooked them up to cable radio and connected them to the commune. As I said earlier, it started with Tian Jiaying personally going to the broadcasting station to read Chairman Mao's letter. However, Tian Jiaying's accent was not standard and the local peasants

could not fully understand him, so a young girl who had graduated from junior high school and worked in the commune was chosen to be the broadcaster. She was so articulate that Tian Jiaying said he would transfer her to work at the Central Radio Station, but of course the transfer did not take place.

It is true that "boastfulness" was the main artificial cause of starvation in difficult times. It is not a good idea to make a false statement about grain production, because if the production is reported high, more will be requisitioned. If you report 2,000 jin, then the levy of 1,000 jin is not too much, but if you actually only have 500 jin, or at most 800 jin, what do you do? What will happen if you don't pay the levy with all the seed food? The result would be starvation.

Wang Renzhong in Hubei was one of the best at boasting and exaggeration, and he was the best at conscripting grain. When all the grain was requisitioned, there was not enough grain in Hubei and Wuhan was in danger of running out of food. So he sent his men to seize the grain that was being transported from Sichuan to Shanghai via Wuhan on the Yangtze River. Later Shanghai complained about this all the way to the Chairman.

Tian Jiaying had great conflicts with Wang Renzhong. Tian Jiaying told me that when Wang Renzhong reported to the Chairman at that time, he often prepared two pieces of documentation in his own two pockets, and depending on the Chairman's mood and attitude, he would decide which one to use. The main year of starvation was 1960. By 1961 the situation had eased because the state had imported a lot of grain. But meat, eggs and fruit were still very tight. At that time, the Soviet Union was forcing debts on us, and a lot of agricultural products were levied in order to pay the debts. So, the market was very tightly supplied.

## **5. Disagreements within the Party after the 7,000 Cadres' Conference**

A central working conference was expanded to include more than 7,000 cadres from the county level and above (at that time it was also called the "five levels of cadres conference", i.e. the central government, central bureau, provincial, local and county levels), including some important industrial and mining enterprises and the army, which was unprecedented since the founding of the Party and the country. This event in itself embodied the broad-mindedness of Chairman Mao, a true Marxist, and the majestic spirit of a proletarian revolutionary. Some people are now saying that the 7,000 Cadres' Conference was a conference in which Chairman Mao admitted that he was wrong, but that is total nonsense.

From the first half of 1959, in order to emerge from the "communist wind" and "blind command" that had been blowing in 1958, Chairman Mao had been considering how to adjust the system of people's communes, proposing to reduce the number of accounting units and to develop a team-based system. Chairman Mao was the first Central Committee leader in the Party to attach importance to the small-team system. On several occasions he asked local leaders for their opinions during his inspections, but he did not say that it was his own opinion, but rather that "some people think so and so". If he were to say that it was his own opinion, then the local leaders would probably go along with him. By the second Zhengzhou meeting in early 1959, Chairman Mao's idea of "three-tier ownership and team-based" had basically taken shape, except that the "team" was still equivalent to the former higher-level community, i.e. the brigade.

At the Ninth Plenary Session of the Eighth Central Committee held in January 1961, Chairman Mao advocated the need to vigorously promote investigation and research, saying that he wanted to make 1961 the year of investigation. He personally ordered Chen Boda, Hu Qiaomu and Tian Jiaying to each take a team to a different place to continue to conduct rural surveys.

In March 1961, Chairman Mao presided over the "Three Southern Conferences" (Southwest, Central and South China) in Guangzhou and adopted the Regulations on Rural People's Communes, later generally referred to as the "Sixty Articles on Rural Work". The situation in the countryside began to change dramatically.

In the autumn of 1961, Tian Jiaying drafted for the Central Government, in accordance with Chairman Mao's ideas, the "Instruction on Changing the Basic Accounting Unit of Rural People's Communes", in which the Central Government intended to formalise the "three-tier ownership, team-based" rural accounting system, which was to remain unchanged for at least thirty years. This "team" was no longer a brigade (equivalent to the previous senior commune) but a "small team", equivalent to the primary commune at the beginning of Liberation, usually consisting of 10 to 20 families. The "three-tier ownership, team-based" accounting system was adopted at the Seven Thousand Cadres' Conference and was then officially distributed to the countryside.

At that time, Chairman Mao personally took charge of three things: reducing the size of communes and production teams, abolishing rural public canteens and changing the basic rural accounting units. This changed some of the naive and erroneous practices of the early days of the People's Commune, and enabled the People's Commune, a socialist collective economic system, to be gradually consolidated and improved. Nowadays, when many people talk about the people's communes, they talk about "one big, two public"<sup>187</sup> and "absolute egalitarianism". This is actually a lack of understanding of the process of the people's commune system from its inception to its development and then to its perfection. In fact, under the new accounting system, the people's communes had completely abolished the "one big, two public" and eliminated the disadvantages of too large an accounting unit, which was too egalitarian.

By the autumn of 1961, the most difficult period was practically over. The years 1962-1966 saw unprecedented and truly high growth in our countryside, grain was up an average of 26 billion catties per year and cotton was up an average of 6 million dan<sup>188</sup> per year. All this is now well documented.

I remember that in 1962, a cadre from Dafeng Commune, where I was planting experimental fields in Sichuan, wrote me a letter in which he said: "Old Qi, don't be anxious, we have good weather here now and the economy will recover in a year". I then published this letter in the "Reports from the Masses". I did not expect that Chairman Mao would be very happy to read this letter in the "Reports" and immediately approve it for the entire Central Standing Committee to read.

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<sup>187</sup> "One big, two public" comes from the editorial of the People's Daily of September 3, 1958, "Raising the red flag of the people's commune". It refers to the basic characteristics of a people's commune: one is that it is big and the other is that it is public. By big, it meant that the original co-operatives of one or two hundred households are merged into a people's commune of four or five thousand or even ten or twenty thousand households. Generally, there was one commune in one township. Big meant that the commune was large enough to facilitate large-scale integrated production and construction, and public means that "the people's commune is more socialist and collective than the agricultural production co-operatives."

<sup>188</sup> A *dan* is a carrying pole, and its associated load. The measure was systematized to an equivalent of 50 kilograms.

After the 7,000-strong conference, Chairman Mao left for the South, leaving the work of the Central Committee in the hands of Liu Shaoqi, who was on the front line. But no sooner had Chairman Mao left than Liu Shaoqi convened a meeting of the Standing Committee of the Central Committee in Beijing at the West Building of Zhongnanhai (later called the "West Building Meeting"). At this meeting, he overturned the judgement of the 7,000-strong conference on the situation and the achievements and mistakes in our work. The situation was described as dark. It was said that the achievements and mistakes in our work were not "nine fingers and one finger", or even "three to seven", but that mistakes had taken the lead. All these things were first brought up by Chen Yun. During the Cultural Revolution, when the Premier wanted the leaders of the financial and trade department to criticise Chen Yun with the rebels, he took Chen Yun's speech at the West Building meeting and criticised it. Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping's views were of course all in line with Chen Yun's. The Premier's attitude at that time was not very clear either, as if he was in favour of it in some places and against it in others. Later on, Chairman Mao called this kind of assessment of the situation, which was pitch black, a "dark wind".

In fact, the main purpose of making a pessimistic estimation of the situation was to prepare public opinion for the implementation of the "household contract responsibility system". At that time, Chen Yun was a strong advocate of the "household contract responsibility" and even the "distribution of land to the household"<sup>189</sup>, saying that if the "household contract responsibility system" was not carried out, it would take at least eight years to revive the economy, while the "household contract responsibility system" would only take four years. Liu Shaoqi, on the other hand, went even further, saying that he was firmly in favour of dividing the land between households. These were also the "going-it-alone style"<sup>190</sup> that Chairman Mao later criticised.

At the Seven Thousand Cadres' Conference, some comrades who had been wrongly attacked during the Great Leap Forward for opposing "boastfulness" and wrongly branded as "right-wing opportunists" after the Lushan Conference were rehabilitated. This time, even Peng Dehuai wrote an "80,000-word letter" to the Central Committee, proposing that his case be overturned. This was what Chairman Mao later criticised as the "wind of reversal".

## **6. The struggle between the two paths within the Party over the issue of "the household contract responsibility system"**

The origins of the "household contract responsibility system" were first developed by Zeng Xisheng in Anhui, who had already been working on it as a single pilot in 1961. At that time, when the Chairman heard about it, he did not completely reject it, but only said, "You can experiment, just review it if you mess up". However, in 1962, the wind of going-it-alone was getting bigger and bigger in various places. Yao Liwen, Liu Shaoqi's secretary, was the most important secretary to Liu Shaoqi apart from Wang Guangmei. We usually met often and had a good relationship. But we seldom talked about important matters when we were together, because we both knew in our hearts that we were "each one for himself". But once I asked Yao Liwen, why did Comrade Shaoqi always criticize those "go it alone" materials. Wasn't the Chairman opposed to doing so? Yao Liwen said, "You don't know, for if Comrade Shaoqi hadn't suppressed it, the voices from below would have been louder".

But in fact, Liu Shaoqi was not only in favour of the "household contract responsibility system", but he also advocated the "division of land to the household". Tian Jiaying suggested to Chairman Mao

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<sup>189</sup> Land-to-household distribution refers to the allocation of land to each household finally implemented in 1978 to lay the basis for the household contract responsibility system.

<sup>190</sup> The tendency to return to individual farming.

that the results of the surveys at the grass roots showed that the Chinese peasants wanted land and asked for land sharing, and that they would only be motivated if you gave them land. On hearing this, the Chairman was very angry and rebuked Tian Jiaying, saying that he had been his secretary for so many years but did not know what socialism meant and was still running after others. The Chairman asked Tian Jiaying whether this was your opinion or whether someone else had asked you to come and say it. Who asked you to say this? In fact, when the Chairman said this, it was already clear in his mind that Liu Shaoqi must have asked Tian Jiaying to say this. But Tian Jiaying insisted at that time that no one had asked him to say it, it was only his own opinion. Chairman Mao was completely disappointed with Tian Jiaying.

The intra-party struggle over whether or not to carry out the "household contract responsibility system" was unprecedented in character. The previous incidents involving Gao Gang and Peng Dehuai were mainly about historical grudges and how to maintain the unity of the Party and prevent splits within the Party, but not about whether to take the socialist road. This time, however, the struggle was about whether to take the socialist road of collectivisation or the capitalist road of "going it alone".

Chairman Mao knew very well that the majority of the Standing Committee of the Politburo at that time did not agree with him, and if a Standing Committee of the Central Committee or an enlarged Standing Committee were to be convened at this time to vote on such a major policy as what path to take, he would probably become the minority. In this way, those who advocated the "household contract responsibility system" could immediately change the party line. In fact, people like Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping were not ordinary people, and the issues they considered were not simply a matter of personal power or personal interests. To look at things that way is to vulgarise them. They all have their own political aspirations, and whether they are right is another matter. So, at this level, this is not simply a struggle for personal power, but a struggle for direction and line. This is not to say that they don't want power, but that power is at the service of the line.

At this time, I deeply appreciated Chairman Mao's masterful art of managing the struggle within the Party. He first convened a central working conference attended by the leaders of all regions, provinces and municipalities to prepare for the convening of the central plenary session. Among those leaders who were specifically responsible for local work, most of them opposed the idea of the "household contract responsibility system".

## **Chapter 14 The Beidaihe Conference opposed the "household contract responsibility system" and the 8th Plenary Session of the 10th Central Committee reintroduced the class struggle.**

1. Some information about the Central Working Conference in Beidaihe
2. The "Reports from the Masses" compiled and printed "On the views of the masses on the 'household contract responsibility system'"
3. Some information on the Tenth Plenary Session of the Eighth Central Committee

### **1. Some information about the Central Working Conference in Beidaihe**

The Central Working Conference was held in Beidaihe from 25 July to 24 August 1962, followed by a preparatory meeting for the Tenth Plenary Session in Beijing from 26 August to 23 September.

Tian Jiaying attended the Central Working Conference in Beidaihe. At that time, there was a direct shuttle bus from Beidaihe to Zhongnanhai, so he often went back and forth between Beidaihe and Zhongnanhai, and on August 25 and 26, he conveyed the proceedings of the meeting in the secretary's office, which I wrote down in my work diary at the time. The details of Tian Jiaying's communication can be found in the diary of the two days of August 25 and 26, 1962, on the remnants of the diary in the following chapter.

### **2. The "Reports from the Masses" compiled and printed "On the views of the masses on the 'household contract responsibility system'"**

At the Central Working Conference in Beidaihe, Chairman Mao severely criticised the idea of the "household contract responsibility system" held by some people in the Party. Before that, Tian Jiaying asked me to compile materials such as "On the opinions of the masses on the idea of the 'household contract responsibility system'" and send them to the leading comrades of the Central Committee for reference through the "Reports from the Masses". Tian Jiaying actually supported the idea of the "household contract responsibility system".

To be honest, I was not so positive about the "household contract responsibility system". Why? First of all, when I was a child, I knew a little bit about the countryside and thought that there was no way out of the small farming economy in the countryside, and when I read books about the Soviet Union in secondary school, I learned that Stalin had set up collective farms in the Soviet Union, so I thought that China should also set up collective farms. I thought that after the "household contract responsibility system", firstly, the public grain could not be collected, so many farmers must conceal their production and pay less public grain. Secondly, there were already some small tractors in the countryside, and the small plots of land were all piecemeal, so it was difficult to unify farming, and it was difficult to promote good seeds and new production methods. In the light of the materials on collective farms in the Soviet Union that I read in my early years, I basically believed that the path of collective farms was the fundamental way out for China's rural areas, and that large tracts of land still need to be co-operative, and that the "household contract responsibility system" could only be a compelling choice for some special areas. Without going into the specifics of my own perceptions, I

was also in favour of Chairman Mao's line from an emotional point of view. When I was in high school, I was determined to follow Chairman Mao, but I never thought I would end up working beside him. When the Great Leap Forward saw the emergence of boastfulness and exaggeration, Chairman Mao did not just criticize others, as Peng Dehuai had done, but on the one hand tried to stop the boasting and exaggeration, and on the other hand rescued those cadres at all levels who had made the mistake of boasting and exaggeration. During the difficult period, Chairman Mao shared the hardships of the people on the one hand, and on the other hand, he promoted the style of investigation throughout the Party. Moreover, when he heard the report that those comrades who had made mistakes in the "Eight Secretaries Incident" and were sent to work at the lower levels, he said they should also go to work for training, so that they could conduct investigation and research to understand the actual situation below. I also went to the Erqi Locomotive and Rolling Stock Factory at that time, and took Wang Gang and the others who had made mistakes with me. When I returned, I reported that they had all been rehabilitated and could have their punishments lifted and jobs assigned. The Chairman quickly approved it. After this series of events, I really felt the Chairman's broad-mindedness and the pragmatic working style of a Communist Party leader, and I became even more convinced that the path chosen by the Chairman was the right one and that there was nothing wrong with engaging in socialism.

In any case, I did not listen to Tian Jiaying completely, but I had also created a collection of opinions against the "household contract responsibility system". I chose three representative ones and used the sub-title "Opposition to the 'household contract responsibility system'" to publish them in this collection. In this way, there were both opposing and supporting materials. Although the number of copies was not the same, and one had more letters and the other less, it was an objective situation. When Tian Jiaying read it, he even said half-jokingly, "You are a very slippery person, you send both sides, so you are always right".

Tan Zhenlin, who was opposed to the idea of "household contract responsibility system", felt that he had caught a break when he saw this collection in the "Reports from the Masses". He filled the margins of the pamphlet with his criticisms of the "household contract responsibility system", saying that it was a retrograde step, a counter-current and an anti-socialist tendency. He also said that the editor of the "Reports" was advocating for capitalism and should be investigated. There was already a copy of "Reports from the Masses" in the reading room of the secretary's office, but now there was another copy with Tan Zhenlin's instructions, probably placed there by Tan Zhenlin's secretary. I knew in my heart that Tan Zhenlin was actually doing this to retaliate and take revenge, because we had reported that his wife had used a military plane to buy live chickens. These people, don't think he was an old revolutionary, they are really vengeful.

When he saw Tan Zhenlin's criticism, Yang Shangkun asked Gong Zirong to come and talk to me. I said that we had received many letters from the masses. I then asked for advice from Tian Jiaying, who told me to compile a collection specifically for sending to the central leadership for reference. Yang Shangkun then went to ask Tian Jiaying: "Did Qi Benyu say that you had asked him to compile that thing?" Tian Jiaying was very angry with me about this and came to ask me, "Why did you tell on me?" I was stunned and asked, "What did I tell on you?" He said, "Didn't you tell people that I told you to edit it? Why did you tell anyone? You know how big this is, it's anti-Party, aren't you setting me up?" I said, "I really don't know these things about the central government, and not all of those opinions are in favour of the "household contract responsibility system", there are also those which are against the "household contract responsibility system".

The first time Gong Zirong and his team went to check, there was indeed material opposing the "household contract responsibility system" as I said, but Tan Zhenlin didn't see it for some reason. So Gong Zirong wrote a report to the Party Committee of the Central Office, saying that the collection compiled by the others also contained letters opposing the "household contract responsibility system", and that both views had been conveyed to the Central Committee, which was their job. They were reflecting the opinions of the masses, not their own, which was right. Why should they be held responsible? They are not responsible.

When Peng Zhen learned of this, he said to Tan Zhenlin, "It's okay for you to have an opinion, but you can't go after people. If they don't report anything, how do we know what's going on underneath". At that time, Peng Zhen was opposed to the idea of the "household contract responsibility system", and after reading the opinions of those who opposed it, he found them to be very reasonable.

Later, Tian Jiaying said to me, "It's a good thing that you have included material opposing the "household contract responsibility system", otherwise it would be unclear.

Soon afterwards, the central government issued a directive opposing the "household contract responsibility system", our section chief held a meeting to convey it, and immediately one person came out and said that the "household contract responsibility system" that Qi Benyu was working on was a right-wing opportunist reflection of the situation. Fortunately, Tian Jiaying was also at the meeting. He said that if reporting on the situation was rightist opportunism, who would dare to do any work? No one dared to speak afterwards.

### **3. Some information on the Tenth Plenary Session of the Eighth Central Committee**

At the 10th Plenary Session of the 8th Central Committee, Chairman Mao did not emphatically mention the struggle between the two roads and two lines, but he did reintroduce the topic of the class struggle. It was said that there were still classes, class contradictions and class struggle in socialism.

Once the plenary session of the Central Committee was held, most of the secretaries of the regional and provincial committees at that time were in favour of people's communes and the road to collectivisation, and they did not agree to the idea of the "household contract responsibility system". So, in this way, Chairman Mao was in the majority at the plenary session of the Central Committee, and the other Standing Committee members became the minority. Even if Liu Shaoqi and the others wanted to do it alone, they could not say so at the meeting, so they had to follow the Chairman and talk about class struggle.

I have also included in my working notes the contents of the Tenth Plenary Session of the Central Committee as conveyed by Tian Jiaying, which are also recorded in the chapter "Remains of the Diary".

Tian Jiaying did not mention Liu Shaoqi, Deng Xiaoping or Chen Yun in his transmission, but only Deng Zihui<sup>191</sup>, who was not a member of the Politburo. It was only Deng Zihui who was formally criticised by the Chairman at the Tenth Plenary Session.

As for Peng Dehuai, although he strongly opposed some of Liu Shaoqi's "leftist" practices in the Great Leap Forward at Lushan, he was not a member of the Politburo. But he was in full agreement with Liu Shaoqi on the issue of the "household contract responsibility system", and he also advocated the distribution of land to the peasants.

Chairman Mao had a long speech on class and class struggle at the 10th Plenary Session of the 8th Central Committee: During the whole historical period of the proletarian revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat, during the whole historical period of the transition from capitalism to communism (a period that takes decades or even more) there exists a class struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, a struggle between the two roads, socialism and capitalism. The overthrown reactionary ruling class, not content with extinction, always attempts a restoration.

This is a law of history that was articulated early on in Marxism-Leninism and which we must not forget. This class struggle is intricate, tortuous, ebbing and flowing, and in some cases even very violent. Inevitably, this class struggle must be reflected in the Party. At the same time, there are still bourgeois influences and the customary forces of the old society, the spontaneous capitalist tendencies of a section of small producers. The pressure of foreign imperialism and the existence of domestic bourgeois influence are the social roots of revisionist ideas within the Party. While waging the struggle against the class enemies at home and abroad, we must be on the alert and resolutely oppose all kinds of opportunist ideological tendencies within the Party in good time.

Later, from this speech of the Chairman, the basic line of the Party in the historical stage of socialism was summarized. As it spread to the masses, it was simplified to "the class struggle should be taught year after year, month after month, and day after day." But Chairman Mao's emphasis on the "class struggle" was mainly because he saw that there was still a danger of capitalist restoration throughout this stage of socialist history. And he gradually made it clear that this danger did not come mainly from the lower strata, but from within the Party, especially from the upper strata. And all this has since become a historical fact.

And one such feature of our internal Party struggle is that because of Chairman Mao's high prestige and the widespread support he enjoys both inside and outside the Party, not many people openly put forward views that were opposed to those of Chairman Mao. The Anti-Rightist Movement of 1957 was later turned into a "widening of the Anti-Rightist Movement", in which those who opposed him were branded as Rightists. And the slogan of "class struggle", which was reintroduced at the 10th Plenary Session of the 8th Central Committee, was in practice turned into something aimed at

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<sup>191</sup> Deng Zihui (1896- 1972) was one of the main founders and leaders of the Minxi Revolutionary Base and the Soviet Area. After Liberation, he served as Minister of the Rural Work Department of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China, Vice Premier of the State Council, and Vice Chairman of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference. In 1961, when he was in charge of rural work, he resisted Mao Zedong's policy on agricultural cooperatives and endorsed the Anhui Provincial Party Committee's support for the "household contract responsibility sytem". In September 1962, at the Tenth Plenary Session of the Eighth Central Committee of the Communist Party of China, Deng Zihui's proposal to support household contracting was regarded as a "revisionist program" and was severely criticized. He was elected as a member of the Seventh, Eighth, and Ninth Central Committees of the Communist Party of China. During the "Cultural Revolution", he was severely criticised. He died of illness in Beijing in 1972.

the masses below. This was how a series of practices such as class education and emphasis on class origin were developed, which gradually became the erroneous tendency of cracking down on a large group to protect a small group in the "Four Clean-ups" campaign, and the "left in appearance but right in essence" phenomenon at the beginning of the Cultural Revolution, together with the "linkage" of the "anti-capitalist road line" and the "theory of class origin". But after Chairman Mao's death, they in turn put the label of "expanding the class struggle" on his head.

At the end of that year, on his birthday, Chairman Mao wrote a poem entitled "Winter Clouds":

Winter clouds, snow-laden, cotton fluff flying,  
None or few the unfallen flowers.  
Chill waves sweep through steep skies,  
Yet earth's gentle breath grows warm.  
Only heroes can quell tigers and leopards  
And wild bears never daunt the brave.  
Plum blossoms welcome the whirling snow;  
Small wonder flies freeze and perish.

The "flies" in the poem have always been interpreted as a reference to Khrushchev's revisionism. In fact, that year, from the 7,000-strong conference at the beginning of the year to the 8th Plenary Session of the 10th Central Committee, Chairman Mao experienced turbulent waves within the Party!<sup>192</sup>

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<sup>192</sup> There have been quite a few translations and explanations of Mao's poetry. In 1993, Beijing University Press published a collection of Mao's poems translated and annotated by Gu Zhengkun, then working at UNESCO in Paris. His explanation of references in the poem are useful, and support Qi Benyu's interpretation of "flies". He says that the first two lines "imply that the political situation in the world at the time was depressingly unfavourable to the Chinese Communist Party. Mao thought that most of the so-called Marxist Parties in various countries had degenerated into revisionists." The fourth line indicate that "things will gradually take a favourable turn...a brighter future is visible." Tigers and leopards "refer to the imperialists" whilst wild bears are the "Soviet revisionists – Russian bears". Plum blossoms "imply the Chinese Communist Party" and the flies are "opportunists who sneaked into the communist ranks".

## Chapter 15: Remnants of a Diary (April 20, 1962 - October 24, 1962)

### Full text and description of the remnants of the diary

When I was working in Zhongnanhai, I had a habit of keeping a diary, which was haphazard, random, incoherent and scattered, but true, private and easily accessible. Unfortunately, most of these diaries were lost during the Cultural Revolution when I was on trial, perhaps collected and stored by someone with an axe to grind, or disposed of as waste paper. Only the remnants of the diary from 20 April 1962 to 24 October 1962 were returned to me in a book when I was released from prison in 1986.

At the time of writing the diary on scraps of paper, I was working in the secretary's office editing "Reports from the Masses". The months described on the scraps were just before the convening of the 10th Plenary Session of the 8th Party Central Committee and during the Central Working Conference in Beidaihe. Although they are only a few words, they reflect some of the events within the Party and at home during this major turning point in history, and are useful as historical references. The words in brackets are new notes that I have added in the compilation.

(The diary was lost before 20 April 1962)

*20 April 1962, sunny*

Issue 35 of Reports from the Masses goes to press. The article criticising Ge Huimin (Tan Zhenlin's wife) occupies the first article.

[Note] I have already described in Chapter 12 above about Tan Zhenlin's wife, Ge Huimin, buying chickens and transporting them in a special plane.

*April 21, 1962, sunny*

The problem of farm animals is serious. Tell Jiang (Dejiu) and Chen (Ximei) to sort out the materials.

[Note] The serious problem of farming animals refers to the situation at the time.

Jiang Dejiu was a section member of the first section of the secretary's office. He went to work with me at the Erqi rolling stock factory. Later he was transferred to the General Office of the Guizhou Provincial Party Committee to work. During the Cultural Revolution, he was the one who told me about Li Zaihan, the commander of the Guizhou Military Region, who supported the Guizhou rebels. When I was arrested, both he and Li Zaihan were arrested as "516 elements" and investigated for a long time. Chen Ximei was a university student and a general cadre in Section 1.

*22 April 1962, sunny*

Letter to Lin Ke (short), asking him to send Ge Huimin's material (Reports from the Masses No. 35) to the Chairman for perusal. Issued and edited Reports No. 36, with editor's note.

[Note] Lin Ke was a member of the staff of the group around the Chairman.

*23 April 1962, sunny*

Director Yang (Shangkun) delivered a letter from Shanghai (from the public), reporting that the First Ministry of Machinery Industry had no regard for the overall situation. Compiled in issue 37.

[Note] Yang Shangkun had a problem with Chen Pixian in Shanghai, so he gave me the letter and asked me to publish it. Even though he was very critical of the Reports from the Masses that I had put together, he would often take a lot of things and ask me to print them for him. He also knew that the problem could be solved in this way.

*24 April, 1962*

The Chairman wants "Cao Zi Jue" and has asked Liu Zizhang (Director) of the Cultural Bureau (Beijing) to find two copies of the book and send them to him. A bookshop has now found (one more), lithographed, in poor condition, and will not send it.

Reading the History of the Qing Dynasty (Ten Complete Martial Arts Chapters)

I have seen Wang Renzhong's Notes on Reading, (sent) to Tian Jiaying (for reading).

[Note] The Ten Complete Martial Arts Chapters were read by the Chairman, and I would buy a copy of any book that the Chairman had read to read it myself.

Wang Renzhong's Reading Notes were printed in Hubei (oil), and at that time the cadres in Hubei had more or less of a copy in hand.

*25 April 1962, sunny*

Lin Ke has sent issue 35 of Reports from the Masses to the Chairman for his perusal.

(Deputy Director of the Central Office) Gong Zirong approached Chen Bingzhen (Deputy Director of the Central Secretariat), dissatisfied with the publication of a letter critical of Ge Huimin in Reports. Passed on the words of Director Yang Shangkun: "People have become monkeys, they have to look after people's faces."

(When Chen Bingzhen came to tell me of Yang Shangkun's discontent, he saw me reading Qing history and asked me to find out who Sun Kaiyang was. When I did, I found out that he was Sun Chengzong, the famous governor of Jiliu and Liao.) Chen bought a painting of the Ancestral Shrine of Lu Zhonglian by Sun Kaiyang (an ancient painting) with an inscription by He Zizhen<sup>193</sup> at the Liulichang Factory for 30 yuan. Most people did not know who Sun Kaiyang was. The painting was then purchased by Chen Bingzhen at a low price.

Chairman Mao wanted the Cihai Dictionary<sup>194</sup> (pre-liberation edition) and the Chinese Anthology of Literature (new edition)<sup>195</sup> (both the Chairman and Tian Jiaying were in Hangzhou). He urgently told the China Bookshop to look for the books, which found the Dictionary, but not the Chinese Anthology of Writings, and approached the Zhonghua Book Company to do find it.

Zhu Laozi<sup>196</sup> inscribed and stamped a large seal for my collection of The Fugue of the Orchid<sup>197</sup>.

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<sup>193</sup> Also known as He Shaoji (1799~1873) Qing Dynasty poet, scholar and calligrapher. Not to be confused with Mao's third wife, He Zizhen.

<sup>194</sup> "Cihai" is a Chinese reference book started in 1915 under the auspices of Mr. Lu Feikui of Zhonghua Book Company, and it is the largest comprehensive dictionary in China.

<sup>195</sup> Also published by the Zhonghua Book Company, in 1937.

<sup>196</sup> "Laozi" is a term of respect, like a generic "father". Here Qi Benyu refers to Zhu De. See also Part 3.13.

<sup>197</sup> The Fugue of the Orchid (*Youlan Fu*) is a prose poem written by Huang Tingjian of the Tang Dynasty. He wrote it when he was recalled to Beijing after being demoted. He used an unprecedented ups and downs, calm and vigorous approach to express his mood after being rehabilitated. The words were inscribed in Huang

[Note] Chen Bingzhen is the deputy director of our secretary's office. He is the grandson of Chen x x from Shandong and writes well. The official signed Chinese text of the Sino-Soviet Friendship Treaty was copied by him in lower case.

The painting by Sun Chengzong was given to Kang Sheng by Chen Chengzhen, who asked him to inscribe it on it. Kang Sheng later handed the painting over to the state.

Sun Chengzong was the Minister of Defence of the Ming Dynasty. He fought against the Qing Dynasty. Kang Sheng asked me to write a book about him, which I did and submitted it to the China Bookshop for publication. Later, when I was criticising Hai Rui's dismissal, Peng Zhen found the book I had written and wanted to submit it to the Chairman, saying that it was also about the "Minister of National Defence". Wang Li said to him, "No, Qi Benyu was in the Eight Secretaries Incident, if you do this, you will create another Eight Secretaries Incident. After hearing this, they wanted to withdraw the book they had submitted, but they had already submitted it together with Guan Feng's article, so they could not withdraw it. The Chairman said to Peng Zhen at that time that we could talk about them three years later. Three years later, we were really arrested. This may be a coincidence, or perhaps the Chairman knew that in a big political movement, some brave elements would later be punished.

He Zizhen was a famous calligrapher of the Ming Dynasty.

Zhu De used Huang Tingjian's script to inscribe "The Fugue of the Orchid". This inscription was copied by the Central Office after my arrest and was not returned to me.

*26 April 1962, Windy*

(collated a copy) of the material "How to deal with the Central Committee" for the publication "Reports from the Masses".

Revision of the decision on the issue of Wang Gang and others.

The comrades in the Central Office (Research Office in the back building) had a good reaction to the "Reports".

The letter about Ge Huimin caused quite a shock at the top.

Evening viewing of the pingtan<sup>198</sup>: 'The Long March Suite', with a wonderful performance by Ling Wenbo.

Reading Qing history. Analysis of the contradictions of Qianlong's rule.

Reading Kautsky's The Land Question.

[Note] The general reaction to the letter criticising Ge Huimin published in the Reports from the Masses was that it was "very good".

Some of the leading cadres warned their families not to cause any trouble like Ge Huimin.

Kautsky said that it was impossible to have socialism with small production, and that even capitalism could not allow small production to exist in large numbers.

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Tingjian's calligraphy on stone steles, the most famous being the seven steles of the Confucian Temple in Zizhong County, Sichuan. Qi Benyu's collection is probably rubbings from the steles.

<sup>198</sup> Story-telling and singing in the Suzhou dialect

27 April, 1962 sunny

(The Chinese Anthology of Literature had not been bought, so I bought it urgently from the editorial office of the Zhonghua Book Company in Beijing. The Zhonghua Book Company asked who wanted it. In the afternoon they sent a comrade to deliver it (the clerk paid for it, but they said they were sending it to Chairman Mao for review and did not want any money). In the afternoon I went to the bookstore to buy three volumes of the General History of the World and a photocopy of Yan Zhenqing's Memorial to the Sacrifice of his Nephew<sup>199</sup>. The total price was ten yuan. When I admired the Memorial to the Sacrifice of the Nephew with Cheng Chen, I found that there were seven or eight errors in the interpretation.

[Note] I was particularly affected by that speech by Lin Biao. I was there to hear it at the time. His speech was much more exciting than the text that was later issued. Lin Biao came up and said that it was not the Chairman who made mistakes, it was us who made mistakes. "Whenever we leave the Chairman, we make mistakes. If you don't believe me, go and check it out for yourselves. If there is something that the Chairman has not spoken about, then we would not know what to do about it". The Chairman later asked Luo Ruiqing, "Can you say such things?"

Liu Shaoqi's report was also discussed by us at that time. In his speech, Liu Shaoqi did not critique himself at all. In fact, he was the one who spoke most strongly during the Great Leap Forward. But he did not examine himself at all. The Chairman took all the blame on himself. Instead, Liu said something like, "Three parts are natural disasters and seven parts are man-made disasters". It sounded to people as if it was all the Chairman's fault and he himself was not at fault for anything. Liu Shaoqi was consistently like this. In the past, when he made left-leaning mistakes, he also criticized others for making left-leaning mistakes as if he was consistently right.

28 April, 1962, sunny

(The Secretariat Office of the Central Office) held a room meeting to discuss the (streamlined) establishment of ..... (This is) an important measure to overcome the present difficulties.

The Chairman wants (us to) buy some classics to give away. (Book list:)

(The) History of the Eastern Zhou Kingdoms

The Romance of the Two Han Dynasties

The Romance of the Three Kingdoms

Selected Qu (edited by Gu Ming, Shanghai Guanghai Publishing House)

Liaozhai

[Note] The Secretary's Office originally had less than a hundred people. The Chairman wanted to streamline the staff of all units, so the secretary's office was also streamlined.

29 April, 1962 cloudy

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<sup>199</sup> The Memorial to the Sacrifice of the Nephew records an event associated with the rebellion of An Lushan against the Tang Dynasty in 755. Yan Zhenqing resisted the rebellion. In 756, the rebels took Ji Ming, and threatened to execute him unless his father, Yan Zhenqing's brother Yan Guoqing, surrendered his troops to them. He refused and Ji Ming was beheaded. In 758, Yan Zhenqing wrote his memorial to his nephew.

In the morning, I received demobilised soldiers from Lai County, Hebei, and they reported on the corruption of village cadres.

In the afternoon, I bought a book for the Chairman, running to both sides of the city. (The Selected Qu is in poor condition)

Reading Comrade Chen Yi's report to the National People's Congress.

*30 April, 1962, sunny*

A letter to Comrade Jiaying.

Wen Wei Bao sent "Where is the Grand View Garden in Beijing? The article, "The original location of the Grand View Garden", is a proof of the its original location and affirms that "Dream of the Red Chamber" is an autobiographical novel, with which Li Xifan has a different opinion. Yesterday, Guangming Daily published Wu Han's article "The Controversy of the Controversy", which also disagrees with Li Xifan.

In the evening, I saw the film Eastward Prelude, which was good in terms of political content and artistic quality.

*1 May, 1962, sunny*

In the morning, I went to Tiananmen Square with my daughter to celebrate May Day.

Reading "Red Crag".

*2 May, 1962, Rain becoming overcast*

I received a letter from home that my wife's sister's factory (a state-run textile) had been shut down and the workers returned to their hometown to deal with the situation. I was disturbed by the mistake in our work, which had caused such consequences.

I went to the Chinese bookstore and met Liu Zizhang, the Director of Culture, who had seen that the Chairman wanted the book "Cursive Tips" (knowing that it would be useful) and was organising photocopies for distribution.

*3 May, 1962, sunny*

Today is the fourth anniversary of the day (four years ago) when the Chairman lifted the dark clouds and reopened the red flag for us, the day we were criticised for our active participation in the Rectification Movement.

[Note] This is the day that the Chairman spoke to us in Zhongnanhai in 1958. Every year on this day, we, the eight Secretaries, meet together to commemorate the anniversary.

*4 May, 1962, sunny*

Preparing a report on "Discontent of Fuxin coal miners (with the leadership)" for publication in "Reports from the Masses".

*8 May, 1962, Gale*

Visiting the 6th calligraphy exhibition in the capital, many good works.

Commander-in-Chief Zhu De: recalling the Jinggang Mountain poem and Mao's quotation: (Chinese culture comes from ancient culture, this banner is well written)

Dong Lao: Recording of Gong Zizhen's poem, good.

Xie Wu-liang: poem in cursive, a different kind of poem.

Shao Yu: (Dean of the Academy of Fine Arts) Running script, new poem (Even though there are many hardships and twists, the performance will last for a thousand years! Good.

Lao She: Running script, Shantou line, good.

Ning Fucheng: A lot of ink (clerical script), very distinctive!

(Others, such as Shen Yinmo, Shen Junru, Liu Zizhang, Xie Zizhai, Deng Tuo, Guo Lao, Ouyang Yuxian, Li Kuchan, Lai Jinxi, Lao She, Ling Zifeng, Zhao Shuli, Gu Jiegang, Ye Shengtao, Wang Kunlun, He Xiangning, etc., also have their own merits in calligraphy.

*9 May, 1962*

(I was informed by the duty office in the morning) The State Council Secretary's Office called to say, "Comrade Xi Zhongxun (Secretary General of the State Council) thinks that the Reports from the Masses is well run, he reads every issue and circulates it up to the Deputy Secretary General."

A call from Xu Ming's office, last report to Premier Zhou (on Peng Dehuai's views on the issue). The Premier had read it and asked his comrades in the Central Committee to circulate it.

In the afternoon the duty office also told us that the State Council Secretary's Office had called and (Secretary General Xi wanted) them to send the Deputy Director and three others to find out how we were doing with the "Reports from the Masses".

Today, I acquired a copy of Nurhaci's Actual Records.

[Note] The State Council was under the control of the Office of the Secretary General. After Xi Zhongxun became the Secretary General of the State Council, Xu Ming became in charge of incoming and outgoing correspondence.

Xu Ming was then the Premier's Chief of Staff. The report on Peng Dehuai's views was a summary of the content of the letters from the public that I wrote to the Premier. At that time, there was a lot of fuss about reversing the case against Peng Dehuai. The main point of my summary report was that if there had been no interference from Peng Dehuai at Lushan at that time, then so many leftist mistakes would not have been made later. The Lushan meeting was supposed to correct the leftist mistakes. When Peng Dehuai made a mess, it turned the meeting into an anti-right one. So Peng Dehuai has been interfering with the Chairman's steps and is still interfering to this day. After the Premier approved this report, this view was shared by everyone.

I spoke about Xi Zhongxun's sending people to take lessons in Chapter 12 earlier.

*10 May, 1962, sunny*

Doing the letter.

Long-distance call from Tian Jiaying, telling him to write the concluding section on Wang Gang and others.

Reading Laozi in the evening.

[Note] Tian Jiaying was following the Chairman to the Central Working Conference in Beidaihe at the time. That meeting was a preparatory meeting for the 10th Plenary Session of the 8th Central Committee.

*11 May, 1962, sunny*

Editing the 40th issue of "Reports from the Masses" ("The General's Son").

Chen, Vice Director of the General Office of the State Council, and three other people visited us to learn about our experience in running Reports from the Masses. We talked about our experience in five points, such as being small and concise, but could not talk much else.

In the evening, we went to Huai Ren Tang to watch the Gan opera "Journey to the West".

[Note] Three people came from the General Office of the State Council, all old cadres, very old cadres. The Premier has a shortcoming, he uses old cadres around him. Not much use is made of young people. Here the Chairman used young people like Lin Ke and Tian Jiaying.

The "five points of experience" were discussed in Chapter 12.

*12 May, 1962, sunny*

Xiang Zhonghua wrote a report to the Central Committee, making some checks on the exposure of "Reports from the Masses", which was not profound.

The Organization Department of the General Administration (of the Military Commission) made an inspection of the issues such as the specialisation of "On Army Cadres" in Issues 1-2 of "Reports from the Masses" and (concluded) that the mass reports were basically true.

Watched the documentary "A Great Journey".

[Note] Xiang Zhonghua was the commander of the armoured corps at the time. Someone wrote to him about his privileged life, and it was published in the "Reports". He admitted it and wrote a review, saying that he accepted the comments. I also published his letter in the "Reports". This was something that Luo Ruiqing had asked about. At that time, the troops were really engaging in seeking privileges. The main thing was the style of eating and drinking, seven big plates and eight big bowls. The public hospitality money was used to drink for themselves. It was still the time of rationing. There was also the occupation of public housing and public property. They decorated their own houses. Using public property to give gifts to one's relatives and friends. But there wasn't much embezzlement at the time. But there was a lot of womanising.

*13 May, 1962, sunny*

Purchase of Yanshan Night Talk, The Burning Book and Selected Writings. Reading The Burning Book at night.

[Note] I read Yanshan Night Talk and wrote a critical letter to the editorial board of Frontline magazine at that time. It said that what you had written was too much. Anyone can see that you are attacking the central leadership. Where is the direction or guidance that you want to propose? But they wouldn't let me print this letter. Instead, they wrote back to me, saying that there were reasonable aspects to your opinion, but that we didn't agree what you said. So we won't publish your letter. Later on, according to their account during the Cultural Revolution, every sentence of this reply was written by Deng Tuo after careful deliberation. I wrote this letter under the

pseudonym "Qi Yi" (the name I used at the school). They went around to find out who Qi Yi was, but after checking, no one knew who it was.

At that time, not only me, but also many people in the General Office of the Central Committee and the Research Office in the rear building wrote letters to them, but they did not publish any of them. Later, the Chairman criticised Yanshan Night Talk. I then took the letter out. When Kang Sheng read it, he said, "Everyone is equal before the truth". This was evidence that this was a typical suppression of criticism. Later he instructed that my letter be published in full in the Guangming Daily.

*14 May, 1962, Windy*

Looking at the documents (sent to the Central Government) from all over the country, there is a strong call for the "household contract responsibility system".

Yang (Director Shangkun) criticised the previous publications (in the "Reports from the Masses") for being inappropriate. But I think it would be good for the comrades in charge of the central government to know about the dark side of society, because it is not the right attitude to be afraid of people knowing about the shortcomings of the work. Compiled and published in Reports, No. 41.

Reading Zhuangzi at night.

[Note] Yang Shangkun felt pressure, he said, and the army had criticisms of him. It was because people thought that the Reports was under Yang Shangkun's control and that it was Yang Shangkun who was trying to get at them. They said the army was a big school for learning Mao Zedong's thought, so how could they say that we were in darkness. In fact, there is a good side to the army, but some of the top leaders do engage in privileges. Yang Shangkun's attitude towards the Reports from the Masses was rather pragmatic. On the one hand, he had opinions about whoever he was talking about, and he asked us to publish many materials on them. For example, he had opinions about Ke Lao of the East China Bureau and Chen Pixian, because Chen Pixian listened to Ke Lao. So he asked me to publish letters about them. But when I published some letters from the public criticising other leaders, he became dissatisfied with me.

*16 May, 1962, sunny*

Collating The Disaster in the Mountain Forest

*17 May, 1962, sunny*

The General Meeting of the Secretariat Branch approved the deferment of the (original) party disciplinary punishment of Wang Gang and others. (The Chairman instructed that some party disciplinary punishments should be suspended on a trial basis to see what happens later, and that if this worked, it could be recommended to the Central Committee for extension.)

*1962.5.19, Saturday, sunny*

Editing Reports from the Masses, No. 43.

Late reading of Jian Bozan's "Discussion Series on Historical Problems".

*1962.5.21, Monday, sunny*

Deputy Director Gong has suppressed a letter reporting the locust plague in Inner Mongolia for 20 days, which is really uncalled for.

22 May, 1962

Ge Huimin wrote in with a complaint, saying that the criticisms against her were made by Yu Xianjue who had listened to the bad guys. Gong Zirong instructed that her comments be published in full in the "Reports from the Masses".

I also heard that Ge wanted to go to Director Yang (Shangkun) to make trouble, and Yang instructed Gong Zirong to receive her. What a tiger's ass!

Editing issues 44 and 45 of Reports from the Masses. Working overtime with Jiang Dejiu to write: "The leading cadres of the Dezhou District Committee violate the law and discipline".

[Note] Ge Huimin didn't just complain, she counterattacked. How can these people be so easily offended.

Gong Zirong instructed that her letter be published in full. I published her letter under the title "Comrade Ge Huimin's response to the public's views in the last issue". This strengthened people's opinions of her.

Yang Shangkun said he asked Mr. Tan to explain that he didn't do it, but that it was done by someone below him, but Tan Zhenlin didn't even listen. He always thought, "How can the people below you log it without your consent?" He didn't know at the time that I had decided to publish it. I was still an unimportant person at that time. When he found out that I had done it, he hated me to the bone, so to speak. These people are vindictive, so to speak. So, it's understandable what their attitude towards the Cultural Revolution was later on.

When I did this, not only was Yang Shangkun passive, even Tian Jiaying was very passive. Tan Zhenlin was always looking into Tian Jiaying's business.

The Chairman scolded Tan Zhenlin very much, but always defended him. During the Great Leap Forward, Tan blew things out of proportion, and he should have been mainly responsible for the starvation deaths. He didn't review the situation either. That's why we all had a strong opinion of him. He was determined to follow the path of socialism, but he was quite good at enjoying himself. He was a worker by birth. He was a hard-core collectiviser and industrialiser.

He had a very bad relationship with Jiang Qing. He wrote a letter to Lin Biao calling Jiang Qing a Wu Zetian<sup>200</sup>. Perhaps this was more or less related to me, because he saw that Jiang Qing trusted me so much and relied on me.

He was angry with Zhang Chunqiao during the "February Backlash". In fact, Zhang Chunqiao had not offended him, but I had. It's just that I happened to be at home writing an article that day and didn't go to the meeting. Otherwise, it is likely that he would have come at me.

In fact, I was quite conflicted inside. Later, when he was struck down, the Chairman still wanted to protect him. Jiang Qing asked me to go and speak to the masses. What I said at the mass meeting was most convincing. I said that although Tan had made mistakes, we had to see that he was different from Liu and Deng. He was a supporter of Chairman Mao in the Party, a staunch advocate of the socialist road, and a staunch opponent of the "household contract responsibility system". It is

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<sup>200</sup> Wu Zetian (624–705) was the de facto ruler of the Tang dynasty, first through her husband the Emperor Gaozong and then through her sons the Emperors Zhongzong and Ruizong, from 665 to 690.

said that he was satisfied with what he heard at the time and said that this lad had spoken human words.

*25 May, 1962, sunny*

(Attending a meeting at the Central Office. Report from Director Yang Shangkun)

The Central Committee has decided to send 100 ministerial-level cadres down to strengthen the work of key counties. All units of the Central Office are to draw people, and Hu Yaobang, Liao Luyin and Li Jiebo have signed up.

Yang (Shangkun) said that the content of the recent issues of "Reports of the Masses" was sharp and had criticised the boss's wife, Mr Tan, as well. Many people thought this reflected badly on her, using the plane (to Beijing) to bring things (live chickens and ducks), so many people had opinions. But I was afraid that this would cause Mr Tan to misunderstand and think that I was fixing him. When I explained this to Mr Tan last time, he said that he was fine with it, but (only) Ge Huimin was nervous. Yang said that in future, we should discuss with him more about it when publishing such things.

At night, I watched the Hunan opera "The Card of Life and Death". (I heard Lin Ke say that Chairman Mao had seen the play and was very moved by the scene in which several people fought for the death card.)<sup>201</sup>

[Note] Lin Ke also told me that the Chairman told him, "Wasn't it the same when you were involved with the Eight Secretaries Incident? You would rather take a beating yourself in order to protect others". Lin Ke said, "Yes. At that time, when Yang Shangkun staged the Eight Secretaries Incident, his first choice of target was Lin Ke, because he had the best relationship with the Chairman and the Chairman trusted him. He said that at that time, in order to protect him, everyone pulled the blame on themselves and told Lin Ke not to make an investigation, but let them do so, so that people would not blame Lin Ke in any way". The Chairman said, "All of you in the Eight Secretaries Incident are really interesting, genuine friends. Like the case of the life and death card".

*26 May, 1962*

The Italian film "She's in the Dark" is a film that could be shown in society to compare the advantages and disadvantages of capitalist and socialist societies.

*27 May, 1962, sunny*

Collating "The many ills of institutional production".

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<sup>201</sup> This story was set in the Ming Dynasty. Saburo, the son of the powerful He Zongbing, was hunting one day and came across a girl Wang Yuhuan, whom he tried to rape. She ran from him across a bridge. Chasing her, he accidentally tripped on the bridge fell into the river, and drowned. He Zongbing demanded that the local magistrate, Huang Boxian, execute Wang Yuhuan. However, she was the daughter of his benefactor, Wang Zhijian, and he was reluctant to execute an innocent person. He planned to secretly release her, but his two daughters feared for him, should he be discovered, and decided that they would be executed in Wang Yuhuan's place. But the three of them argued about who should be executed, and, not being able to reach agreement, decided to place a death card on a wall in the dark, and that whoever touched it would be the one to die. That turned out to be Huang's daughter Xiulan. Wang Zhilan, who had been away fighting, returned home just then, and hearing that his daughter was to be executed, and not knowing of the plans to rescue her, abused Huang for being ungrateful. But when he went to the prison, he saw that the condemned girl was not his daughter, but Huang's. He Zongbing ordered all three girls to be executed, but this was overturned by Hai Rui who released the girls and punished He Zongbing instead.

Visiting the National Art Museum of China.

[Note] It was a time of economic hardship. In order to overcome the difficulties, some departments organised their own production. Some engaged in agricultural production, others in fishing. What was produced was divided among the units, and often the leaders got the most while the people underneath got very little. Everyone had a problem with this. Others took things to the market and sold them cheaper than the market price, resulting in competition with the people for profits. The masses had opinions about this. Some institutions even competed with peasants for land. Later on, the Chairman approved the recommendation that once the situation improved, the production would be given to the peasants and the authorities would no longer be involved.

*28 May, 1962, Monday, sunny*

Someone from the Chinese Revolutionary Museum came to discuss the custody of Chairman Mao's gift. I told them what I knew about the evolution of the Lenin Museum and the significant role of this museum in propagating the proletarian revolution, for their consideration.

[Note] There were many gifts to the Chairman, from foreign guests, as well as from internal guests and overseas Chinese. They are all under the control of the Secretary's Office. For those sent by internal guests, we usually gave money, which was taken from the Chairman's own salary and writing fees. But some of them were sent by overseas Chinese, and you couldn't pay for them. One Chinese sent several catties of bird's nest, saying it was for the Chairman's nourishment. But the Chairman didn't eat it and told him to take all the bird's nest to the Great Hall of the People and use it for foreign guests.

This is what the Chairman's cook told us. During the Cultural Revolution, an old Taoist from Mount Longhu brought the Chairman his own "longevity pills". It really worked, and he had lived to be over 90 years old. The Chairman laughed at it and said he did not believe in this stuff. He told Wang Dongxing to take it and dispose of it. Wang Dongxing took it and put it in his own mouth and ate it up. He also asked me to eat it too. I said, I won't eat it, in case it's poisonous. He said, "Nerd, how dare he give something to the Chairman that is poisoned?" In fact, I thought to myself, "How can you eat something given to the Chairman that the Chairman didn't ask you to eat?" Zhang Yaozhi was eating along with him on the side.

I told them about how the Lenin Museum collected things used by Lenin. They said that this was good. They asked me if I had ever been to the Soviet Union. I said no, but I had read a pamphlet written by the Lenin Museum and passed it to them to read. They found it very enlightening. But it is foolishly said now that the porcelain used by the Chairman, is called "Mao porcelain". This is pure nonsense. The Chairman did not use that stuff.<sup>202</sup>

*29 May, 1962, Tuesday*

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<sup>202</sup> Qi Benyu is referring to the fantastic prices being paid for such Mao artefacts as his porcelain bowls. They were certainly made for him, but Qi says that he refused to use them. In January 1975, the Ceramic Industry Research Institute of the Ministry of Light Industry in Jiangxi secretly developed a batch of porcelain for daily life for Chairman Mao according to the instructions of the Central Office. The project code was "7501". Decades have passed, and the value of this batch of "mysterious" porcelains has also increased tens of thousands of times from the original tens of yuan: a "7501 porcelain" spoon is 100,000 yuan, a small porcelain bowl is 1.7 million yuan, and a pot of ten tea cups and a set of wine sets of 2 million yuan. They are "Mao Porcelain"!

Tian Jiaying returned to Beijing and (decided) to collate materials such as "The Proposal on the 'Household Contract Responsibility System'" (sent to the leading comrades of the Central Government for reference through "Reports from the Masses").

Tian Jiaying said that the proposal on the "household contract responsibility system" should not be relaxed, for if it is relaxed, collectivisation will be in danger of disintegration. Those who have already implemented the "household contract responsibility system" can be allowed to exist and should not be corrected in a hurry.

It was also decided to compile materials on the issue of "the exodus of peasants from the Guangdong coast to Hong Kong" immediately. The matter was said to have caused an international shock, and the British Foreign Office sent us a note with a fair attitude. The United States, on the other hand, wanted to interfere with us on the pretext that they wanted to take the matter to the United Nations, and Kennedy had already spoken several times. The Guomindang is pretending to allocate money for relief. We should have reported this to the Central Government long ago, but now we are slow in reporting it.

The incident of Ge Huimin caused a shock, and the Chairman (who took this issue of "Reports from the Masses") approved it for several people to read.

Wang Gang (who was officially transferred to a local job) came to say goodbye last night. (It seems) he still has feelings for us. (After all, we have been working together for more than a year. Later on, we went down to investigate and study together.)

[Note] The Chairman's instructions were circulated in a very small area. I have not seen it. But I know that the content was critical of Tan Zhenlin. But the Chairman only told him to deal with the matter himself. That had a big impact in Zhongnanhai. Everyone felt happy, who would dare to mess with Boss Tan in general? Several people met me in Zhongnanhai and gave me a thumbs up with a smile.

*30 May, 1962, Wednesday, sunny*

I telephoned the General Office of the Guangdong Provincial Party Committee to tell them to pay attention to a person called Liu who had been doing secret service work against us for ten years (he was trying to get smuggled into Hong Kong by plane) and not to let him go to Hong Kong.

Tian Jiaying came to the office in the morning to talk about the public's opinion of Gong Tongwen's (the pen name of the article co-authored by Wang Renzhong and Mei Xing) article. Tian said that (at a recent enlarged meeting of the Politburo) he had conveyed three opinions to Wang Renzhong.

One, Gong's article said that we should go beyond Chairman Mao. This was inappropriate.

Secondly, it was also inappropriate for Gong to say that he should not be superstitious about Marx.

Thirdly, it was not right to allow others to criticise Gong Wen's writings; to criticise Gong Wen was to be right-wing and rightist.

Tian Jiaying said that the first was arrogant; the second was absurd. Because not to superstitiously believe in Marx means not to superstitiously believe in Marxism, which is a science, and telling people not to superstitiously believe in science simply does not make sense. If not to superstitiously believe in Marx means not to superstitiously believe in Marx himself, then there is no such thing as a personal superstition about Marx! Khrushchev only said that some people had a blind faith in Stalin, he didn't even dare to say he had blind faith in Lenin, let alone Marx!

The third one is that democracy should be made authoritarian.

Tian said that Wang Renzhong heard his criticism and did not say a word. The next day he admitted his mistake and sent the propaganda minister to Beijing to give an account to Lu Dingyi.

Tian added that he had also criticised people there in the meeting, Ke Lao (Qingshi), for sniffing at what was wrong without studying it, and resisting what was right in the name of steadiness. Ke Lao said he would consider his opinion.

(Tian again had a problem with Ye Zilong.) He said that (after the Chairman had transferred Ye Zilong from his job), Ye Zilong disobeyed his job assignment (as deputy director of the Beijing Light Industry Bureau) and told Director Yang (Shangkun) that he was going to be deputy minister of the Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications. Director Yang (Shangkun) said, "He still has to be a minister, not even a director."

Tian said that he regretted that he had not taken back the refrigerator and the mink-collared leather robe that Ye Zilong had embezzled and handed them over to the public.

Tian also conveyed Director Yang (Shangkun)'s opinion and told us to greet the people below (to help He Zai remove his rightist hat).

[Note] Wang Renzhong's comments were indeed wrong. Although Wang Renzhong made a self-criticism at the time, Tian Jiaying and Wang Renzhong had a falling out. After Tian Jiaying's downfall, Wang Renzhong drank for several days in a row.

Later, Chen Boda wrote a report to the Chairman on how to deal with Tian Jiaying. Wang Renzhong immediately complained to the Chairman about Tian Jiaying, saying that he was spreading the idea of the "household contract responsibility system" everywhere.

To be honest, Wang Renzhong had always insisted on socialism. By the time he was defeated, he had not been found to have any objection to socialism.

Nor did he, after the Cultural Revolution, support Deng Xiaoping's idea of the "household contract responsibility system". Nor did he support privatisation. This was also the case with Peng Zhen. After the Cultural Revolution, Peng Zhen's relationship with Deng Xiaoping was never good. Many people in the Party actually looked down on Deng Xiaoping. Zhang Yunyi just kept saying that Deng Xiaoping was a runaway from the Seventh Red Army.

In fact, I have always thought that if we had not used the method of struggling against these people during the Cultural Revolution, but the method of uniting with them, perhaps the result would have been better.

Once the Cultural Revolution was over, although all these people joined forces with Deng Xiaoping and the others to oppose it, many of them did not want capitalism, as Deng Xiaoping did. They still wanted to engage in socialism.

Tian Jiaying criticised Ke Lao. He had a problem with Ke Lao, and he also had a problem with Zhang Chunqiao. At that time, he was so arrogant that he thought he was on Chairman Mao's side. This also doomed his downfall later. I was also very arrogant later on, saying whatever I wanted about whomever I wanted. I dared to say what others did not dare to say, and I was also unconcerned. So, I was bound to collapse too. However, I was only similar to him in character. There was one difference between Tian Jiaying and me, I stuck to socialism. Whereas Tian Jiaying later actually turned to Liu and Deng's side and wanted to engage in capitalism.

Tian Jiaying criticised Wang Renzhong and Tan Zhenlin, mainly for their leftism. Tian Jiaying did not advocate collectivisation.

And I was criticising them for being on the right, for seeking privileges, for being out of touch with the masses and for suppressing them. But I do admire them for sticking to socialism.

The refrigerator was given to the Chairman by the Soviet Union. The Chairman didn't want it, so Ye Zilong took it and used it.

Those Soviet fridges were big and heavy. I also used it. It was originally Wang Jiaxiang's<sup>203</sup>. After he moved out of Zhongnanhai, perhaps because it was too heavy, or perhaps because he bought a new one, he didn't move it and left it in the house. After I was transferred to Red Flag magazine, my family also moved outside Zhongnanhai. After the Cultural Revolution began, I heard that those people from the Western and Eastern Corps were investigating our place and threatening to take some kind of "Black Panther" action<sup>204</sup> against us and wipe us out. When this was reported to Jiang Qing, she ordered us all to be protected. Guan Feng lived in a bigger place, so troops were sent to his house to guard it. I was told to move back to Zhongnanhai and live in the quadrangle where Wang Jiaxiang used to live. Next door to me lived Huang Lao.

He Zai's rightist hat was removed at that time and he later went to Shanxi. The people there looked after him quite well. After the Cultural Revolution, he went to the Central Organization Department as a deputy minister. When I was released in 1986, I went to stay with a friend in Shenzhen. I heard that there was a retired Beijing cadre living in a building next door, and that he was always recruiting pretty girls to provide special services for him. I wondered which big cadre it was. Later on, I inquired, but it turned out to be He Zai. He was also corrupt.

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<sup>204</sup> Not to be confused with the US Black Panthers, Qi Benyu's reference is to a specially trained commando force of the PLA which fought a famous evacuation operation on 7 January 1987 when the PLA went into Vietnam.

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*1 June, 1962, Friday, bright night-time*

In the afternoon, I listened to Tian Jiaying's report on the current situation in the countryside.

The "Proposal on the household contract responsibility system" was prepared for printing as a booklet.

*3 June, 1962, Sunday, wind and rain*

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Visiting old workers at Changxindian Railway Factory.

*4-6 June 1962, Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday, sunny*

On the 4th, we studied documents and on the 5th and 6th, we printed the proposal of "the household contract responsibility system" and distributed it to all comrades of the Central Committee.

*9 June, 1962, Saturday, sunny*

Comrade Xi Zhongxun approved a letter from Jiangsu Province against seeking privileges, (instructions for the publication in "Reports of the Masses") sorting and printing in the morning.

(Afternoon) Reading the material "A few things about the Shaanxi Provincial Party Secretary's expenses and waste", collating and typesetting.

[Note] Those were all senior leaders on the front line.

*12 June, 1962, Tuesday, sunny, light rain in the evening*

Editing material for "Seeking Privileges in the Jilin Provincial Committee", going to press.

*18 June, 1962, Monday, sunny*

Edited "Six Party members who resolutely fought against privileges" (published in "Reports").

Recently watched films such as "Three Mile Bay" and "The Young People in Our Village".

*19 June, 1962*

After work, I read the Outline of Qin History and an abridged version of a famous work of Western literature.

I also admired the Ming inscription on the Kong Zu Stele rubbings, purchased by Chen Boda for 80 yuan and annotated by Bing Chen. Kang Lao has the Song rubbings of this stele in storage, and there are Song people's, Ming people's and Qing people's. (Bing Chen made an annotation on the copy in Chen Boda's storage which I borrowed for comparison). Gao Nanfu made annotations. I feel that this copy does not resemble the Song style, as both the Song and Ming texts are forgeries, but only the Gao text seems authentic.

*23 June, 1962*

Edited 'On the relationship between the wage system and the privileges of cadres' for 'Reports from the Masses'.

*24 June, 1962*

Visiting Comrade (former Deputy Director of the Chinese Secretariat) Peng Dazhang, who was recently demoted to Secretary of the County Party Committee. He spoke to me about his views on Tan Zhenlin and General Wang Zhen.

Tan Zhenlin said many wrong things at the provincial party committee's seminar in October 1959, and was both uninformed and subjective, staying in the most luxurious hotels when he went down there and not going down to the lower levels. He should be sent down to the countryside so that he could do some practical work and correct his mistakes.

Wang Zhen's work is not realistic, high indicators, under pressure to have a big hat put on, only this year admitted mistakes.

Peng also said that there are now some places where they are going in for large-scale production, and the labourers were losing money. Heilongjiang's leaders are building a guest house for the central leadership on the pretext that it is like a maze inside. (I heard that Ye Zilong took advantage of the Chairman's outbound tour) to renovate Chun Ou Zhai<sup>207</sup>, and the Chairman came back furious. The Chairman is wise not to follow the path of Emperor Yang of Sui<sup>208</sup>, some places are simply repeating the mistakes of Emperor Yang of Sui.

*29 June, 1962, Friday, sunny*

Edited "Border Front Update".

*9 July, 1962, Monday*

Recently, I compiled five issues of "Reports from the Masses" (61-65), including "Opinions on Comrade Liu Ren", "About the encroachment of cadres on peasant fields", which was approved by Premier Zhou, and the material of Director Yang (Shangkun) on "Sponsoring the responsibility fields in Anhui".

Read Nurhaci's Actual Records and the General History of the Northeast, and also The Theory of the People's Covenant.

Watched the film The Story of the Cuban Revolution.

*13 July, 1962, Friday, rain*

I was approached by Tian Jiaying for a talk. The following comments were made on the Reports from the Masses.

(a) The title should be objective. The tendency should be correct. Don't be inclined to issues that have not been decided by the Central Government. For example, if the letter is about the "household contract responsibility system", you should not use a supportive title indiscriminately. Deng Lao (Zichuan) advocated the "household contract responsibility system", but his opinion was not yet a decision of the Central Government. He did not yet agree with Deng's views. The letter from Director Yang (Shangkun), "Sponsoring the responsibility fields in Anhui", was not suitable for publication, so I asked you to delay it. We cannot be held responsible for the mistakes that have been made, and we do not know very much about the actual situation of the responsibility fields in Anhui.

(2) Some of the references in the editor's note should be considered carefully, as we are a publication of the Central Office, and we should consider the relationship between the comrades in charge of the General Office and other leading comrades.

(iii) It would be appropriate to change [this journal's newsletter] to [this journal's comprehensive materials]

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<sup>207</sup> Chun Ou Zhai, located next to the Yi Nian Hall, is an ancient building. There are pools of lotus roots at the front and back of the hall. The Yi Nian Hall was the place where Mao Zedong convened the central leaders for small meetings, and ordinary people could not enter. Chun Ou Zhai was the venue for weekend dance parties, and occasionally movies were shown.

<sup>208</sup> Emperor Yang Guang (569-618) of the Sui Dynasty committed to several large construction projects, most notably the completion of the Grand Canal, and the reconstruction of the Great Wall, a project which took the lives of nearly six million workers. He also ordered several military expeditions that left the empire bankrupt and the populace in revolt.

Editorial: "Some people in Dingyuan County, Anhui Province, take the opportunity of rehabilitation to beat up cadres, who dare not go out".

*14 July, 1962, Saturday*

At the end of last week, Chairman Mao talked to a comrade in the Chinese Secretariat about the work of the masses in writing letters, asking how many letters had been written in favour of the "household contract responsibility system" and by whom (an analysis should be made). What was the response to the letters on the streamlining of the country's work? And so on. After listening to the report, Tian Jiaying decided to make a report on his work to the Chairman, and it was decided at the meeting that I would draft it.

Note: I was told that the Chairman had conveyed to me what he wanted, and I knew that the Chairman had views on the "household contract responsibility system".

*16 July, 1962, Monday, rain*

Yesterday, Sunday, I went to the home of my old friend Zhao Suxing from the regimental school and met his new wife Lin Min (who works at the Beijing Picture Gallery and is a retired member of the Air Force). He told me about many of his comrades from the regimental school: Wu Jianxun (class teacher) is in the Construction and Engineering Department, Hang Guanhua is in the Academy of Fine Arts, Lu Kai is in the Zhejiang Provincial Youth League Committee, Wang Bixia (the flower of the regimental school) is in the Construction and Engineering Department, Zhou Zuxi is in the Sports Committee, and Zhu Xiaolun and Han Bin are in the Central Committee of the regiment.

Zhao Suxing worked for the Military Commission, and his wife was also transferred from the Air Force to work in the Beijing Library. She later told me that someone was manipulating my materials. Han Bin was a worker and peasant cadre, and it was he who firmly recommended me to work in Zhongnanhai, saying that there was hope for this person in the future. He was in charge of the organisation in our class.

[Note] Feng Wenbin was the headmaster of the regimental school at that time, a man of little prestige. He couldn't walk away when he saw a pretty female student and always approached people to talk. We all thought he had gone too far when we saw him. Later Hu Yaobang transferred him to be the director of the Central Office. Feng actually offered to ask Zhang Yufeng to sleep with him and was scolded by Zhang Yufeng. Zhang Yufeng wrote a letter to the Central Government, saying how could there be such a director of the Central Office? She said that the Chairman and the Premier both treated her with respect. Hu Yaobang immediately dismissed him.

*21 July, 1962, Monday*

A performance of Peking Opera at the Spring Lotus Root Festival. At eight o'clock, Chairman Mao came and sat in the middle of the first row, Jiang Qing sat on his right, and Peng Zhen and his wife came and sat on the Chairman's left. I happened to sit behind the Chairman in the second row. The play 'Lost in the Air', with Tan Yuanshou playing Zhuge Liang. The Chairman was very familiar with the singing in this play and often nodded his head along with the parts, whispering with Jiang Qing during the performance to comment on the singing work of the actors. At the end of the performance, the Chairman and his wife, and Peng Zhen, stood up to applaud and thank them.

*24 July, 1962, Tuesday*

I heard that the Chairman is going to Beidaihe tomorrow, so the Peking Opera performance at the weekend has been brought forward to today. Today's performance features three famous actors, Zhang Junqiu, Tan Fuying and Qiusheng Rong. The play 'The Great Protection'. When the actors came out, the Chairman and Jiang Qing applauded and welcomed them. During the performance, the Chairman kept clapping with his hands, relaxed and at ease. One of the actors fainted on stage and later said that he was so nervous that he fainted because he was afraid that he would not be able to perform well when he saw the Chairman for the first time. Jiang Qing immediately asked someone to carry him to the back of the stage and asked a doctor to give him first aid. When the doctor came, he had already regained consciousness and Jiang Qing ran up and down the stage several times to check on him and came back to tell the Chairman that he was all right, so he was relieved. At the end of the performance, the Chairman asked him again if he was well, and the actors thanked the Chairman for his care.

Edited issues 66 and 67 of "Reports from the Masses", mainly focusing on the production malpractices of the organisations.

*5 August, 1962*

My mother brought my son from Shanghai to Beijing for a reunion. I took a bus to the station early in the morning to pick them up.

Editing a draft of "The Relationship between Population Development and Food Production in China" for publication in "Reports from the Masses" for the Central Government's reference.

Appreciating the Qing dynasty's Qian Li's "Postscript on Contested Seats" in Tian Jiaying's collection, the writing is really good. If Yan Zhenqing could see it, he would be happy.

*6 August 1962, Monday*

Cui Ying came to see me today and told me that she had met the Chairman when she was swimming some time ago and that he had heard that her husband had died in the line of duty while she was decentralised to the countryside and had expressed his condolences to her and told her to raise her children well. The Chairman said that her name was memorable and that there was a Cui Yingying in The West Wing. He also said, "The essays in The West Wing are beautifully written, you can read them more often, I've read them a dozen times!"

[Note] Cui Ying is of Korean origin and is a member of my section.

*7 August, 1962, Tuesday*

The publication "The Yellow Cow (Speculators) Run Factories" appeared in Reports from the Masses.

Tian Jiaying returned to Beijing and talked about the current situation, saying that many issues were still being discussed by the Central Government and opinions were divided, and that for the time being, Reports should not publish more and take less of a stand.

*18 August, 1962*

My mother returned to Shanghai today. This time, she came to Beijing, accompanied her to eat Peking duck and invited her to watch Peking opera performed by Ma Lianliang and Zhang Junqiu, and opera criticism performed by Xin Fengxia. She was very happy and said that she was content to live in Zhongnanhai, where the emperor had lived. I was so busy with my work that I had taken little care of my parents for many years, and when I sent her off on the train, I was very upset.

*25 August, 1962, sunny, Saturday*

The pamphlet Sun Chengzong is finished and ready to be sent to the Zhonghua Book Company for publication.

Tian Jiaying returned to Beijing to talk about certain aspects of the enlarged meeting of the Central Political Bureau.

This time there was more talk, more mixed. The main points are

(1) Some people are now talking about the good situation again, saying that more horses have been dismounted in the past and advocating that they should get back on the horse and do a great job.

(2) At the meeting, many people criticised the idea of the "household contract responsibility system", saying that it was a question of two roads. Tan Zhenlin was the most energetic, making many specious criticisms and listing many unfounded targets for increasing production. His tail was up in the air.

(3) (Many people have strong opinions about Chen Zhengren.) It was said that Chen made false reports at the meeting, reporting that he had gone to Hunan and other places and seen the common people were all red. In fact, he did not go into the countryside at all. The comrades who went down with him to investigate were furious when they saw that he was telling lies! When Director Yang (Shangkun) found out about this, he said he would ask someone to write an anonymous letter and have it published in the "Reports from the Masses". Tian said, "That's not a good idea. We should write a letter with a name". It was said that Chen Zhengren was an old revolutionary, and his name was mentioned in the first volume of Mao's Selected Works, but his style was not good, and he used to be Gao Gang's lieutenant and had been criticised within the Party. He liked a flower girl actress and took her as his goddaughter, for whom he threw a banquet. (Tian said that it was not a coincidence that Tian saw this incident.) Chen Zhengren invited Tian to another meal (meaning that Tian should not say anything to the public). But he was a bourgeois politician in his politics, which was not pleasant to see, and he went around saying that Tian was a big support.

(4) Once when drafting a document of the Central Committee, there was the phrase "report the situation truthfully" in it. Chen Boda was saying that it should be amended to "reflecting the situation from the standpoint of the proletariat", otherwise the idea of "individual production" would be carried in the internal press. Individualistic thinking had also become "reporting the situation truthfully." Tian said I would have to refute him. I said that if there is the idea of contracting production and going it alone, it should be reported truthfully so as to let the central government know! Hu Sheng said, "If we follow the old man's meaning, then in the United States we would have to say, 'reflect the situation with bourgeois positions and views'", and everyone laughed. Chen Boda's "revision" opinion had to be dismissed.

(5) At the Central Committee meeting, Deng Zichuan was heavily criticized. When the Chairman talked to him, he did not mention a single word about his own views on the issue of the "household contract responsibility system", and in fact, he disregarded organisational discipline by making reports everywhere and advocating such views. However, when he reviewed the situation, he did not look for the reasons himself, but instead involved Tian Jiaying, saying that he had been "influenced by Tian Jiaying's Hunan rural survey". Tian (Jiaying after hearing this) got angry, for, in fact, Deng's report was everywhere first, and Tian's investigation report was later. He criticised Deng Zichuan for being disorganised and undisciplined in making reports everywhere and deserved to be criticised. Later, Deng blackened his heart and said he was influenced by others. Such a person was criticised to death by others, and no one had any sympathy. Later someone relayed these circumstances to Deng Zichuan, Deng said, "Alas, mistaken, misunderstanding, misunderstanding! "

(6) Some people at the meeting also criticised Tian Jiaying on these situations, and Tian laughed out loud, quoting a poem by Wen Tianxiang, "Names are not listed in the centre of the policy, but the land of the Queen of Heaven is clearly understood afterwards." It means that I am a man of no reputation, but God knows who loves and cares for the people.

(7) Yang Jiaying and Wu Lengxi discussed the matter and determined that we should not follow the wind. We should still report what should be reported, and the proposal on the "household contract responsibility system", could still be published in internal publications, so that the Central Government could understand the situation. (Qi's note: However, in addition to my proposal on the "household contract responsibility system", I also published a piece of material in the People's Reflections that was positively opposed to the "household contract responsibility system", but I was criticised by Tian Jiaying for wavering. I felt aggrieved by Tian's criticism and said to him, "Last time when you came back to tell us about the editorial policy of the Reports from the Masses, you said that materials advocating the "household contract responsibility system" could be published, but you did not say that opinions opposing the "household contract responsibility system" could not be published. He said, "You are apologizing for yourself for fear of being criticized for publishing the proposal for the "household contract responsibility system". I said I didn't even know how the Central Committee was discussing the issue, let alone that the idea of the "household contract responsibility system" had been criticised at the enlarged meeting of the Central Committee. I only think that opposing views are also a kind of dynamic, regardless of whether one is in favour of them or not, one should also collate them and publish them, otherwise how will people in the central government know that there are also people who oppose the idea of the "household contract responsibility system"? Besides, what if the crop is not harvested when the production is contracted out? What about the polarisation of the countryside? We need to look into it. Tian said, "I don't care what you think, I don't agree that the "household contract responsibility system" is a struggle between two roads, if the central government says yes, I also say yes, but I reserve my opinion. I said, "That's what the letter writer said. (It was only an opinion.)

(8) Tian said that two Marxists were also criticized at the meeting (the two Marxists were Wang Renzhong and Tao Zhu, whom Tian Jiaying described as Marxists, meaning it sarcastically). They were left for a while, surprisingly left. For example, they strongly advocated the expulsion of those who advocated the "household contract responsibility system" from the Party. At other times they were so far right. (For example, they insisted that the management of the fields must be "contracted out to the households", that is, the responsibility fields in Anhui Province, and the five unities<sup>209</sup>). Their ideas were contradictory!

(9) The central government still advocates maintaining two markets and two prices, says Tian.

(10) But the Central Government has not yet come up with a solution on how to manage the fields. (Tian pointed at me and said, "If you are interested, I agree to let you go down to investigate and study, and then put out a satellite!" I said, "If you don't have a solution, how can I come up with one if I go down there?" (Tian asked the others who were interested, but no one said yes.

In the evening, we watched the British film "The Red Shoes"<sup>210</sup>. It is an art film rich in philosophy (the philosophy of pain).

26 August, 1962

Tian Jiaying continued to talk about the situation at the room meeting.

- (a) Tian said that Chen Boda was very leftist. He is a person who ignores his conscience. During the Tianjin investigation, the cadres conveyed to him the peasants' demand to work individually, but instead of reporting this to the Central Government, he talked about the good situation. The materials he forwarded to the Central Government were also materials that talked about the good

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<sup>209</sup> The "five unified" system of land management means that the government implements unified requisition (recovery of levies), unified reserves, unified development, unified allocation, and unified management.

<sup>210</sup> The Red Shoes is a 1948 British drama film written, directed, and produced by Michael Powell and Emeric Pressburger. It is based on a fairytale by Hans Christian Andersen.

situation, and he said that this was Marx's way of thinking of grasping the mainstream. Tian said that this was pragmatic Marxism. Tian also said that Chen Boda wanted to pull his secretary Feng Xianzhi over to Beidaihe. He directed Feng to do things for him, but Feng excused himself by saying he had something to do out of town. Chen Boda had not trained a secretary in all these years. He always had trouble with his secretary. Shi Jingtang was so loyal to him; even though he still wanted to use Shi Jingtang, he looked down on others.

- (b) Tian said that Liao Luyan<sup>211</sup> was a son of a bitch! He said he was going down, but in fact he was staying in the Northeast Hotel to recuperate. This time it was so left that it was a two-line struggle to attack people.
- (c) Tian said that he had spoken for an hour at the Beidaihe Conference, but he did not criticize in good conscience that the "household contract responsibility system" was a struggle between two roads, and if he had spoken in good conscience, he would have spoken better than those guys. Tian said his own speech was also a "slick speech". "I am against saying that preserving some free market is capitalism, but instead of saying that directly, I am saying that the premise of capitalism is that labour becomes a commodity, not that preserving some commodity economy is capitalism. I say that there were commodities in slave societies, and big speculators, but that's not capitalism. When I said this, Tan Zhenlin listened very well. I was clearly against the abolition of the free market, but Tan Zhenlin loudly agreed with me! He couldn't even hear that I was objecting to his labeling of the free market as capitalism! I was opposing him, and he didn't know I was opposing him, but he agreed with me! Tian says that I also object to saying that the distribution of labour produces polarisation. But I don't say that, instead I cited the Critique of the Gotha Programme. The Gotha Programme says that the distribution of labour is a socialist principle. Socialism also has divisions, but they are divisions between the poor and the middle peasants and the rich middle peasants, not polarisation into an exploiting class. Tan Zhenlin also could not hear that I was opposing him and also expressed agreement with me at the meeting."
- (d) Tian said that some leaders of the central government, such as Wang Heshou, were more vocal than local comrades in their opposition to the idea of the "household contract responsibility system".
- (e) Li Jingquan was so far to the left!
- (f) Tan Zhenlin even said something like this, you have to be realistic when you talk about the situation, and talk about what is good, and if it is good, it is good, and as for the task of requisitioning, it can be negotiated, so we all have to be optimists and resist the darkness. But there will be no increase in the requisitioning tasks, and there will be grain imports this year.
- (g) Tian said, "I hope Comrades Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping can hold steady and will not let them mess around."
- (h) Tian said that Premier Zhou had comforted him by quoting Chairman Mao's poem, " Beware of heartbreak with grievance overfull, Range far your eyes over long vistas."<sup>212</sup> Tian said, "This is the Premier's fear that I am too young and angry." The Premier also said, "There were defeats after the Zunyi Conference, and some people did not carry out Chairman Mao's line."
- (i) Tian appreciates the words of Zhou Tianzi as recorded in the Zuo Zhuan: Convince people with reason, not with force. But the provincial party secretaries were not very good, and they did not understand the theory they were talking about.

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<sup>211</sup> Liao Luyan (1913-1972) joined the Communist Party of China in 1932. Participated in leading the Beijing Student Movement. Later he served as editor of Shanxi Anti-Japanese Military and Political Training Committee and instructor of military and political training class. Director of the Political Department and Brigade Political Department of the Shanxi Youth Anti-Enemy Decisive Team. Went to Yan'an in 1939. Later, he served as section chief of the United Front Work Department of the CPC Central Committee, researcher of the Party Affairs Research Office, and secretary-general and deputy director of the Policy Research Office of the CPC Central Committee. From June 1959 to the beginning of the Cultural Revolution, he concurrently served as the Deputy Director of the Agriculture and Forestry Office of the State Council. He was struggled against and imprisoned during the Cultural Revolution and died in November 1972.

<sup>212</sup> See Mao Zedong's poem *Reply to Mr Liu Yazhi*, April 29 1949.

- (j) Tian said that the day before, Lu Dingyi had lectured at the Propaganda Department about the benefits of the "household contract responsibility system", but when the Central Committee met this time, he heard some rumours and immediately turned the rudder and lectured again about the disadvantages of the "household contract responsibility system". I do not have this ability. Chen Boda, Lu Dingyi, Chen Zhengren and Liao Luyin are all like that!
- (k) Tan Zhenlin had a big fight with Director Yang (Shangkun) during the meeting and criticized Yang for being right-wing (i.e. supporting the "household contract responsibility system").
- (l) After listening to Tian Jiaying's talk about what he had seen and heard at the Central Committee meeting, the meeting reported to him on the life meeting of the middle-level cadres of the Central Secretariat. After listening, Tian made some comments to three people:
  - (1) Qi Benyu. "(1) talented, but not firm enough, easily wavering, such as the "household contract responsibility system", and when he heard some wind, he published material against the "household contract responsibility system"; (2) selfish. For example, the 'Survey on Surveys', which was given to me and then to Peng Zhen. Isn't this throwing oneself into the net? He will listen to your criticism, if I had known, I would not have forwarded it from you to the Chairman; (3) when investigating factories in Tianjin, in addition to doing the working group's tasks, I engaged in my own set of ("referring to going to banks to do financial investigation)."
  - (2) To Lu Cheng. "(1) too much selfishness; (2) very fierce, brutal, democratic style lacking. (3) He is worried and not sure what he will do when he comes to power, as Ma Zhijiang is."
  - (3) To Li Gongchuo. "It can't be helped, he's too selfish."

(This was Tian Jiaying's criticism of three members of the Eight Secretaries Incident at one time. After the meeting Ma Zhisun, a member of the Eight Secretaries Incident, said to us, "Maybe Master has been in a bad mood lately and has criticised you all heavily." (But I really didn't care very much at the time.)

*October 24, 1962*

Tian Jiaying conveyed a number of issues from the 8th Plenary Session of the 10th Central Committee in Beidaihe at a room meeting of the Secretariat Office of the Central Office.

The theme of the meeting was class and class struggle.

(a) Internationally, Soviet has done eight things, Iraq, India, the atomic bomb, the Peace Conference, etc., none of which has been done correctly.

At the peace conference our chief made a mistake by expressing his appreciation of Khrushchev's speech.

(b) There are two winds at home: the wind of reversal and the wind of individualism.

First, the wind of reversal

Peng Dehuai wanted to overturn the case. He wrote a complaint of 80,000 words. He overturned the past self-criticism, saying, "The past self-criticism was forced upon me". Peng also vigorously denied the criticism that he was a "foreigner", saying that he did not know foreign languages, so how could he be a "foreigner"?

In fact, he could not reverse this "foreign language".

(1) He said to Khrushchev that China did not understand your policy guidelines in the past, but now it does.

(2) He had said to Bulganin that the socialist countries would have to create a unified body.

(3) The Soviet Union had sent a Chinese-American (Soviet) intelligence officer to contact him alone.

(4) Khrushchev had said publicly in foreign countries that Peng Dehuai was his best friend, as was Gao Gang, and that Mao was just worn-out galoshes; Khrushchev still supports Peng Dehuai to this day.

There is still a lot of material that is not suitable for disclosure. The central government did not wrong him.

In his complaint, Peng Dehuai also boasted that he had organised a soldiers' committee in the army and staged the Pingjiang riot long before the August 1 Nanchang Uprising in 1927.

Peng Dehuai is very good at interfering with our work during difficult times. We are now focusing on our current work, and the Central Committee has set up a committee headed by He Long to examine and deal with his problems. In addition to the reversal of Peng Dehuai's case, there has recently been a reversal of Gao Gang's case.

Xi Zhongxun supported Li Zhitong's novel Liu Zhidan from sectarianism and wanted to overturn the case for Gao Gang. But Chairman Mao protected Xi Zhongxun and the case was handed over to the Premier and Comrade Kang Sheng for review.

The second was the wind of single-mindedness.

Chairman Mao analysed that in the face of difficulties, there were three types of people in the Party.

First, those who are determined to overcome their difficulties and do not waver, such as Lin Biao, Premier Zhou, Ke Qingshi, Li Jingquan, Peng Zhen and Tao Zhu.

Two, those who wavered and were afraid, such as Deng Zichuan.

Third, those who gloat, such as Peng Dehuai.

Deng Zichuan was resolute in the democratic revolution, but he was not prepared for the socialist revolution. In the past, he cut down cooperatives, and now he is vigorously promoting the "package of production to the household. He gave a lecture at the Party School, where many people sympathised with him. He also gave a lecture at the Logistics Department of the Military Committee and so on. Comrade Luo Mai used his own experience of making mistakes to educate him, but I wonder if he can correct them?

Chairman Mao wanted us to stick to the collective economy of the people's communes, and his analysis, based on reports from comrades in Shandong and Henan, said that in another three years, the agricultural economy would be revived and the collective economy would have a major development.

Tian Jiaying did not mention the political attitudes of Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping in his conveyance, nor did he mention Chen Yun, but only Deng Zichuan. But Deng Zichuan was not a member of the Politburo, and it was Deng Zichuan who was formally criticised by the Chairman at the Tenth Plenary Session.

## **Chapter 16: Transferred to the Rear Building Research Office and going to Tangshan to carry out the pilot of the "Four Clean-ups" campaign**

1. Transferred from "Reports from the Masses" to the Rear Building Research Office
2. The Rear Building Research Office
3. To Tangshan to carry out the pilot of the "Four Clean-ups" campaign

### **1. Transferred from "Reports from the Masses" to the Rear Building Research Office**

Yang Shangkun had always had a strong opinion of the "Reports from the Masses", which I edited. Although he would sometimes often approach me to publish things that were critical of people he didn't like, he was always worried that I would stir up trouble for him. Especially because of the Ge Huimin affair, his relationship with Tan Zhenlin was very tense. Later on, he and Tian Jiaying were both attacked by Tan Zhenlin on the issue of the mass opinion album on the "household contract responsibility system". So, he had a discussion with Tian Jiaying and transferred me from my job.

It was around the middle of 1963 when Gong Zirong approached me and said that so many people had failed to produce much from the "Situation Reflections" in the Rear Building of the General Office, but that such a small publication as "Reports from the Masses" had relayed a lot of information to the Central Committee, so it was now decided to transfer you to the Research Office in the Rear Building to strengthen the editorial work of "Situation Reflections". So, I left Reports of the Masses. When I was transferred to the Rear Building, Gong Zirong gave me the name of researcher on the registration form. But I knew that I was still very young, and that the people working in the "back building" were all very old and highly qualified party cadres. So, when I attended meetings, I consciously sat in the back row.

I was honestly prepared for this transfer, because the "Reports" was run so sharply that it was published as soon as the leading cadres did something privileged, which of course made many people feel happy, but it was also bound to make some people feel uncomfortable, especially those leaders who liked to seek privileges, and they always felt restless.

Tian Jiaying has always been very supportive of my work, and he has a characteristic of never passing the buck to his subordinates. I respect him for that. He sometimes accepted Yang Shangkun's advice because he had no choice but to do so. At that time, he was also a firm advocate of the "household contract responsibility system", and in fact he had completely fallen in line with Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping. Yang Shangkun was the one who carried out the line of Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping, so he could not afford to offend them.

I had produced a total of more than 100 issues of "Reports from the Masses". After I left, Ma Zhisun took over the reins and she did a good job. However, Lin Ke later told me that the Chairman did not read it much anymore and did not give any further instructions.

### **2. The Rear Building Research Office**

In the beginning, reports from all places (including the regions and provinces and cities) to the Central Government were also handled by the Secretary's Office. Then the Central General Office thought that this would leave them with nothing. So a special body was set up to deal with the

reports from various places to the Central Committee, as well as to present their findings and proposed solutions to the Central Committee. Letters and documents from various places to Chairman Mao, on the other hand, were still handled by the Secretary's Office. Since this body was located in the rear building of Zhongnanhai, it was customarily called the "Rear Building Research Office". Apart from that, it had no other official name. It did not have a director either, but was divided into separate groups, such as the General Group, the Industrial Group, the Agricultural Group, the Cultural and Educational Group, and the Masses Group. In total, there were 30 or 40 people, all of whom were high-ranking cadres. The work of each group was reported directly to Yang Shangkun or Gong Zirong (deputy director of the Central Office).

In 1963, when I was transferred to the Backstairs Research Office, I was assigned to the General Group. In 1954, after Rao Shushi's case, Yang Shangkun asked Chen Qizhang to look into Rao Shushi's history. He did so, and then reported factually that he had found nothing wrong. So Yang Shangkun trusted him. Until after the Cultural Revolution, Chen Qizhang was still working as a researcher in the General Office of the Central Government.

The Reflections is the work of the General Affairs Team, headed by Chen Qizhang. When I first joined, I assisted him with the "Situation Reflections", together with Wang Qinglin and a reporter named Luo. At that time, the main task of the Reflections was to investigate and report to the Central Government on the situation in rural areas, as rural work was a major issue that affected the overall situation. At that time, the Chairman was very concerned about agriculture, and he did not read much about industry, culture and education, but he had to read about agriculture. Therefore, we had to report on the situation in the countryside whenever it was reported from below. The Chairman also read all of them and crossed them out on the top, but there didn't seem to be many specific instructions.

### **3. To Tangshan to carry out the pilot of the "Four Clean-ups" campaign**

In June 1963, the General Office of the Central Government formed a rural investigation team to go to the countryside to carry out a pilot socialist education campaign (later called the "Four Clean-ups" campaign). I joined the working group that went to Fanning County in the Tangshan region of eastern Hebei. The Taoyuan brigade where Wang Guangmei went was near the place where I went.

During the three years of hardship, there was all kinds of confusion in society, and there was also confusion in the Party's thinking. At that time, we learnt from the information reflected in letters from the masses that various strange phenomena in society had resurfaced, and some feudal and superstitious activities, which had been outlawed after the founding of the country, were also rampant, and in some places, there were even bootleggers. Some rumours even reached Zhongnanhai, saying that it was the end of the world on such and such a day in such and such a year, and so on.

Strangely enough, as soon as the 8th Plenary Session of the 10th Central Committee was held at the end of 1962 and Chairman Mao made the call to "never forget the class struggle", all those things immediately went into hiding, as if they had all disappeared at once.

The main purpose of our visit was to investigate how to carry out a "socialist education campaign" in the countryside. After a period of time, we found that the biggest problem in the countryside at that time was the problem of private distribution and sale by cadres, and this problem was very common. The chief of the production team, the accountant and a few other key cadres secretly gave themselves more grain than they should have, and then quietly sold the grain on the "free market". At that time, the national price for grain was only a few cents, but when it was sold on the free

market, the price was several times higher. The situation was better in the teams. In those days, when the crops were harvested, they were divided into piles on the grain field and then the dozen or so families in the team claimed them themselves. Everyone could see them. It was difficult to divide up a lot of the crops privately. But after the production brigade and commune, it was much easier for the cadres there to divide it up. But don't think that the people don't know about these things, they see it in their eyes and remember it in their hearts. So when we went down there, once the team was mobilised, a group of "brave elements" would immediately come forward and expose the problems of the cadres.

In fact, in any mass movement, the first people to come forward must be the "brave ones". These people are usually more active, but they are not always good in their own right and often have a lot of flaws. For example, they were often guilty of stealing chickens and dogs, or of being a "broken shoe"<sup>213</sup>. When the movement came, these people were often the first to rise up. Later, Chairman Mao also said that these people were still useful, but they should not be relied on to hold power.

The team did not go into the village for several months, but secretly engaged in some "taking root and connecting with each other", going from house to house to find out the situation. At that time, we were very unimpressed by this practice, as we didn't think it was necessary. If you went down and mobilised the masses, the situation would be clear. So we didn't pay much attention to it. Later, Liu Shaoqi turned it into the so-called "Taoyuan experience" and wanted to promote it throughout the country, which was criticised by Chairman Mao. It was then that we felt there was something wrong with it.

Liu Shaoqi and his people, though strongly denying the existence of classes and class struggle in a socialist society, opposed the Marxist theory of class struggle upheld by Chairman Mao. But when it came to concrete practices, especially when it came to mass movements, they were never ambivalent about class struggle. This can be seen clearly from the anti-rightist movement in 1957 and his practice of the "bourgeois reactionary line" at the beginning of the Cultural Revolution. After the Cultural Revolution, Deng Xiaoping rejected Chairman Mao's theory of "class struggle as the basis", but when the June Fourth Incident occurred, he even used the army to suppress the mass movement. This is the same practice.

While Chairman Mao attached great importance to class struggle, he always believed that in this historical period of socialism, the real danger came mainly from within the ruling Communist Party, especially from the top of the Party. This was the reason why Chairman Mao later called Liu Shaoqi's approach to the "Four Clean-ups" during the Cultural Revolution "leftist in form but rightist in reality". To put it simply, the class struggle advocated by Chairman Mao was mainly directed at the top. Liu Shaoqi's struggle, on the other hand, was directed mainly at the masses below.

In 1964, Chairman Mao made it clear that "the focus of this campaign is to overthrow those in power within the Party who have taken the capitalist road", which was resisted and opposed by Liu Shaoqi and his group. In this way, a pattern of struggle between the two lines within the Party was formed.

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<sup>213</sup> Before Liberation, under patriarchal sway, it was originally a term of abuse for women who committed adultery.

At the outset, reports to the central government from all regions (including the districts and provinces and municipalities) were also handled by the secretary's office. Later, the Central Office thought that they knew nothing. A special body was therefore set up to deal with local reports to the Central Committee and to present their findings and recommendations to the Central Government. Letters and documents addressed to Chairman Mao are still processed by the Secretary's Office. Since the institution is located in the back building of Zhongnanhai, it is used to calling it the "back building research room". Other than that, it has no other official name. It also does not have a director, but is an independent group, such as integrated groups, industrial groups, agricultural groups, cultural and educational groups, mass groups. There are a total of thirty or forty people, all of whom are high-ranking cadres. The work of each group is reported directly to Yang Shangkun or Yu Zirong (Deputy Director of the Central Office).

When I transferred to the back room in 1963, I was assigned to the integrated group. Group leader Chen Yizhang, he was Rao Shushi's great secretary. In 1954, after Rao Shushi's accident, Yang Shangkun asked Chen Tozhang to look into Rao Shushi's history. He went to check it out, and then reported realistically that he hadn't found out what was wrong. So Yang Shangkun has a lot of trust in him. Until the Cultural Revolution, Chen was doing research in the Central Office.

"The Situation Reflection" is carried out by the integrated group and is the responsibility of Chen Yizhang. When I first went in, I was helping him with "Reflections", along with Wang Qinglin and a reporter surnamed Luo. At that time, the main task of the Situation Reflection was to investigate and report comprehensively to the central government on the situation in rural areas, which at that time was a big issue affecting the overall situation. The chairman was very tight on agriculture at that time, other aspects of industry, culture and education things he did not look at, about the situation of agriculture he must look at. So where the following report on the rural situation, we must report up in a timely manner. The chairman also looked, on the above draw a line together, the specific instructions seem to be not much.

### 3. Go to Tangshan to engage in the "four Qing" movement pilot

In June 1963, the Central Office formed a working group on rural investigation to conduct a pilot project of the "Socialist Education Movement" (later known as the "Four Qings" Movement) in rural areas. I took part in a working group to Funing County in Tangshan District, East China. Wang Guangmei's Taoyuan brigade is near the place I went.

During the difficult period of three years, there have been various chaotic phenomena in the society, and the thinking of the Party is also rather chaotic. At that time, we learned from the situation reflected in the letters from the masses that all kinds of strange and strange phenomena in society have re-emerged, some feudal superstitions banned after the founding of the People's Republic of China have also been rampant, and in some places there have even been private affairs. Along with feudal superstition activities are all kinds of rumors are up, some rumors even spread to Zhongnanhai, said a certain month of a certain month what is the end of what, and so on.

But it is also strange that by the end of 1962, when the Eighth Plenary Session of the Tenth Central Committee opened, Chairman Mao put forward the call "Don't forget class struggle", those things immediately all went into hiding, like all of a sudden disappeared.

Our main purpose is to investigate how to carry out the "socialist education movement" in the countryside. After a period of time to ask the understanding, found that the biggest problem existing in the countryside at that time, is the problem of the private division of cadres and private sale, and this problem is still very common. Production team captains and accountants and other major cadres, hidden from the masses to give themselves more food, and then quietly put the food to the "free market" to sell. At that time, the state-mandated grain prices are only a fraction, can be taken to the free market, that is several times the price. And it's better in the squad. Because then the crops were collected, they were placed in the valley yard pile by pile of land, and then by the team of more than a dozen families to claim their own. Everyone can see it. To separate a lot of more difficult young. But to the production brigade and commune, where the cadres to share, it is much more convenient. But these things you don't think the masses don't know, they are all in the eyes of the heart. So when we go down, as soon as the team launches, there will be a group of "brave elements" to come forward and expose the problems of cadres.

In fact, any mass movement, the first to stand out must be these "brave elements." These people are usually more active, but his own performance is not necessarily good, there are often many shortcomings. For example, stealing chickens and dogs, make a "broken shoes" have. When sports come, it is often these people who start first. Later, Chairman Mao also said that these people are still useful, but they cannot be relied upon to take power, and that handing over power to these people is often problematic.

And Wang Guangmei they in Taoyuan brigade made very mysterious, the working group for several months did not enter the village, but secretly engaged in what "rooted in series", door-to-door touch the situation. At that time, we heard this practice feel very disingenient, there is no need for this. Don't you know all about you going down and starting the masses? So we didn't care much. Later, Liu Shaoqi made it into a so-called "peach garden experience", to be popularized throughout the country, by Chairman Mao's criticism. That's when we thought there was a problem.

Liu Shaoqi these people, although they are trying to deny that there are still class and class struggle in the socialist society, against Chairman Mao adhered to the Marxist theory of class struggle. But in terms of specific approaches, especially when it comes to mass movements, there is no ambiguity about their class struggle. This was clear from the anti-right movement of 1957 until his "counter-line" approach in the early days of the Cultural Revolution. After the Cultural Revolution, Deng Xiaoping rejected Chairman Mao's theory of "class struggle as his platform", but by the time of June 4th, he had used the army to suppress mass movements. This can be said to be the same.

Chairman Mao attaches great importance to class struggle, but he has always believed that in this historical period of socialism, the real danger comes mainly from within the ruling Communist Party, especially from the top of the party. Chairman Mao later referred to Liu Shaoqi's practice in the "Four Qings" as "left and right" during the Cultural Revolution, and that's where the truth is. Simply put, Chairman Mao advocated class struggle, and its main point was against it. And Liu Shaoqi their struggle is mainly aimed at the following masses.

By 1964, Chairman Mao had clearly stated that "the focus of this movement is on the power of the entire Party to follow the capitalist path", which was resisted and opposed by Liu Shaoqi. In this way, the pattern of two lines of struggle within the Party is formed.

## Chapter 17: Before and after the publication of "A Commentary on Li Xiucheng's Autobiography"

1. Why I wrote "A Commentary on Li Xiucheng's Autobiography"
2. The controversy surrounding the article "Commentary on Li Xiucheng's Autobiography"
3. Jiang Qing conveyed Chairman Mao's instructions to me
4. What happened afterwards
5. Fučík's cry: Be vigilant, people

Appendix: "A Commentary on Li Xiucheng's Autobiography" - and discussions with Mr Luo Yuzhang, Mr Liang Zhiliu and Mr Lu Jiyi

### 1. Why I wrote "A Commentary on Li Xiucheng's Autobiography"

At the end of 1962, when I was the editor-in-chief of "Reports from the Masses", I learnt from the Chairman's reading list that he was reading books on the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom, so I also sought them out and read them, among which was the book Autobiography of Li Xiucheng written by Lu Jiyi. In Lu Jiyi's book, he put the original autobiographical account written by Li Xiucheng in his own handwriting in the prison cage, in a photographic plate inside the book. The original copy of the "Autobiography of Li Xiucheng" was later taken to Taiwan by members of Zeng Guofan's<sup>214</sup> family. These photos were taken by Zeng's family before he fled to Taiwan. In addition, I also found some related books to read. At that time, Luo Erzang, Liang Zuilu and Lu Jiyi were arguably the three most authoritative figures in the study of Li Xiucheng. They wrote many testimonies and commentaries on the Autobiography of Li Xiucheng. Among them, Luo Erzang's book "The Original Manuscript of the Autobiography of Li Xiucheng, a Faithful King" has the greatest impact. Chairman Mao also read Luo Erzang's book, but he did not write down any comments on it.

I was quite unimpressed after reading Luo's book. In the book, Luo Erzang glorifies Li Xiucheng as a great hero of the peasant uprising, and describes his "confession" to Zeng Guofan as a bid to save the "country", saying that he was like Jiang Wei in the Three Kingdoms who "falsely surrendered" to the enemy.

But after reading Li Xiucheng's autobiography, I concluded that this guy had already surrendered and defected. Can you, as the commander of an army, fake surrender? If you do so, won't so many of your men surrender along with you? Then what is there of real surrender and fake surrender. Besides, in his "autobiography", Li even offered a plan to Zeng Guofan, begging him to let him go out and recruit those fighting troops who were still resisting. And the plans he offered were all workable. This is clearly the confession of a defector, but why did Luo Erzang and the others twist it so much?

In order to clarify the question of whether or not Li's was a fake surrender, I went to the Beijing Library to check out some historical materials, and I felt even more justified in my opinion, and it was

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<sup>214</sup> Zeng Guofan (1811 –1872), was military general of the late Qing dynasty. He is best known for raising and organizing the Xiang Army to aid the Qing military in suppressing the Taiping Rebellion.

"stuck in my throat and I could not stop talking about it". During the Spring Festival in 1963, I stayed at home all day by myself and concentrated on writing an article entitled "A Commentary on the Autobiography of Li Xiucheng" - and discussing with Mr. Luo Erzang, Liang Zuilu and Mr. Luo Jiyi. My main point was to deny that the Autobiography of Li Xiucheng was a peasant revolutionary hero's "firm revolutionary stand". I thought it was a confession of a revolutionary defector.

After the article was written, I was planning to submit it to the Journal of Historical Research, which at that time was the most authoritative journal in history. Before submitting the article, I also wanted to discuss it with my colleagues in the secretary's office, but I could not find anyone who was interested in this period of history. So, I took the article to Tian Jiaying, because on the one hand he was interested in history and at the same time he was my leader. Tian Jiaying said that he did not have time to read it carefully either, so he let me give him some basic points. After listening, Tian Jiaying did not object and said that the writing was quite good. Some people later said that Tian Jiaying had guided me in writing the article. Actually, no, he did not give me any guidance at that time. I also heard later that Tian Jiaying privately told the people at Historical Studies that Qi Benyu was not a good person and told them not to publish it yet. It is said that Li Peng told Tian Jiaying at the time that if we did not publish an article like Qi Benyu, it would be published elsewhere. I was puzzled at the time to hear why Tian Jiaying had to be so inconsistent. Some people also said that Jiang Qing and Chairman Mao had instructed me to write this article, which is even more nonsense. Some people also linked my article to the arrest of the "traitor group"<sup>215</sup> during the Cultural Revolution. Although, objectively speaking, it did have that effect later on. But in my position at the time, I could not have had such foresight. I wrote this entirely spontaneously. To say what motivated me to write this article, I simply related it to the ongoing struggle against the revisionism of Khrushchev in the Soviet Union. I considered what Khrushchev had done to be a complete betrayal of the revolutionary cause started by Lenin and Stalin. And I have always abhorred acts of treason against the revolution.

After the article was sent, I went to Jidong with a rural investigation team from the General Office of the Central Government to carry out pilot work on "socialist education". The place I went to was a remote village where there was no post office and no newspapers. Once I went to a meeting of the Tangshan District Committee and saw the newly published catalogue of Historical Studies in the People's Daily, and realised that my article had been published in the fourth issue of Historical Studies in August 1963. But I had no idea at all that Beijing had already held several consecutive meetings to criticise my article.

## **2. The controversy surrounding the article "Commentary on Li Xiucheng's Autobiography"**

At the end of September that year, I returned to the Central Office with the rural investigation team. As soon as I returned, my colleagues Zhu Gu, Tian Chongjing and Liang Chuan from the secretary's office and Xiao Li from the library of the Central Office came to see me. They told me that there had been a great reaction to my article in Beijing, and that the Central Propaganda Department and the Institute of Modern History had held separate meetings to criticise my article.

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<sup>215</sup> Around 1931, 61 senior party cadres including Bo Yibo were arrested by the Guomindang. In 1936, under the situation of the national anti-Japanese national salvation movement, in order to carry out work and solve the problem of lack of cadres, the Northern Bureau of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China reported to the Central Committee of the Communist Party for approval and instructed Bo Yibo and other 61 people to perform the procedures prescribed by the enemy and be released from prison. The people concerned were denounced as a "traitor group" in March 1967.

What was this all about? As I later learned, it turned out that my article was published in *Studies in History* and immediately caused a great response. That issue of *Studies in History* had a small print run and sold out as soon as it came out. The *Beijing Evening News*, which had a large circulation at the time, published a report and excerpt about the article on 2 August 1963, which is reproduced below:

[From the newspaper] In the recent publication of the fourth issue of *Historical Studies*, an article entitled "Commentary on the Autobiography of Li Xiucheng" written by Qi Benyu was published. In this article, the author presents some views on the thinking and behaviour of Li Xiucheng in his later years that are different from those of most historians.

The Autobiography of Li Xiucheng was written by Li Xiucheng in captivity after he was captured by Zeng Guofan's forces following the defeat of the Taiping Revolution. In his autobiography, he tries his best to show that he did not join the revolution out of a clear revolutionary consciousness, but was "confused" and went along with the trend, just like "riding on the back of a tiger, I had to do it". He says that the revolution was a "great calamity" and that he was unfortunate to be caught up in this "calamity". He also devoted much space to flattering the Qing emperor and Zeng Guofan, and even expressed his willingness to serve these reactionary rulers and to subdue the Taiping army, which was still fighting bravely for them, if they would take him in.

Many experts on the history of the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom (such as Luo Erzang, Liang Zuilu and Lu Ji Yi Zheng) believe that Li Xiucheng was loyal to the revolution from the beginning to the end, and that he wrote this autobiography with the ulterior motive of gaining the trust of his enemies, so that he could use the opportunity to retain his revolutionary power, and also to exploit the conflict between Han landowners such as Zeng Guofan and the Manchu rulers, and to use Zeng Guofan to oppose the superior foreigners (invaders). The revolution was a very important part of his life.

In his essay, Qi Benyu argues that a person's motives should be judged by his social practices. In his autobiography, Li Xiucheng puts forward a set of poisonous plans to "recruit" the troops of the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom, each of which, if implemented, would have been effective and would have greatly helped Zeng Guofan in destroying and dismantling the revolutionary forces. In his autobiography, Li Xiucheng treats the Qing emperor and Zeng Guofan as one and praises them equally, with no trace of 'exploiting the Manchu-Chinese conflict'. While it is certainly commendable that Li Xiucheng expressed his intention to guard against "foreign devils", he betrayed the revolutionary masses who resolutely resisted the invaders and tried to rely on the feudal reactionaries who had defected to foreign capitalism to fight against the devils, which is a retrograde step and should not be "commended" at all. In short, the surrender and defection of Li Xiucheng is a solid fact and his confession is a "confession" of a traitor.

As a result, Qi Benyu believes that Li Xiucheng should not be promoted and educated to the general public as a revolutionary hero. Although he played a role in the history of the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom, he eventually lost his revolutionary spirit and betrayed the revolutionary cause. There is no justification for such a "confession" of defection to go down in the annals of revolutionary history.

It can be expected that the evaluation of Li Xiucheng and his confessions will lead to heated discussions in the academic community.

Many readers will know about this article from the Beijing Evening News story. However, the average reader does not know who I, the author, am. In the controversy, there were a large number of people for and against it, including the Central Office to which I went. Many scholars of stature and status were disgusted with my views. It is said that Luo Erzang was so angry after reading my article that he jumped to his feet, saying that I had ruined his life's research. The bigwigs in the Central Propaganda Department at the time were in favour of the views of Luo Erzang and others, who in their view were not open to discussion. And the arguments that I put forward against them were treacherous. So, the Central Propaganda Department had to intervene in the debate.

In September, Zhou Yang called a meeting at the Chinese Propaganda Department with many of the biggest names in academia, and even chaired the meeting himself, to accuse me and criticize my article. The meeting was attended by Liu Guosheng, Zhang Youyu, Hou Weilu, Yin Da, Liu Dalian, Li Shu, Ding Shouhe, Guan Feng, Lin Lushi, Wu Fuqi, Jian Bozan, Wu Han, Qin Liufang, Sha Ying, Ji Weiqing, Lin Jianqing, Yu Guangyuan and others. As Zhou Yang had already spoken out clearly, the meeting was largely one-sided, with a few people such as Guan Feng being silent. Zhou Yang was the most critical of the article, saying: "Unlike Cao Cao, this is not at all an academic issue, but a political one, and should be submitted to the Central Propaganda Department for discussion and a ministerial meeting, and the Central Government should also be asked to consider it. It concerns the question of valuing the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom, the revolutionary martyrs, and Li Xiucheng was a revolutionary leader before the proletarian revolution, from whom we came ..... to change the evaluation of him, is a question with a political character." Zhou Yang also criticized my article as "attacking one point and not counting the rest", which is a typical revisionist approach.

My article had been agreed to be published by Ding Shouhe, the editor of Historical Studies, and Li Shu, the executive editor, so at the meeting there were people who reproached and complained that Historical Studies should not have published the article. Li Shu argued that Qi Benyu worked in the Central Office and that his article had been read by Tian Jiaying. Zhou Yang said that Tian Jiaying did not care about this area of work.

In order to eliminate the impact of my article, Zhou Yang proposed several solutions at the meeting: first, the Central Propaganda Department should first issue a notice to stop reprinting Qi Benyu's article anywhere; second, Liu Dalian should write an article criticising Qi Benyu and affirming Li Xiucheng, and still publish it in Studies in History as the basic attitude of the historical community; third, after Liu Dalian's article was written, the historians would hold a seminar, and after the meeting, a public announcement would be made to indicate that the historians were criticising Qi Benyu's views to set the record straight.

Sure enough, after the meeting of the Central Propaganda Department, the central newspapers and local newspapers in all provinces and cities were not allowed to reprint my article. The Institute of Modern Chinese History also held a special seminar to discuss the evaluation of Li Xiucheng. The meeting was chaired by the director, Liu Dalian, and was attended by about 100 people, including Fan Wenjian, Mou Anshi, Hou Weilu, Wang Rongsheng, Jian Bozan, Zhang Yaiqian, Li Wenhai, Yuan Dingzhong, Li Kan, Deng Tuo, and Lin Jianqing. The meeting was one-sided, all affirming Li Xiucheng and criticising Qi Benyu. The tone of the criticism of Qi Benyu was even higher, saying that Qi's article "distorts and inverts the objective facts of history" and denies the "glorious image" of the hero. After the meeting they wrote a report and sent it to the Chinese Propaganda Department for approval.

The criticism of my article was launched with great force, but I, the author of the article, knew nothing about it. It is no wonder as I had only written a few small articles published in internal

journals since I joined the workforce and had not formally participated in any academic discussions. So, I had no reputation in the academic world and was unknown. I did not know any of the big names in the Chinese Propaganda Department or the academic world. Even Ding Shouhe and Li Shu, who agreed to publish my article, were unknown to me at the time (Guan Feng also became known to me later). I was neither a leading cadre, nor a scholar, nor a professor. So when the Central Propaganda Department organised the criticism of my article, and thus mobilised famous scholars in history to launch a massive siege against me, there was of course no need to inform me as the author of the article. These people like Zhou Yang were very active in promoting human rights and humanitarianism after the Cultural Revolution, but they did not seem to respect the human rights of an unknown person whom they criticized back then, nor did they talk about humanitarianism.

However, my leaders, colleagues and friends in the Central Office were all very concerned about me and told me everything they knew about the criticism of me. The people who knew the most about the whole situation were Li Boren, the researcher and head of the group in charge of culture and academics in the Central Office, and my leaders He Jun and Chen Qizhang, economists. They all came to comfort me, telling me not to be too concerned about the meeting held by Zhou Yang of the Central Propaganda Department, saying that "the Chairman has not yet spoken". Tian Jiaying was also unhappy that Zhou Yang and his group had not consulted him before criticising me, and he said angrily that he (Zhou Yang) was too domineering.

I was the author of the article and the subject of Zhou Yang's criticism, so of course I wanted to know more about the specifics of the conference's criticism of me. After the National Day, I immediately called Ding Shouhe, who was responsible for publishing my article, but after calling several times but not finding him, I wrote him a letter. The original letter is as follows:

Comrade Shouhe (please pass on to Comrade Liu Guiwu).

I have not been able to reach you on several calls. I was doing research in the countryside some time ago and returned to Beijing the day before yesterday. I didn't attend the meeting at the Institute of History to discuss Li Xiucheng, but I don't know what opinions were expressed at the meeting. I have already heard some of the opinions (from the People's University and the Normal University). I would like to hear more.

My telephone number is 6725 (not 6554)

If you send a letter to the Central Office, it will be fine.

I hope to reply and shake hands.

Benyu

October 2

After Ding Shouhe received my letter, he asked me to meet him in the parlour of the Institute of Modern History. I went as promised, and he told me something about the two criticism meetings held by Zhou Yang and Liu Danian. He also whispered to me that this critique meeting was so big that not only was Zhou Yang in charge, but Premier Zhou had also intervened. Zhou Yang's speech and arrangements were reported to the Premier for approval.

Ding Shouhe was a bit nervous when he said these words, his words were slurred and he wanted to stop talking. After all, both the Institute of Modern History and the Journal of Historical Research were under the control of the Ministry of Propaganda, and since my article had caused so much trouble, he, as the author of the article and one of the directors of the Journal of Historical Research,

might face dismissal from his post or even being sent down to labour. But my own state of mind at the time was different from Ding Shouhe's. For one thing, I had experienced the "Eight Secretaries Incident" in 1958 and had some experience of struggle. It had been five years between 1958 and 1963, and I had grown up a lot more in those five years. Secondly, I already knew from my comrades in the General Office that Chairman Mao was taking an interest in this matter. They told me that a group (the working group responsible for Chairman Mao's work, life and security) had sent someone to the library to look for books on the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom and Li Xiucheng, saying that the Chairman and Jiang Qing had asked for them. So at that time I was very open-minded. I expressed to him my attitude towards my article: stick to the truth and correct errors.

Liu Danian and his team sent the report on the conference to the Central Propaganda Department, which immediately organised a team of people to deliberate on the text, repeatedly worked on it, finalised it and prepared it for publication. But at this time, the news that Chairman Mao was studying my article also reached the Central Propaganda Department. The Ministry of Propaganda then suppressed the report, and soon afterwards telephoned all over the world to inform them that in future they should not publish any articles glorifying or affirming Li Xiucheng, no more plays should be performed, and no more articles criticising Qi Benyu should be published. In just a few days' time, the Central Propaganda Department issued two contradictory notices, one after the other, leaving the lower authorities at a loss as to what to do and what was happening up there.

In a similar vein, Li Peng, who scolded me as worthless after the Cultural Revolution, said to me personally back then: "You can be the Liang Qichao<sup>216</sup> of the new China because you have feelings at the end of your pen".

Mu Xin, the former head of Guangming Daily, who was always fond of creating rumours and causing trouble, and who was never responsible, said after the Cultural Revolution that I was frightened and "terrified" after hearing that the Central Propaganda Department was criticising me, and hurried to review my work. But back then he was the very person who had made me into a person of such great talent.

It was Liu Danian, who was the director of the Institute of Modern History at the time, who was instructed by Zhou Yang to write the first draft of The Question of Li Xiucheng's Evaluation, which was published in late November. He probably found out from Tian Jiaying through Li Shu that Chairman Mao was looking for books on the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom and was studying the question of Li Xiucheng's evaluation. He also sent the article to Tian Jiaying for review. It took courage for Liu Danian to do so, because he had already heard from Zhou Yang's speech at the meeting that Zhou Yang had an aversion to Tian Jiaying. When Tian Jiaying read Liu Danian's article, he said that he was hypocritical and inconsistent in his views. This is not all Liu Danian's fault, as the confession of Li Xiucheng included too much about the "boss", Zeng Guofan, and Liu Danian had no way to defend Li Xiucheng. Tian Jiaying asked me to take Liu Danian's article back and read it. In fact, I had already received the first draft of Liu Danian's article from Liu Guiwu, the leader of the Party Committee of the Institute of Modern History, under the name of "Historical Research" (unsigned). I think it was probably Liu Guiwu's own intention to do so, in order to hear the views of his

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<sup>216</sup> Liang Qichao (1873–1929) was a Chinese social and political activist, historian, journalist, and intellectual who lived during the late Qing dynasty and the early Republic of China. His thought had a significant influence on the political reform movement in China at that time. He was one of the leaders of the Reform Movement of 1898 (Hundred Days Reform). After the Revolution of 1911, he joined the Yuan Shikai government and served as the chief of justice. Later, he severely criticized Yuan Shikai's proclaiming himself emperor. He advocated the New Culture Movement and supported the May Fourth Movement.

opponents. As Liu Guiwu was a calm and simple man with no attitude, I could not make things difficult for him, so I gave him a reply two weeks after the article was sent to me: "I read with great interest Comrade Anonymous' great work 'The Question of Li Xiucheng's Evaluation'. I agree with the article's assessment of Li Xiucheng's merits before his capture and note that he does not adopt Luo's pseudo-surrender theory, but I cannot yet agree with his assessment of Li Xiucheng's confession." I concluded by writing, "Is it possible to open up further discussion on the issue of Li Xiucheng's confession? Can articles with opinions different from this article be published again, and I hope I will be given a reply." They did not give me any reply later.

### **3. Jiang Qing conveyed Chairman Mao's instructions to me**

In the spring of 1964, Jiang Qing sent for me three times, the first two times because I had gone out of town, and the third time Jiang Qing's secretary Shen Tong found me by phone. He told me to wait for him in the corridor of Juren Hall, where I was working at the time, and then he took me to Jiang Qing's home. After we met, Jiang said to me that she had seen my article from Historical Studies and thought it was good, so she sent it to the Chairman, together with a report in the Beijing Evening News and an internal update in the Guangming Daily. When the Chairman read your article, he asked me and my secretary to look for information. The Chairman had read many books on the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom. Jiang Qing took out a thread-bound book with a blue cover and said to me: The most important one is this one. This is the newly published Confession of Li Xiucheng from Taiwan, in black and white. It was imported from Hong Kong by Zhang Chunqiao of the Propaganda Department of the Shanghai Municipal Party Committee. Chairman Mao read it carefully and even put a note in the book. Chairman Mao said that you would not be able to get this book and asked me to give it to you so that you could continue to study it and write articles. She also told me that Chairman Mao had said, "Don't expect to use one article to change the views that people have been studying for a lifetime. Then Jiang Qing said: "The Chairman has finally taken a stand on the issue of Li Xiucheng, and he has approved sixteen words: "Black ink on white paper, ironclad evidence; the loyal king is not finished, but is not to be taken as an example." Then she said: "This is not a simple statement, this is a major issue of right and wrong, a struggle of principle with great implications! The revisionists at home and abroad are all anti-Marxist traitors to the revolution!" Jiang Qing also told me that the Chairman's instructions were written on a report on academic developments, and that the Chairman had circulated it to the relevant leaders of the Central Committee; at the end of the instructions, the Chairman had written the words "Return to Jiang Qing". She said that the approval was being circulated and that she would show it to me when it was returned. Jiang Qing finally said to me: "You have done a good deed and given credit to the people. But don't be proud, you have to read the material again and continue to write articles. Don't be afraid of interference from the bigwigs, the Chairman supports you, so don't be afraid".

But for some reason, perhaps because he was busy, Jiang Qing did not show me the Chairman's instructions afterwards. So, I thought at first that the Chairman's instructions were "the disloyalty of the loyal king"<sup>217</sup>. That's why I later wrote the phrase "the loyal king is disloyal" in my article. Later, Deng Liqun told me that what the Chairman had written was "the loyal king is not finished", which

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<sup>217</sup> This phrase of four characters is spoken as "zhong wang bu zhong" and both "zhongs" have the same tone, so sound exactly the same. However, they are written as different characters and have different meanings. Hence Qi Benyu's misunderstanding – he had not seen the written characters, but had only heard Jiang Qing say them. Li Xiucheng was given the honorific "Loyal King" (Zhong wang) after he refused a bribe from a Qing general officer to kill Hong Xiuquan, the founder and leader of the Taiping rebellion.

meant that he would not be able to save his life in his later years. Deng Liqun had seen the Chairman's written approval from Kang Sheng.

In May 1966, I was summoned by the Chairman to Shanghai and stayed at the Jinjiang Hotel. In the evening, Cao Diqu and Wei Wenbo invited the Premier to a banquet and I was invited to accompany them. At the banquet, the Premier spoke with me and asked me to go to the top floor of the hotel the next morning to get some fresh air. I went there the next morning before 8am. The Premier first asked me about my experience, and I told him about my youth in Shanghai, where I had joined the underground and worked in the student movement. The Premier said he had also worked underground in Shanghai in the 1930s and was very familiar with the city. In the middle of the conversation, the Premier suddenly said very sincerely: I am sorry for you, Zhou Yang criticised you because I authorised it. In fact, I also thought your article was well written and had momentum. But they all wanted to criticise it, giving many reasons. I did not study it properly before approving it. Fortunately, the chairman found out in time, otherwise I would have made a big mistake.

At a mass meeting during the Cultural Revolution, the Premier once shouted the slogan "Learn from the young historian Qi Benyu". However, after my arrest in 1968, the Premier also said at a mass meeting that Qi Benyu's articles were written for him by others. I have always respected the Premier, and still do to this day. But I have always had a problem with this speech by the Premier, too. Of course, at that time the Premier was only motivated by the needs of the political struggle.

#### **4. What happened afterwards**

My articles were recognized by the Chairman and I became famous. Hu Qiaomu, Tian Jiaying and others all offered to collaborate with me on the article. When Jiang Qing found out about it, she told me, "What do you want with them?" She told me to go to Kang Sheng. Tian Jiaying, Hu Qiaomu and Jiang Qing were at great odds. Jiang Qing first saw that these two people were unreliable. Later history also proved that Jiang Qing was right.

In accordance with Chairman Mao's instructions conveyed by Jiang Qing, in the summer of 1964, I wrote my second article on Li Xiucheng, "How to deal with the question of Li Xiucheng's surrender and defection?"

Once the first draft of the article was written, I went to the anti-revisionist writing team led by Kang Sheng to help with any changes. At Diaoyutai, I was warmly welcomed by Kang Sheng and all the members of the anti-revisionist team. I remember that Wang Li<sup>218</sup> said to me at the time that your article was very inspiring to us all in writing anti-revisionist articles, and that the line in a recently broadcast anti-revisionist article, "You can hardly wash away the shame of betraying the revolution even if you pour out the water of the Volga River", was transplanted from my article, "Even the waves of the Yangtze River cannot wash away the shame of Li's betrayal of the revolution". When

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<sup>218</sup> Wang Li (1922 –1996) was a prominent member of the Cultural Revolution Group, and is credited with being the lead drafter of the "May 16 Circular", which marked the beginning of the Cultural Revolution. In May 1967, he made mistakes in handling a major factional dispute involving units of the PLA in Wuhan, and then in August, he delivered an incendiary speech in support of rebellion at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, severely embarrassing the Chinese government. Shortly thereafter, Mao ordered the arrest of Wang Li, Guan Feng and Qi Benyu and they were sent to prison. After his release, Wang Li, like Qi Benyu, wrote a memoir in which he continued to profess his support for Mao and the ideology of Mao Zedong Thought.

discussing the revision of my article, Wu Lengxi<sup>219</sup> and Yao Qin<sup>220</sup> spoke the most; they thought that my second article was not strong enough, not at a high enough ideological level, but was following the rationale of my opponents to defend myself, as if I were in the wrong. Kang Sheng proposed that even Wang Jingwei should be properly criticized. He said that Wang Jingwei was once a hero of the Xinhai Revolution, but later became a traitor. By linking up Wang Jingwei, people's heroic attachment to Li Xiucheng would be dissolved. I listened humbly to their advice and the article I revised according to their comments was really powerful. He is an old ginger.

The final revised draft of this article was sent to the Premier, Kang Sheng, Jiang Qing, Lu Dingyi, Zhou Yang, Chen Bodha, Tian Jiaying, Wu Lengxi, Fan Ruoyu, Xu Liqun, Guan Feng, Li Shu and Deng Liqun for review before publication. They replied to me either by phone or in writing, and Zhou Yang also expressed his support over the phone. Guan Feng and others made further final revisions to the article.

Prior to this, the debate on the issue of Li Xiucheng was carried out according to a plan drawn up by Chen Junsheng, Deputy Chief Editor of People's Daily: to reissue the critical article I had published in Historical Studies and to publish successively in the press articles with various different opinions in order to open up discussions. During this period, at a meeting of the literary and artistic sections of the Central Committee, Premier Zhou and Kang Sheng each addressed the issue of Li Xiucheng in their speeches. I have collated the main points of their speeches from the transcripts at the time as follows:

Premier Zhou said: The issue of Li Xiucheng of the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom can be discussed. The loyal king, Li Xiucheng, was a prominent figure in modern history, but later wrote a confession, surrendered to Zeng Guofan and offered to collect the ranks of the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom for Zeng Guofan. Some people think that Li Xiucheng did this out of strategy. But in any case, it was wrong to surrender, and it was a shame to have the word "loyal" in the name of the "loyal king". Zeng Guofan was the executioner of the revolutionary people, so how could Li surrender to him? Can such a person be called loyal? This issue can be discussed, but his confession in black and white is unchangeable. .... The heroes of the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom should still be written about, and Chen Yucheng is one.

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<sup>219</sup> Wu Lengxi (1919-2002) joined the Communist Party of China in April 1938; formerly the president of Xinhua News Agency, secretary of the Guangdong Provincial Party Committee, and deputy director of the Central Literature Research Office. In July 1964, he served as Deputy Minister of the Propaganda Department of the CPC Central Committee. He was struggled against early in the Cultural Revolution resumed work in the People's Daily in 1972. In 1975, he became a leading member of Mao Zedong's Selected Materials Group and a leading member of the Political Research Office of the State Council. He supported Deng's revisionist program and helped draft the terrible "Resolution on Certain Historical Issues of the Party Since the Founding of the People's Republic", which gave the go-ahead for Deng's capitalist "reforms".

<sup>220</sup> Yao Qin (1921-1966) joined the Party in 1938. In 1954, he became Director of the International Propaganda Department of the Propaganda Department of the CPC Central Committee. In 1954, Yao Qin was transferred to the Central Propaganda Department. He repeatedly visited abroad with Liu Shaoqi and Zhou Enlai because of his expertise in international propaganda. Peng Zhen, then vice chairman and secretary-general of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress, also asked him to be appointed as the deputy secretary-general of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress, in charge of international publicity matters. Yao Qin often collaborated with Qiao Guanhua and Wang Li, and under the pseudonym "Yu Zhaoli", he published papers on major international issues in important newspapers and magazines in China, becoming an authoritative writer on the subject. During the Cultural Revolution he attended endless criticism sessions and died in July 1966.

Kang Sheng said: Nowadays, there are a lot of newspaper articles commenting on Li Xiucheng. What kind of a character was Li Xiucheng? Now Luo Erzang and Qi Benyu have two opinions, one saying that he was a hero and the other saying that he was a traitor. The drama sector also staged *The Death of Li Xiucheng*. Before the Xinhai Revolution, was it good for Wang Jingwei to run *Ming Pao*? Yes! How about assassinating the Regent? Yes! Was it good to do revolutionary work in Guangdong during the Revolution? Yes! How about being a leftist in Wuhan? Yes! But later, when Ning and Han merged<sup>221</sup>, he joined Chiang Kai-shek and became anti-communist! And then he joined the Japanese and became a traitor! Who wouldn't blame him? What should we think of the former revolutionaries who later surrendered and defected? I hope you will think about it carefully. You should have a clear idea of whether Li Xiucheng is a good or bad man.

On 23 August 1964, *People's Daily* and *Guangming Daily* published my second article commenting on Li Xiucheng at the same time, and *Studies in History* also published it in its fourth issue in 1964. It was originally decided that it would be published by *People's Daily* and *Studies in History* first and then reprinted in newspapers around the country, but Mu Xin, who was then the head of *Guangming Daily*, approached me for a clean copy, and he insisted that it be published at the same time as *People's Daily*. I asked Kang Sheng, who was very close to him, so I agreed that the article should appear in both newspapers at the same time.

This magnificent article, revised by the Diaoyutai anti-revisionist team, was quickly reprinted everywhere after it appeared in the press and soon created a great debate in the national ideological arena. When my second article was not published, there were articles both for and against my views, and those in between. Now that people had heard Premier Zhou's and Kang Sheng's speeches, and seen the statements in the central press, the number of articles supporting my views increased greatly, and those against my views decreased greatly, and slowly became less common. Again, this was not something I had expected, nor was it something I wanted to see, nor was it something I caused. I always wanted it to be a scholarly debate, but those who held opposing views stopped writing articles, so the third article I had drafted and printed in unfinalized copies of *Red Flag* to solicit comments was no longer necessary for publication at this point.

It was actually people like Zhou Yang who caused the academic discussion to degenerate. I learned later that Chairman Mao was very annoyed with Zhou Yang and his group for interfering with academic discussions by political means. As late as March 30, 1966, when he was talking with Kang Sheng, Chen Bodha and a group of academic experts in Shanghai, he mentioned this incident and said, "What is meant by academic tyrants? Academic tyrants are those who have tyranny but are not academics, who do not study, do not read newspapers, do not learn, harbour the traitor Li Xiuchen, and issue notices everywhere that Qi Benyu's articles are not allowed to be published.

As for Luo Erzang, who held different academic views from me, later on, when I was in charge of the movement in the Institute of History during the Cultural Revolution, I did not allow the rebels in the Institute of History to attack Luo Erzang, saying that it was an academic argument and that Luo

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<sup>221</sup> In September 1927, the Nanjing National Government, led by Chiang Kai-shek, merged with the Wuhan National Government, led by Wang Jingwei. Because Nanjing was referred to as "Ning" and Wuhan was referred to as "Han", it was called the Confluence of Ning and Han in history. The essence of the Ning-Han confluence is the temporary union of the various factions of the Kuomintang, and their fundamental interests are the same. The government after the merger of the Ning and Han governments was still called the Nanjing National Government

Erzang had actively supported the democratic movement before liberation. Therefore, Luo Erzang did not suffer any impact during the Cultural Revolution.

### **5. Fučík's cry: Be vigilant, people**

The above is the general process of the academic and political storm triggered by the Commentary on the Autobiography of Li Xiucheng. My article was not a piece of literature that some people thought was "following orders", nor was it written by someone else who asked me to write it. To my surprise, the article was like a boulder falling from a high cliff into the calm lake below, creating a big wave in the historiographical world and sparking a big controversy in the literary world, the theatre world, institutions and schools, and even many factories were involved in the controversy. There were also rumours that the author was a graduate of the history department of Shandong University and that 'Commentary on the Autobiography of Li Xiucheng' was the author's debut novel.

Three years after the publication of the article, the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution broke out, and the criticism of the traitorous group in the movement, and my personal floundering, cast another layer of mystery over the article. I was also asked during the Cultural Revolution, "Did you know that the Chairman was going to solve the traitor problem when you wrote 'Commentary on the Autobiography of Li Xiucheng'?" The "traitor problem" in this question was not about the betrayal by Li Xiucheng, but the case of the "Sixty-one people who surrendered themselves to the Guomindang" at the beginning of the Anti-Japanese War. When I wrote the "Commentary on Li Xiucheng's Autobiography", I was not aware of the issue of the "Sixty-one people who surrendered and betrayed the Party", so there could not be such a connection. Moreover, I think Chairman Mao did not think of solving the problem of the "61 people who surrendered and betrayed the Party" at that time.

It was Zhou Yang's group that caused a healthy academic discussion to turn sour. Zhou Yang and his gang's political interference alerted Chairman Mao, and eventually there was his sixteen-word instruction on Li Xiucheng. I sometimes even wonder what would have happened to me, Qi Benyu, if Zhou Yang had not interfered in this academic discussion, and if Chairman Mao's anger at Zhou Yang's interference and his sixteen-word instruction on Li Xiucheng had not been there.

My second article was "semi-compliant" - the result of my collaboration with the anti-revisionist team - but it was not about the "sixty-one people who surrendered and betrayed the Party" or anything like that, but rather it was intended to take the academic discussion further. As this second article was preceded by prior statements from Kang Sheng and Zhou Enlai on the issue of Li Xiucheng, a heated academic discussion was soon silent, leaving much food for thought for future generations. After the great discussion, I soon joined Guan Feng, Deng Liqun, Chen Maoyi, Tao Wengre, Wang Mengkui, Deng Shaoying, Teng Wensheng, Wang Ruisheng and a dozen other cultural warriors in responding to Chairman Mao's call to join the socialist education movement in the countryside.

A few of my influential articles during the Cultural Revolution include 'Commentary on Li Xiucheng's Autobiography', 'Study of History for the Revolution', 'Review of the Bourgeois Stance of 'Frontline' and 'Beijing Daily'' and "Patriotism or National Betrayal? On the Reactionary Film 'The Inside Story of the Qing Court'", etc. I am more satisfied with this last piece, "Patriotism or National Betrayal?" This article was written in accordance with Chairman Mao's instructions and was revised by him, and was subsequently discussed and revised several times by the Central Cultural Revolution Group before it was finalised. Chairman Mao was a great authority of the proletariat and he was satisfied with it. This article, Commentary on the Autobiography of Li Xiucheng, in fact amounted to a change

in certain ideas about traitors and caused controversy. "The study of history for the sake of revolution" reaffirmed Chairman Mao's idea that "rebellion is justified", which sent shockwaves throughout the historical community.

These three articles were all named by Chairman Mao and all have rich academic connotations in themselves. The article "Commenting on the Bourgeois Stance of the 'Front Line' and 'Beijing Daily'" is basically a political commentary, mainly pointing out that Peng Zhen and his colleagues were not wrong in saying that "all people are equal before the truth", but they did not implement this statement themselves, and instead they "oppressed others with their power". They criticised me behind closed doors, but afterwards they held a conference and organised a siege on me by the academic authorities, not allowing me to attend the conference and not allowing me to read the documents. Is this equal? The Chairman's words of criticism against Peng Zhen and the others were much more powerful than mine: he said to them that "everyone is equal before the truth", but you have never been equal.

I was once so naive as to think that a few articles would enable the revolutionary forces to overcome the forces that betrayed them. What an unrealistic fantasy that was. I still remember clearly that after the publication of my second article on Li Xiucheng, my ears were ringing with all kinds of heartfelt praise and flattery. The leader of the Guangming Daily mentioned above said all sorts of good things about me at that time, and even quoted a poem by Chairman Mao, saying that my article "swept away a thousand armies like a rolled-up mat"<sup>222</sup> (I didn't dare to take it personally, but of course I denied it. When he was in trouble during the Cultural Revolution, I asked Jiang Qing, Kang Sheng and Chen Boda for advice, and dragged Guan Feng along to the newspaper to defend him, but I never imagined that this man would be the one to scold me the most and go out of his way to slander me.

He is the one who started the nonsense that I stole Lu Xun's manuscripts, snitched to Jiang Qing and so on. If this man is so capricious about a friend, will he be persistent about the revolutionary cause of the proletariat? Is there any trace of Li Xiucheng in him? Further, I think that Li Xiucheng was both a "loyal King who was disloyal" and a "loyal King who was not finished". If we look at the people who followed Chairman Mao's revolution in the context of the proletarian revolutionary cause, we will see how many "loyal kings" were not loyal, how many "loyal kings" had not finished! Some people tried to kill Chairman Mao's family and his cause when he was dying; some people still really sought to kill his family and his cause at the same time that Chairman Mao's bones were cold; some people said they would "never overturn the case", but once they had power in their hands, they would overturn any case.

Wasn't the case of the "Eight Secretaries Incident" in Zhongnanhai reversed? Wasn't the case of the criticism of Li Xiucheng also overturned? Wasn't even the case of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution overturned? History has proved that not only were there repeated struggles between revolution and betrayal in the peasant revolution, which lacked scientific theoretical guidance and the support of new social forces for thousands of years, but there were also repeated struggles between revolution and betrayal in the proletarian revolution, which had scientific theoretical guidance and the support of advanced class forces.

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<sup>222</sup> A line from Mao's 1931 poem *Against the Second "Encirclement" Campaign*

From a fascist prison, the international communist fighter Fučík<sup>223</sup> (1903-1943), who wrote the immortal "Report from the Gallows", gave his life to cry out to us:

Be vigilant, people!

I wish that the cries of Fučík would echo forever in the sky of the proletarian revolution.

### **Appendix: "A Commentary on Li Xiucheng's Autobiography" - and discussions with Mr Luo Yuzhang, Mr Liang Zhiliu and Mr Lu Jiye**

A major general of the late Taiping Heavenly Kingdom, Loyal King Li Xiucheng, was captured by Zeng Guofan's forces on 22 July 1864 (the third year of Tongzhi's reign). He wrote an autobiography while in enemy captivity. This confession, in terms of its historical value, is undoubtedly extremely valuable; however, in terms of its fundamental position, it is a 'confession' of betrayal of the revolutionary cause of the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom.

#### **The paradoxical phenomenon of history**

How paradoxical is the phenomenon of history. The warlike and powerful general of the peasant revolution wrote a "confession" of flattery and humility. Greatness and insignificance, glory and shame are mixed together, how irreconcilable, how inconsistent! How to deal with this, how to understand this? Over the decades, historians have offered us many different interpretations.

"This is simply not true; how could the gallant and loyal king write an autobiography that lost his revolutionary integrity! It must be a forgery by Zeng Guofan." Some people once defended Li Xiucheng by simply denying the authenticity of the autobiography. However, after much debate in the historiographical community, this argument is now untenable.

Some people also said that in his autobiography, the Loyal King did write some insulting words about himself and flattering to the enemy, even saying that he would surrender to the enemy. Although these words are a stain on Li Xiucheng's heroic deeds, they are all false. His aim was to use the 'fake surrender' to gain leniency from the enemy in order to preserve the revolutionary forces, and to exploit the enemy's internal conflicts to divide the Manchurian and Chinese rulers, and to get Zeng Guofan to turn his guns against the foreign invaders. The most forceful advocate of this argument was Mr. Luo Erzang.

In the "Preface to the Three Editions" of the Original Manuscript of the Autobiography of the Loyal King Li Xiucheng (1951-1957, Kaiming Bookstore and Zhonghua Book Company editions, hereinafter referred to as the "Preface"), Mr Luo Erzang says, "One must first have some understanding of the hidden affairs of the Loyal King's heart, and then you won't be taken in by the superficial views of

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<sup>223</sup> Julius Fučík (1903–1943) was a Czechoslovak journalist, critic, writer, an active member of Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, and part of the forefront of the anti-Nazi resistance. He was imprisoned, tortured, and executed by the Nazis. In 1920 he took up study in Prague and joined the Czechoslovak Social Democratic Workers' Party, which founded the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia (CPC) in May 1921. In 1930, he visited the Soviet Union for four months and by 1941, he was on the CPC's Central Committee and doing underground anti-fascist work. On 24 April 1942 he and six others were arrested in Prague by the Gestapo and put in jail where he was interrogated and tortured. He wrote of his experiences on pieces of cigarette paper and smuggled out by sympathetic prison warders. In 1943 he was sent to prison in Germany and was hanged there in September 1943. After the war, his wife, Gusta Fučíková, who had also been in a Nazi concentration camp, researched and retrieved all of his prison writings. In 1947, they were published as "Notes from the Gallows", an outstanding condemnation of fascism and of communist commitment.

those who slander the martyrs." (Luo Erzang: *The Loyal King's Secret Heart*) (Luo Erzang, "Evidence from the Original Manuscript of the Autobiography of Chung King Patrick Li", 1951-1957, Kaiming Bookstore, Zhonghua Book Company, 3rd edition, p. 6.) In his examination of the third edition of the book, he pointed out that "after the Loyal King himself intended to preserve the strength of the revolution if he was released after a false surrender and under the pretext of inviting surrender, and then wait for the outbreak of the conflict between Zeng Guofan and the Manchu imperial dynasty, or between the Manchu imperial dynasty, the Han bureaucratic landowners and the foreign capitalist invaders, he attempted to take advantage of the development of the situation to preserve his own strength and develop his own power so as to overthrow the reactionary rule in order to restore the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom. The fact that this seemed quite possible in the objective circumstances of the time shows that there were conditions that enabled the Loyal King to adopt such an attempt." (Ibid., p. 34.)

In the examination and explanation of the fourth edition of the Preface, Mr. Luo Erzang further argues the above point. In his analysis of Li' Xiucheng's motives for writing his autobiography, apart from "summing up the lessons of the Taiping Revolution", there are two main points: "The first is to protect the people for the sake of happiness. Secondly, to prevent ghosts from rebelling as the first (to prevent foreign capitalist invaders) ..... requires Zeng Guofan to put down his butcher's knife and work together with the people to deal with foreign invaders." (Luo Erzang: *The Original Manuscript of the Autobiography of the Loyal King Li Xiucheng*, Fourth Edition, pp. 36-37.) The reason why the Loyal King used "an extremely detailed and twisted narrative, sweet words, and even the word 'surrender' at the expense of shame and humiliation" was to realize such a far-reaching political intention, so as not to "stimulate the enemy and arouse their suspicions" (ibid., pp. 36-62). This "painstaking intention" is "true for a thousand years." (ibid., p. 65.)

Mr Zhou Chuan, who wrote the Preface, also supported Mr Luo Erzang's opinion. He said: "From the documents that now survive his (Li Xiucheng's) attitude at the time was to take advantage of the internal contradictions of the feudal rulers, to preserve the revolutionary forces and to turn the spearhead of the struggle to the larger foreign invaders, all three being inseparable manifestations of the whole complex ideology. .... This is the revolutionary demand, which is not only not an illusion, but also not to be viewed as fear of death, compromise and surrender. .... There is nothing diminishing about Li Xiucheng as a peasant revolutionary leader, a heroic figure." (Ibid., p. 8.)

Mr. Liang Zuilu, who has compiled and published some of the authentic autobiographies, also said that Li Xiucheng's was a "false surrender". In the preface to the publication of the 'Autobiographical Supplement to the Autobiographical Memoirs of the Loyal King Li Xiucheng', the Guangxi Tongzhi Autonomous Region's Tongzhi Museum says: "The firmness of his loyalty gives reason to believe that he had a bitter and political purpose in flattering his enemies and smearing himself in his autobiographical accounts, and that we must not listen to Zeng Guofan's slanderous 'wandering for his life and begging for a loan'". (The Proof-read Supplement of the Autobiography of the Loyal King Li Xiucheng, Preface, hereinafter referred to as the Proof-read Supplement, Guangxi People's Publishing House, 1st edition, pp. 9-10.) Mr. Lu Jiyi, the man who proofread the autobiography, also says: "In the whole autobiography, although the Loyal King had to say some words to smear himself in order to realise some of his political intentions, his firm revolutionary stance is still shown everywhere between the lines". (The Proof-read Supplement, p. 18.)

A considerable number of people agree with the above. Some authors of modern Chinese history, in their own writings, have also explained this page of history with the above view.

**The loyal king was not loyal, the facts of history cannot be concealed**

Is the problem really solved? No.

History is not a marble that can be carved at will. History is an objective existence. Objective historical truths (phases) cannot be changed.

Li Xiucheng was a talented general of the peasant revolutionary army in modern Chinese history. He played a major role in the revolutionary struggle of the late Taiping Heavenly Kingdom. Following the infighting of the Taiping leadership, the revolutionary forces were in disarray and the Qing army was advancing, putting the revolutionary cause in grave danger. In order to save the situation, Li, together with Chen Yucheng and others, led the Taiping army to defeat the Xiang army and the Jiangnan and Jiangbei battalions, thus lifting the siege of Nanjing. Later on, he took advantage of the victory to advance eastwards and liberated the Suhang region, making the revolution appear to be revitalised. He also commanded the Peasant Revolutionary Army to defeat the foreign capitalist counter-revolutionary allies on many occasions, demonstrating the fearlessness of the Chinese people in resisting the invaders. He did many good deeds for the people in the Suhang region, making it an important base for the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom for a time. These achievements of Li Xiucheng in the history of the Taiping Revolution should be fully valued and should not be erased. However, the fact that he lost his revolutionary spirit and betrayed the revolutionary cause after he was captured by the enemy cannot be denied either. In his autobiography, the words glorifying the enemy and denigrating the revolutionary cause are so clear and so explicit that any defence is unconvincing in the face of such cold facts.

In his autobiography, Li Xiucheng glorified his enemies. Again and again, he praises the brothers Zeng Guofan and Zeng Guotuan, the sworn enemies of the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom, in the most beautiful terms. He praises Zeng Guochyuan as "a man of virtue and deep admiration", "a wise man who loves the people", "a man who cherishes the goodness of his soldiers"; he praises Zeng Guofan as "a man of deep grace and wide measure, who is eager to save the world", and "a man who is eager to save the world". He also praised Zeng Guofan for his "deep and extensive beneficence and his desire to save the world" and his "benevolence and love for the four quarters, as well as his virtue and morality, which can be deeply admired"; he complimented them for their "lofty beneficence", "good talents" and "bright talents", their unparalleled ability, and "their ability to plan and choose (the) blessings (of) the world".

He praised the notoriously corrupt Xiang army for its "hardworking generals", "strong soldiers", "sufficient strength", "clear rules for the battalion", "ability to endure hardship and perseverance", and "this army is always victorious and has never been defeated". (Ibid., pp. 31, 32, 44, 52, 60, 84, 107, as quoted in the original text of Li Xiucheng's autobiography, which has been corrected from the original photocopy of the autobiography.)

As he wrote these words, the army of "saviours", which he described as "deeply gracious and virtuous" and "benevolent and loving in all directions", was in full swing in Nanjing: "The local people who were unable to carry loads and had no cellar to dig were all killed. .... Their youngest children, under two or three years old, were also stabbed out on the roads as a game. No woman under the age of 40 was left alive. The old men were all wounded, with ten or more stabs, and "the sound of wailing reached four distances, and the chaos was such that it could be [called] outrageous." (A Brief Series of Historical Materials on the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom, vol. 3, Zhonghua Book Company 1962, p. 376.)

Is it not shameful enough that a revolutionary general, when his own brothers and sisters, his father and wife and children are being slaughtered in this way by the enemy, should in good conscience glorify the most reactionary of murderous executioners!

To glorify the enemy, one must necessarily vilify oneself. Li Xiucheng was no exception. In his confession, the great revolutionary struggle of the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom is described as "neglecting the heroes", "quick to die for the people", "violating the Mandate of Heaven" and "harming the people". "It was a "predestined fate" and a "calamity for the world". Nearing the end of his confession, he sighs in remorse, "Why was the King of Heaven born to disrupt the world, and why am I not talented enough to serve him?" (See each of these in the Proof-read Supplement, pp. 29, 51, 52, 122.)

In his autobiography, Li Xiucheng is particularly harsh in his reproach of the Heavenly King Hong Xiuquan. He criticised the King for "not asking about the virtuous", "not asking about the affairs of the state", "not cultivating (virtuous) government" and "not thinking about the people and the army". "He reproached him for his "inattentiveness in employing people, his untruthfulness in trusting them, his slander and sycophancy, his avoidance of the bright and virtuous, and his refusal to enrol the great and powerful". (Ibid., pp. 28, 43, 51, 108.) However, many of the specific facts he cites in this regard are untrue. For example, he says that the Heavenly King did not trust him and detained his mother and wife in Nanjing as "pawns". This is not true. He said that when Nanjing was besieged and there was no food in the city, he "begged the Heavenly King to protect the lives of the poor", but "the King did not comply" and "had no choice but to order the men and women of the poor families in the city to escape from the city." (Ibid., p. 102.) This is also inconsistent with the facts. In the year before Nanjing was defeated, the Heavenly King, in order to save the city from the crisis, had made him a true and loyal military commander, entrusting him with the highest military and political authority in the country, but he says nothing about this in his autobiography, instead saying how the Heavenly King had ostracised him and even saying, "I was not in charge of the closing of the city in the capital". (Ibid., p. 94.) All these issues have been pointed out by Mr. Luo Erzang in his Preface. It should be said that Hong Xiuquan was not without mistakes, and at the same time, one cannot ask Li Xiucheng to judge Hong Xiuquan's merits and faults correctly; however, in any case, he should not disregard the facts and use some distorted or exaggerated charges to smear the face of the revolutionary leader.

In accusing the Heavenly King and exaggerating the conflict between himself and the Heavenly King, he was in fact making a statement about his intentions in front of the enemy. He portrayed his revolutionary history as follows: he had joined the revolution from the beginning under the "confused religion" and "since worshipping the Heavenly King (emperor), I have not dared to offend him in the slightest, and I have always been devout, fearing that snakes and tigers would hurt people." (ibid., p. 6) (ibid., p. 6) "Since I was a child, I have come here bravely for the people without knowing", and all the way "I came here in confusion" and "followed in obscurity", "causing the trouble today "(ibid. (Ibid., pp. 19, 29, 51.) He described the great victory he led the revolutionary masses to achieve in the late Taiping period as: "When I first took up the important task, I was not well thought out and made it in a confused manner; at this time the country was not yet extinct, chaos was made and chaotic actions were rampant, so it has been preserved to this day." (Ibid., p. 33.) He said that the reason he remained in the revolutionary ranks was simply that he "had to be forced to ride on the back of a tiger." "In my life, I have not known the first row of heavenly orders. If one could have foresight beforehand, why would one be willing to violate heavenly orders and act against heaven? Who would be unrighteous and ungrateful? Who would be willing to leave his

family, his relatives and his home?" "I served Qin in Qin, and Chu in Chu."<sup>224</sup> (Ibid., pp. 29, 47.) In addition to stressing his lack of revolutionary consciousness, he also indicated that he had wavered because he was "originally loyal and virtuous, but (un)fortunately did not meet a wise master". It is a pity that the Qing army "beheaded all those who took Guangxi without saving them", otherwise the Taiping army "would have been disbanded for a long time". "It is because of our Cantonese people that there is no way for them to enter the country," and that is why they have insisted on the revolution so far. If this time, "Lord Chancellor Zeng and the old chancellor can play the Qing (please) the emperor, and be willing to save the people of Guangdong, it will be very beautiful". (Ibid., pp. 19, 44, 93.)

In his autobiography, not only did Li Xiucheng not conceal his ideological turmoil, but he also did not hide the fact that he had once surrendered.

At the most critical moment in the defence of Nanjing, one of Li Xiucheng's brothers-in-law, Song Yongqi, went out of town to negotiate with a divisional officer in Zeng Guozhuo's battalion about surrender. Probably this man was not good at betrayal, as he had been in contact with him for ten days without getting the truth. Song Yongqi was a drunkard, and when he was drunk, he mentioned some of the secrets that Li had discussed with him to Chen Defeng<sup>225</sup>, who wanted to defect to the enemy, and when Chen Defeng got wind of it, he wrote to ask about it. It so happened that on this day, when Li Xiucheng was holding a meeting on food matters in his residence, Chen Defeng's letter was opened by an official, Mo Shikui<sup>226</sup>, who opened it by hand, and when everyone read it, they questioned Li Xiucheng and then took Song Yongqi into custody to be executed. The matter became so big that it caused "chaos in the city". The "courtiers" were not sympathetic to Li Xiucheng. It was only thanks to Li's money that Mo Shikui was able to smooth things over. In his autobiography, Li Xiucheng said, "Since then, people have been on guard at all times, fearing that I might change my mind." (Ibid., p. 106.)

In addition, he repeatedly emphasised the many things he had done in the past to benefit the Qing army in order to show "merit" to the enemy.

One of the manifestations of his "merit" was to repeatedly say how he had treated the prisoners who had been taken from the "Emperor of the Qing Dynasty" in the past.

The first thing that happened was to take down Yangzhou, "The governor of Yangzhou was taken, and when he was taken, he was saluted, and his whole family was found, and he was immediately asked if he would surrender or not. If he was willing to surrender, he could do so, but if he did not, it was of his own free will. The (governor) did not comply, and ..... sent the governor away from the Fairy Temple, and issued him with 350 taels of silver from Panchuan." (This passage was omitted from the Proof-read Supplement.)

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<sup>224</sup> Qin refers to the Qin Dynasty (221 to 206 BC.) and Chu to one of its six neighbouring states. They were the two great powers in the Spring and Autumn Warring States period, and the defeat of Chu by Qin enabled the Qin to establish their rule over a unified China. But the Qin state's authority was never accepted by the people of Chu. When Chu rebels under the lieutenant Liu Bang attacked, the Qin state could not hold for long. The Han Dynasty was then created. Li Xiucheng's statement reflected his swapping sides during the Taiping Rebellion.

<sup>225</sup> Chen Defeng (?—1864) joined the Taiping Army and had the title King of Song conferred on him. He later conspired to rebel and was captured and killed.

<sup>226</sup> Mo Shikui (?-1874) was promoted by the Taiping Heavenly King to the post of Minister of Penal Affairs and Foreign Affairs of the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom.

The second thing was to defeat Suzhou and capture "countless civil and military candidates of the Qing Dynasty, and a number of full generals, all unharmed, each wanting to go home, without access to Panchuan, I gave them their funds, sent them boats. (The Proof-read Supplement, p. 56.)

The third incident was the defeat of Rui Zhou, capturing the Qing general Li Xi Yang, and "seeing that he was a famous man of bravery, his heart felt sorry for the hero, so he did not kill him", and later even failed to persuade him to surrender, "(but) treated him with courtesy, did not lock him up and listened to his reasons", and after a few days "issued from Panchuan more than sixty taels of silver, which he did not accept and he went to Jiangxi". (ibid., p. 64)

The fourth event was the defeat of Hangzhou, when "all the troops were immediately ordered" to "forbid the killing of captured Manchurian soldiers", and to "offer money for the lives of those who did not want to surrender", "pay compensation for any privately killed" and "allow them to return to their country". "There are countless candidates for office and upright officials in the province, and the industry is also costly." The high-ranking officials Lin Fuxiang, Mi Xingchao and others who were captured, I said, "Don't kill them, but treat them politely", and they were not locked up, but left in the study room to chat with my civil officials. "Lin and Mi wanted to go", "that is, they prepared a boat and went from Hangzhou to Shanghai, and each were given 300 taels of silver". He not only treated the prisoners with hospitality and courtesy, but also sent people around to "find the bodies of Qing generals and captains who had died in battle and bury them in coffins". The body of Wang Youling, the governor who "won the hearts of the army and the people", was found by Li Xiuchang himself in the back garden after the city was taken; he had committed suicide. After his body was found, Li Xiucheng used the "Qing clothes, hats and court dress" to place him in his coffin. Later on, he also "ordered 500 men", "gave 15 boats" and "spent 3,000 taels of silver" to escort his coffin back to his hometown. At this point in his writing, Li Xiucheng expressed his feelings that "each supported his master and each had a loyalty", and that he "regretted seeing the brilliant and righteous men" and that "death should not be an enemy to them". (Ibid., pp. 69-72.)

Why did Li Xiucheng treat the captives so well, and why did he secure the bodies of those determined counter-revolutionaries with such pomp and circumstance? Some believe that it was mainly to win over the enemy with a policy of treating captives favourably. Even if this is the case, then why did he say this when he himself had become a prisoner of the enemy? At that time, there were no more enemies to win over, so I am afraid that these words were said to make the enemy "fight" for him. Li Xiecheng himself said, "It is not that I have spoken well, bringing honour for my sake, but that the Emperor is so enlightened that I dare not conceal it." (Ibid., p. 56.) What is this if not a "merit"? (According to Zhao Liewen, a member of Zeng Guofan's staff, he once said to him in a conversation, "As for the use of troops, they should not be killed indiscriminately, and those who broke Hangzhou and got Lin Fuxiang and Mi Xingzhao were all saluted, and those whose family members fell into the city were given tickets to protect the territory. It is also a tone of "merit". (See A Brief Series of Historical Materials on the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom, vol. 3, p. 374.

The second manifestation of "merit" is to say repeatedly how he had forgiven the revolutionary traitors who had defected to the "Emperor of the Qing Dynasty".

The first is that the traitor Li Zhaoshou "offered Chuzhou to the Qing dynasty, but I did not blame him for stealing his wife, whom he had married in the capital, and sending her to me without the knowledge of the King of Heaven". (The Proof-read Supplement, p. 35.) The words "I have not blamed him" are not true, but the "merit" mentality is clearly evident.

The second thing was that the Na King Gao Yongkuan<sup>227</sup> and the others had long been about to mutiny, "Though I know what they are doing, I am not guilty." They were also told, "We now control the Mongols, you are a man of the two lakes<sup>228</sup>, so this day is at your disposal, and you and I need not think (of) harming each other." Later, "this group of unrighteous ministers" killed Tan Shaoguang, the king of Mu, and "threw him to Li Fudai". He was "killed by Li Fudai three days before offering the city". (ibid., pp. 92, 93.)

The third incident was that the Song King Chen Defeng during the siege of the city, secretly communicated with the enemy "outside the eastern gate". The incident leaked out and he was arrested. "I had to think about it, .....and immediately came up with a plan to bail him out, using more than 1,800 in silver. Then the life of Chen Defeng was guaranteed." (Ibid., p. 104.)

The famous loyal king turned out to be a soft-hearted person, which was unexpected by the reactionaries. The old and cunning false Taoist Zeng Guofan had no shortage of skills in dealing with him. So, after two "deeply favored and kind" conversations, this so-called "eternally loyal" King submitted a surrender to the opposition. It doesn't count if you initiate the surrender, he still had to put up the white flag of surrender on behalf of the reactionaries in the north and south of the country.

In Li Xiucheng's confession, he wrote: "Be loyal to the Qin first, and be faithful as to a husband; Chu is willing to accept people, but also to die. Recover the army, and the rewards are high, the rest of the soldiers will not be chaotic, and the people will be peaceful. First, obtain the grace of the Qing Emperor, second, obtain the Zhongtang<sup>229</sup>. Inheriting the virtue of a county magistrate, achieving a great reputation, I was born with no talents, but cherished honesty and followed righteousness, for there is nothing else... Seeing that Zhongtang and Zhongcheng<sup>230</sup> have a large number of people, it is straightforward to express my true feelings: I am willing to work with Zhongtang and Zhongcheng, and all people of Heavenly Kingdom will be subdued. The Zhongtang and Zhongcheng wanted to get rid of my troubles, and brought all these people back. It is also a good thing to get rid of them. If I lose my country<sup>231</sup> and perish, then collect all the people, avoid chaos, calm everyone, and look after the common people, secure the Zhongtang and Zhongcheng, help to free labour and the country's goods. This is a straightforward statement from the heart of a man who has been treated with kindness, not with any other intention, so I beg you to look into it and see the truth. (This paragraph was omitted from the Proof-read Supplement and should be added to page 31.

"Today, the country has fallen, which is a blessing for the Emperor of the Qing Dynasty. Now that I am in the Celestial Empire, I am also loyal to its cause. The army of the country has died, and I am the general of the surname Hong. Now I see that the old Zhongtang's kindness is very deep, Zhongcheng has mature wisdom and love of the people, cherishes the

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<sup>227</sup> Gao Yongkuan, a native of Hubei, followed Li Xiucheng to conquer Suzhou. Because of his merits, he was made the king of Na.

<sup>228</sup> In the Qing Dynasty, Hubei and Hunan were collectively referred to as the "two lakes".

<sup>229</sup> The term "Zhongtang" literally translates as "middle hall". During the Tang Dynasty, the prime minister occupied the middle hall, and his secretaries sat in halls on either side. The prime minister came to be called "Zhongtang", and this was an established honorific by the time of the Qing Dynasty. At the time of the Taiping Rebellion, the title referred to Zeng Guofan.

<sup>230</sup> An assistant to the Minister.

<sup>231</sup> Although he does not specifically identify "country" here and in the next passage, he is referring to the area controlled by the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom.

goodness of the soldiers, I would like to take all the subordinates from both sides of the chasm, and reward high generosity, ..... I would like to collect all the people, do justice to the Emperor of the Qing Dynasty, in order to repay the old crimes of foolish people. If I had done this while my Lord was still in the state, I would have been disloyal, but now that my Lord is dead and my country is dead, I have hundreds of thousands of soldiers, and I am unable to defend the people of the world, and I am guilty of harming them. Now that the dynasty has lost its kingdom, I have been blessed with the grace of a substitute, and I wish to repay its virtue. Now that I have been arrested, I will be punished at an early date, but I am grateful for the delay. Now that the country has been defeated, I can't let my soldiers do any more harm to the people, so the old Zhongtang and Zhongcheng are willing to allow this move, and the room is an extra blessing for the Emperor of the Qing Dynasty, and all the people share the grace of the Chinese government. If I can have this ability to recover, I am afraid that I will not be able to prevent other people from thinking about it, and I still pray that the law of the state will be corrected. The reason I am doing this is because I want to keep the people happy. I'm afraid that the Zhongtang does not believe that I will do this, and I am still locked in the prison. Allow me to do this and pay for the people I use. It can be in the middle of the Anhui Province, where I can service both sides of the chasm. There is a surplus of piety in my heart. I have no second thoughts, but if you are willing to accept me, I will do everything, and I will not let you down. I pray that I may be able to find out if this is possible. (The Proof-read Supplement, pp. 112-113)

The last part of his statement was torn up by Zeng Guofan, but, in the last few lines, the military commander of the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom had already considered himself to be the "Root of the People of the Qing Dynasty", while the revolutionary army and the revolutionary masses had become "the bandits". (Ibid., pp. 119, 121.)

According to Zhao Liewen, a member of Zeng Guofan's staff, before his death, Li wrote ten lines of final words, "to describe his loyalty". (The Taiping Heavenly Kingdom Historical Collection, Book III, p. 381) Many people have used this incident to substantiate Li's "ardent loyalty", but it is a pity that the original words have not survived, otherwise it might have been possible to find some solid basis for this claim. But it was too late to be loyal to the revolutionary cause of the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom, if at all. "How can Fangzhi be able to work while pursuing advances in his career?"<sup>232</sup>. Turning poetry into the waves of the Yangtze River will not cleanse this shameful record of surrender and defection.

In short, the unforgiving truth is that Li Xiucheng's autobiography was not a 'revolutionary document' written to summarise the lessons of the Taiping revolution. (According to a source in the Records of the Qing Dynasty, before writing his autobiography, Li Xiucheng told the Qing officials, "Bring me paper and pencil, I will write it down. If I do not write it down, I will not be able to pass it on to future generations." (But the reliability of this material is highly questionable, and it cannot be confirmed in any of the accounts that have been found of people who witnessed Li Xiucheng writing his own account of what happened.) It is nothing more than a "confession" of betrayal of the Taiping revolutionary cause for the purpose of surrender.

### **The issue at stake is how to judge Li Xiucheng's motives**

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<sup>232</sup> A line from the *Li Sao* (The Lament) of Qu Yuan (c. 340-278BC), the patriotic poet and statesman whose suicide by drowning, in protest against the rulers of his day, is remembered in the annual Dragon Boat Festival.

It is clearly a "confession" of surrender and defection, but Mr Luo Erzang and others say that this surrender is a false surrender, saying that the words in the confession, "praising the enemy and defaming himself", are all deceptions of the enemy.

The crux of the matter is how to judge the motives of Li Xiucheng.

In order to be responsible for history, it is important to follow the correct historical perspective.

Chairman Mao said, "We dialectical materialists insist on the unity of motive and effect." (Speech at the Yan'an Forum on Literature and Art, Selected Works of Mao Zedong, vol. III, p. 870.) The only criterion for judging the subjective motives of a historical figure is his own social practice, and here subjective speculation must be avoided. Li Xiucheng's confession of his betrayal of the revolutionary cause of the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom is a reasonable outgrowth of his idea of surrender and defection.

Let us analyse the ten points of the platform proposed by Li Xiucheng, namely the "Ten Keys to Recruiting and Surrendering". He believed that "the roots of the dynasty have been removed, and if we can recover these people, we will be able to quickly pacify the world and "prevent the heart of the Qing dynasty from being destroyed again". (The Proof-read Supplement, p. 119.) It was for this purpose that the "Ten Keys to Recruiting and Surrendering" was proposed.

"One of the methods used to recruit and surrender the Ten Essentials was to use the policy of "amnesty for the people of the two provinces" to break up the most determined revolutionary ranks. "If you are willing to disperse the people of the two provinces, it will be easy to do so". He advocated the use of prisoners of the Taiping army for propaganda work, so that "everyone would know that Zhongtang and Zhongcheng had pardoned them with grace, so that their hearts would be free of knots and the work would be done quickly." He also advised Zeng Guofan to "show the provinces, counties and villages near and far, saying that Jin Ling was so and so<sup>233</sup>, and that now all the people were still for each other regardless of what they all had to save". (Here and in the original text of the "Ten Essentials of Recruiting and Surrendering" quoted below, both in the Proof-read Supplement, pp. 113-118.)

Here, Patrick Li once again expressed his intention to make use of the prestige of the commander-in-chief of the Heavenly Kingdom to participate in the surrender activities himself.

In the concluding part of the 'Ten Keys to Surrender', Patrick Li says, "Last night, I was transferred to the court by the old Zhongtang, and was questioned by him. I have sinned against the general and did not see the wise monarch and loyal courtier. Now that I have seen the generosity of the old Zhongcheng, I must first repay him for his kindness. I am grateful for your kindness last night, and I wish to die and return to the afterlife with joy."

Here, the Taiping troops spread out on both sides of the river become a welcome gift for Li Xiucheng to present to his new master. In his Evidence, Mr Luo Ergang states that the phrase "sinned against the general" here does not mean that he "bowed to the enemy", but that he "could not defend the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom". The phrase "I wish to die and return to the afterlife with joy" indicates that he had already made up his mind to die for the revolution. (Luo Ergang, "Evidence from the Original Manuscript of the Autobiography of the Loyal King Li Xiucheng", 4th edition, pp. 35, 64) Mr. Luo Erzang seems to have misunderstood what Li Xiucheng meant. Li's "sinned against the general" is clearly a self-proclaimed expression of repentance to the enemy; "I wish to die and return to the

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<sup>233</sup> Poems titled "Jin Ling" were written during several dynasties including the Song and Tang, but I am unsure of their relevance here.

shade with joy" is clearly a flattering expression of loyalty to the enemy. Translated into modern terms, it means: "I have sinned greatly, but you have treated me so kindly that I can hardly repay you with my broken bones. I will willingly sacrifice my life for you in the future." What determination to die for the revolution can be found here?

Li Xiucheng's plan to recruit and surrender was divided into three steps.

The first step was to "take my son first", asking Zeng Guofan to allow him to find someone to bring his personal letter to do this.

The second step was to "take my cousin Li Shixian as the head. Li Shixian's mother and her family have been taken to Liyang, Suzhou, and are being raised by Li Fudai. If you want to take my brother, you can quickly see his merits, so please ask the Chinese government to send a letter to take his mother to Anhui Province, and I will send a letter to him, so that he can succeed quickly. He is very filial to his mother, and now that I have been captured, it will be very easy for him to do this". Li Shixian was a major force in the Taiping army south of the Yangtze River. Recruiting Li Shixian was an important move to destroy the Taiping army, and the Qing court took this matter very seriously, and issued an order to Li Hongzhang to inquire about the situation after Li's death. Li Shixian did not surrender to the Qing Dynasty later, but Li Xiucheng tried to take his mother as a hostage in order to recruit Li Shixian, which was simply unscrupulous.

In the third step, after the "recovery" of his son and cousin, he listened to King Chen Bingwen. "Chen Bingwen and I love each other very much, and we are close friends. Now that I have been captured here, he will be willing to obey me when I arrive. Each of them will be willing to do so. I am here, so each will have his own way to go, and it will be done. If Chen Bingwen comes, Wang Haiyang will also come, my brother will come, and Zhu Xinglong and Lu Shunde will come. "And he received Huang Wenjin", "and it was decided". "The Heavenly Kingdom is alone in my ministry; I will collect all my ministry, and each of the rest will send word and follow."

The young master whom Li Xiucheng had protected during the Nanking breakout had now become a litmus test to re-test his political stance. He knew that he had to take a stand on this major issue of principle, or his new master would not trust him.

He explained that he had been "foolishly loyal" in protecting his young lord. He reckoned that the young master must have been killed during the siege and that "this man must not be left"; but what if the young master had not died? The young lord, a symbol of the revolutionary blood, was a dangerous figure for the decadent and corrupt Qing rulers, who had experienced the troubles of the "Prince Zhu"<sup>234</sup> and had been hit by the waves of the Peasant Revolution. How to answer this question? Li Xiucheng was at a loss.

The King, who had once advocated "pardoning the death of the guilty" regardless of whether he was a king or a general, was unable to help the young master, who had been entrusted by the old King of Heaven with his innocence. The "young master can be everywhere, and then there is another good strategy, and then again, he can be effective". The "iron courage and loyalty" of Li Xiucheng is completely shattered here.

Li Xiucheng also said that he was willing to serve in the suppression of the peasant rebellion in the north after the "recovery" of the troops by the Heavenly Kingdom. "The sin will be to raise money for the ..... twisted bandits to make trouble, and put down with a show of hands." (Mr. Luo Ergang

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<sup>234</sup> More than 200 leaders of the Taiping Rebellion were awarded the title "Prince" by the "Heavenly King" Hong Xiuquan.

once said in a note: "The 'twisted bandits' referred to by the Loyal King refers to the elements of the masses who were revolting at Mengcheng and Bo County and who disturbed the people. .... Those bad elements that disturbed the people were still regarded as bandits even within the revolution." The Fourth Edition of the Notes 125 pp. This is also debatable. If the term "bandits" refers to a few bad elements, then of course, only a few bad elements were "eliminated with a show of hands", and after a few bad elements were eliminated, the revolutionary team became healthier and the revolutionary cause developed further. (How could the pledge of "bringing in both two sides of the chasm" and "pacifying one side first" be fulfilled? This is really the most complete betrayal.

Do these facts, these programmes of action for total rebellion against the cause of this revolution, not show the true intentions of Li Xiucheng?

Each of Li Xiucheng's "Ten Keys to Surrender" could have been implemented immediately and would have had the desired effect. Of course, in the process of implementation, they were bound to meet with resistance from the staunch revolutionaries, but they could still help the enemy to destroy the revolutionary forces in the north and south of the country more quickly.

Wouldn't Li Xiucheng have helped the enemy by doing such a despicable act of persuading surrender? Look at the military order he gave to the enemy. "If this is done, the righteous law of the land will be established." His head and blood had already vouched for his determination to surrender.

Did Li Xiucheng himself not answer clearly whether it was a genuine or a fake surrender? This is the basis on which we judge the motives of Li Xiucheng. Can we say that Li Xiucheng's surrender was to preserve the power of the revolutionary masses, that is, to "protect the people for the sake of their happiness"?

To the revolutionary masses, Li Xiucheng did advocate "don't kill with the sword". It is certainly better not to kill than to kill. However, there was a condition for Li Xiucheng not to kill. This condition was: complete surrender and no more revolution. As a veteran of the Taiping Army, Li Xiucheng knew that the revolutionary masses could not be completely destroyed, and that the more people he killed, the more people would resist.

Otherwise, "although the soldiers of the Zhongtang want to fight, it would be really costly and expensive to achieve peace", and "Your soldiers are here, and they are defecting to the other side. Why have chaos among the people? The army is still besieged, there are still plans for him to escape. There is no other plan except for him to be outside." From this, it seems that Li Xiucheng's "benevolence with the sword" approach of not killing was indeed a good and all-round strategy for the reactionaries. It is no wonder that even the murderous Zeng Guofan, who read this passage, said to the emperor, "His words are quite admirable". (The Complete Works of Zeng Wenzhenggong, vol. 20, "The Separate Punishment of Thieves and Chiefs, and the Preparation of Matters for the Aftermath".

Perhaps, in Li Xiucheng's own mind, he was willing to become a "submissive" in order to save his own life, and he wanted to save the lives of his sons and men by inducing them to become "submissives" who were willing to be put under a yoke of servitude. But this idea was itself a shameful one, characteristic of a surrendered defector. The surrender he devised was not a strategy to preserve the strength of the revolution, but a strategy to dismantle it. The lives of the revolutionary masses can be preserved neither by begging nor by surrender. The lives of the revolutionary masses can only be preserved by the resourceful and heroic struggle of the revolutionary masses themselves.

Can it be said that Li Xiucheng surrendered to Zeng Guofan because he had developed a desire to stir up internal conflicts between the Manchu and Chinese ruling classes?

Such a claim is also unsubstantiated, or at least, it cannot be found in the materials available. On the contrary, we can only see from Li Xiucheng's self-reporting that he often referred to "Lord Zhongtang", "Old Zhongcheng" and "the Emperor of the Qing Dynasty" together, and always puts 'Emperor of the Qing Dynasty' in the first place. In addition, in his autobiography, words and phrases in praise of the 'Emperor of the Qing Dynasty' can be found time and again. For example, "The Qing dynasty is blessed", "The blessing of the Qing dynasty", "A Manchurian has passed through our great country to become an emperor, this is the order of heaven", "This is the great blessing of the Emperor of the Qing dynasty", "Still the Great Qing Dynasty is once again at peace", "The Extraordinary Blessing of the Emperor of the Great Qing Dynasty" (Proof-read Supplement, pp. 49, 55, 69, 107, 113), etc. It seems impossible to find a clue from here to provoke internal conflicts between the Manchu and Chinese ruling classes.

Zeng Guofan, Li Hongzhang and Zhao Liewen, who were experienced in suppressing peasant revolutions, saw the attitude of Li Xiucheng very clearly, and they did not consider him a "false surrender". Zeng Guofan's comment on him was that he was "just begging for his life, begging for a life", and that he was "offering flattery and begging for mercy, just to prolong his life." (The Complete Works of Zeng Wenzhengong, vol. 21, 'Qin Feng Oracle Replies the Fold by Article'.) In his diary, Zhao Liewen twice notes that Li Xiucheng "had the intention of begging for his life" and "the intention of begging for favours". As for Li Hongzhang's view of Li Xiucheng, it is even more embarrassing. Li Hongzhang was so afraid of Li Xiucheng that he sometimes referred to him as "the Old Loyal" in his correspondence. Later, he learnt that Li Xiucheng had written an autobiographical account of his surrender and said in a letter to Zeng Guozhuo that "the tiger in the trap begged for mercy, he was more despicable than a dog or a mouse, so he could be scorned".

If this was the case, why did Zeng Guofan and others not accept his surrender, but instead thought that "this thief is very cunning" and "should not be brought into the capital", and could not wait to kill him?

This question is not difficult to understand. Li was active on the front line throughout the revolutionary war and was one of the leading generals of the late Taiping Heavenly Kingdom. He had a clear picture of the war, and had a clear account in his mind of the woeful defeat, corruption and incompetence of Zeng Guofan, Li Hongzhang and the rest of the Qing army, as well as the rape and plunder that led to the betrayal of the kingdom. He certainly tried to praise the "marquis" in front of Zeng Guofan, but he was not polite to Li Hongzhang, and he uncovered Li Hongzhang's old tragedies with a few incidents. Had he been allowed to surrender, the Qing court would have ordered him to join the court. Who could guarantee that he would not expose Zeng Guofan's scandalous deeds when he arrived in Beijing? Zeng knew very well that the Qing court was very suspicious of him, and there was no telling how much he had deceived the court for over a decade! Although Li Xiucheng did not mean to provoke internal conflicts between the Manchu and Chinese ruling classes in his own words, he had to be very wary. Weighing the pros and cons of the counter-revolution, Zeng sent Li to the guillotine. "Life is the master, and death is a ghost"<sup>235</sup>, but Li Xiucheng returned to his "kingdom of heaven" with tears of shame and grief.

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<sup>235</sup> The lines are from a famous Southern Song Dynasty poem that uses the past to satirize the present and expresses grief and indignation. The poet satirizes the shameless behaviour of those in power in the Southern Song Dynasty. Zeng Guofan executed Li Xiucheng on the day that he finished his confession – only his ghost was allowed to return to the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom.

## Talking about the "revolutionary stance" between the lines

According to Mr Lu Jiyi, Li Xiucheng's autobiography "still shows his firm revolutionary stance in every line". He cites examples, such as "in the time, he wrote the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom calendar", "in the title, he still called it 'Heavenly Dynasty' and 'Heavenly Kingdom' ", and when writing God and Heavenly King, they lift the frame, and "all cities and towns conquered by the Taiping army are written as 'overcome', while places conquered by the Qing army are written as 'lost' or 'lost'", and "the wording of uprising is even more common" (Proof-text, pp. 18-19), etc. Mr. Luo Erzang also cites these materials and believes that they show that the confession of Li Xiucheng "still shows a firm stance in the substance and spirit of its words", adding that this "must be appreciated not only from the traditional Chinese calligraphy of the Spring and Autumn historical pen", but also from the fact that the traitors of the time, such as King Chen Bingwen and the Ning King Zhang Xueming, had slandered the troops of the Heavenly Kingdom as "bandits" and "thieves" in their surrender documents, and praised the decrees of the Qing dynasty as "imperial orders" and "national laws" etc. (The original manuscript of the autobiography of the loyal king, Li Xiucheng, is documented in the fourth edition, p. 63.)

How can these phenomena be explained? Since Li Xiucheng was about to surrender, why did he still use the titles used in the revolutionary ranks in his autobiography and maintain the terminological habits of the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom?

Everything happens and evolves, and surrendering to defection is no exception. It is one thing to decide to surrender to defection, and another to develop the whole psychology and habit of surrendering to defection. While Li Xiucheng could make the decision to surrender and defect in a very short period of time, it was very difficult to develop the entire mentality and habit of surrender and defection in a very short period of time. A historian has said that the Southern Song Empress Dowager, who "signed my name Xie Daoqing", had not yet developed the full psychology of servility when she took her young grandson in hand to meet Kublai Khan. By the same token, the eagle Li Xiucheng, who soared through the smoke of the peasant uprising, was not yet equipped with a complete traitorous mentality when he was caught by the enemy and decided to surrender and defect. This is something that Li Xiucheng himself realised. In his own statement, did he not explicitly say to Zeng Guofan's "masters" that he was "afraid of violating the wording, and that he would be trouble and it would clear his mind to remove it" (Proof-read Supplement, p. 84)! If a "master" had actually changed the phrase "in the year of the first year" to "in the third year of the Tongzhi era" for Li Xiucheng at his request, he probably would not have protested! What determines the nature of the issue is the fundamental position in the confession, not some customary title. Whether he surrendered or did not surrender, whether he was revolutionary or not, this is the fundamental marker to test the firmness of his class stand, without which everything else is just a minor consideration.

If you ignore the words of surrender and defection that fill Li Xiucheng's autobiography, and only examine a few terms and phrases that are superficially in line with the custom of the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom, you will end up treating a defector as a hero who "bends to save the country"<sup>236</sup>.

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<sup>236</sup> "Bending to save the country" is a Chinese term that was generated during the War of Resistance Against Japan. It means that if something cannot be solved by direct means, for example, if there is not enough strength to fight the Japanese invading army head-on, then it has to be indirect. At that time, some reactionaries in the country wanted to surrender to the Japanese. They instigated or supported some troops and officials to surrender to the Japanese invaders, turning them into puppet troops and officials, and attacked

In their surrender documents, several other traitors of the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom slandered the troops of the Heavenly Kingdom as "bandits" and "thieves" and praised the Qing dynasty's decrees as "imperial orders" and "national laws". This, of course, is shameless. This shows that their traitorous mindset had matured long ago, so they would act like despicable and shameful lackeys as soon as they saw the enemy. But using these traitors as a yardstick still does not negate the fact that Li Xiucheng surrendered and defected. In fact, in the last part of Li Xiucheng's autobiography, the so-called "revolutionary stance" or the "calligraphy of the historical brush at the beginning of spring" is no longer found. Here, the "uprising" of the peasants had become "disorderly" and "harmful" to the people, and the "loss" or "defeat" of the revolutionary side had become the "recovery" or "pacification" of the "Qing" dynasty. "The most serious thing is that the revolutionary army and the revolutionary masses of the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom have been called here "the bandits", a term that is already in full agreement with the tone of the traitors, and as for calling the decrees of the Qing dynasty "the law of the land", this had already been the case.

It is evident that whenever one surrenders to defection, one recognises the thief as a father. Psychological and customary incongruities and inconsistencies are after all only temporary phenomena.

### **About "Preventing Ghosts from Rebelling is the Priority"**

Li Xiucheng's idea that "preventing ghosts from rebelling is the priority" is often used as an argument to prove that he did not really surrender. It is true that "prevention of the devil's rebellion is a priority" is indeed worthy of recognition. But this does not clear him of the mistake of surrendering and defecting.

The feudal opponents and the foreign invaders were both enemies of the Taiping revolution. In the view of the Taiping revolutionaries, one was a "demon" and the other a "ghost". Surrendering to the "demon" and inviting him to defend against the "ghost", or surrendering to the "ghost" and inviting him to oppose the "demon" - neither can mitigate his mistake of betraying the revolutionary cause. It is a revolutionary tactic to make use of the internal contradictions of the enemy to carry out the revolutionary struggle, but there is no such thing as a revolutionary tactic for those who have defected from their own class and are trying to surrender to their opponents, willingly helping the enemy to "pacify" the "bandits" and "settle" the world.

The revolutionary cause of the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom was defeated by the combined attack of feudal reactionaries and foreign invaders. Despite their contradictions, the "demons" and "ghosts" are still family. To turn one's back on the revolutionary cause of the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom and surrender to the feudal enemies, attempting to invite them to defend against foreign invaders, would be an unrealisable illusion. The history of the last hundred years has already brought us to a conclusion on this point.

In the decade between the Taiping Rebellion and its defeat, there were two classes in Chinese history that met the foreign invaders on the battlefield. One was the landowning class, represented by the Qing government, and the other was the peasant class, represented by the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom. Their opponents were both the British and French invaders, but the outcome of the struggle was so different. The landowning class quickly gave in to the invaders, surrendered, ceded land and made reparations, while the peasant class fought bravely, dealt the invaders a severe blow and, by their shining example of resolute anti-invasion, inspired future generations to fight bravely.

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the anti-Japanese base areas together with the Japanese army. Surrendering by treason of this kind to the enemy was also called "bending to save the country."

Historical facts have proved that resistance to foreign invaders can only rely on the revolutionary masses. The revolutionary masses were able to deal a heavy blow to the foreign opposition with their own strength even under the difficult circumstances of setbacks and defeats. Under such historical conditions, a peasant leader who had once relied on the revolutionary masses to fight against the foreign invaders, turning his back on the revolutionary line to defect to the feudal reactionaries and still imagining that he could rely on them to oppose the foreign invaders, is not progress but a retrograde step in history.

Was Patrick Li's surrender and defection due to historical conditions?

Some people use the argument of "historical limitations" to justify Li Xiucheng's surrender and defection. They say that the reason why Li Xiucheng's autobiography is "interspersed with words of excessive expectation of the enemy" is because of his "historical limitations in understanding the insidious and vicious class enemy" and because of the "limitations of the peasant revolution". (Preface to the Revised Supplement; Fourth Edition of the Notes, p. 39.)

It is correct to say that the surrender and defection of Li Xiucheng was a manifestation of the historical limitations of the old-style peasant revolution as one of the phenomena that often occurred in such revolutions.

However, it would be wrong to argue that because the old peasant revolution had certain limitations, such as the confused perception of the feudal rulers, the act of surrender and defection was unavoidable for Li Xiucheng, and that he was not to be blamed and could be forgiven.

The heroic struggle of the peasant masses is the only driving force of history until a new social class is formed; without this struggle, history cannot go any further. To abandon the struggle, and to assist the feudal rulers in dismantling it by planning a surrender, is not the limitation of history to him, but his reaction against it.

The old-style peasant revolutions fought against the feudal rulers, but they could not overthrow feudal society. The peasant masses did not recognise the nature of the feudal system and often opposed the old bad emperors and supported the new so-called "good emperors". But this was not the case with Li Xiucheng. He was supporting the bad emperor and slandering his own King of Heaven; he was trying to help the bad regime that the peasants were opposing at the time, and selling out his own Taiping Heavenly Kingdom. It was not the consciousness of the peasant class that limited him, but his betrayal of the peasant class, his crime against it.

Many other Taiping generals who came from the same background, grew up the same way, were captured the same way, and had the same limitations, did not surrender as he did.

There was a great man of the same era, the same hometown, the same origin and the same situation as Li Xiucheng. This was the young hero, the brave and warlike Ying King Chen Yucheng, who was rarely equalled in the world. He was captured in 1862 (the first year of Tongzhi<sup>237</sup>) by another reactionary general, Shengbao, who persuaded him to surrender, but he would rather die than comply and ridiculed the enemy by describing Shengbao's defeat in battle. He was finally brutally murdered. An unnamed man wrote an account of the capture of Chen Yucheng, writing down for us the heroism of this great peasant leader who was steadfast and unyielding in the face of the enemy.

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<sup>237</sup> The Tongzhi Emperor began his reign in 1856.

"Yucheng, having been taken in by Miao Peilin, was then taken to Shengbao's camp. When Yucheng entered, Shengbao sat high on his pedestal and said, 'Why doesn't Cheng Tianyu<sup>238</sup> kneel?' Yucheng said: 'I, King Ying, am not Cheng Tianyu, so why should I kneel? I defeated you, why should I kneel to a rascal so lacking in self-respect?' Shengbao said: 'Are listening to me?' Yu Cheng said: 'Cease this nonsense. I want to die like a man. If I die today, the Miao traitors will die tomorrow! Do you still remember the Hefei Guan Ting, where you had 20,000 horsemen, and after the battle with me, did any of them survive?' Shengbao was silent, and gave him wine and food to persuade him to surrender. Yucheng said: 'If a man dies, he dies'. (See Luo Erzang, 'The Autobiography of Chen Yucheng, King of the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom', Teaching History, April 1953. (A similar account is found in *The Remains of the Knife, A Chronology of Arrests*.)

The same era, the same hometown, the same origin, the same situation, one standing tall, one humiliated and defeated - why would "historical limitations" make such a difference!

Some may think that when Li Xiucheng was captured, Nanjing had already been overrun by the enemy, so the historical conditions were still somewhat different. Then let us look at some other historical figures. There was a leader of the Taiping Empire who was captured at about the same time as Li Xiucheng, and this was King Hong Rengan.

This Hong Rengan was a figure whom Li Xiucheng despised. He had his flaws, but his heroic performance after being captured by the enemy was never as good as that of Li Xiucheng. He called himself "the vassal" in front of the opposition and referred to the enemy as "the demon army". His lofty moral character, firm stance and determination to return to his homeland as if to die, demonstrate the great spirit of the heroes of the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom who were not afraid to sacrifice for the revolution.

In his own words.

"So, Zhao Song Wen Tianxiang<sup>239</sup> was defeated at Wupoling, and captured by Zhang Hongfan, and sent to the poor north with a chariot<sup>240</sup>. He only knew the distinction between people and ministers, and did not know the difficulty of manpower and the resistance of the sky When I read his biography and the Song of Righteousness, I never fail to sigh and weep. As for the gains and losses of life and death, they are left to heaven, and I dare not dwell on them." (The Taiping Heavenly Kingdom, Book II, Shanghai People's Publishing House, 1957, p. 847.)

"As for the life and death of gains and losses, it is not something I dare to say." Hong Rengan is worthy of being the heir of Wen Tianxiang's righteousness.

Look at another historical figure.

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<sup>238</sup> Tianyu was the first title given to Chen Yucheng to record merits from the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom. Later, he was awarded the title of the Ying (heroic) King. Presumably, Shengbao knew Chen Yucheng's details very well. However, facing him as his prisoner, he was unwilling to call him "king".

<sup>239</sup> Politician, writer, and national hero in the last years of Southern Song Dynasty in China

<sup>240</sup> "Sending the poor a chariot" is a Chinese folk custom on the fifth day of the first lunar month. The "poor" was the ghost of a boy born at the palace died in the first month of the year without ceremonial clothes and was buried in the palace. According to legend, the poor ghost is weak and short, and he likes to wear rags and drink rice gruel, a weak porridge. Even if the new clothes were given to him, he would tear or burn a hole with fire before wearing them, so he symbolises rejection of temptations. Wen Tianxiang dies after three years of repeated coercion and temptation.

This is the Zun King Lai Wenguang, who joined the army at a time of national crisis. He continued to fight hard against the reactionary faction on the northern bank of the Yangtze River even after the city of Nanjing was broken. He contacted and led the peasant rebel brothers in the north, the Twists, and defeated the famous Qing general Singhalin and Zeng Guodu's new Xiangnan. Unfortunately, he was defeated and captured in 1868 (the seventh year of the Tongzhi era), but he was undaunted by the brutal torture and was a true man of steel and loyalty. To the end of his life, he was still ruthlessly exposing the brutal and unkind nature of the reactionary faction in his autobiography, denouncing the enemy for "doing injustice and killing the innocent."

At the end of his autobiography, he recounts how he felt - his impassioned, passionate, grief and indignation - when he failed to restore the country and would die in martyrdom. After reading it, people were deeply moved by his unwavering revolutionary will.

"I am afraid that independence will be difficult to maintain and isolation will not last long, so in the autumn of the 16th year of the year, I ordered King Zhang Zongyu of Liang, King Zhang Yujue of Youwu and King Qiu Yuancai of Huai to advance to Gansu and Shaanxi, to reconnect with the masses and to think of the flanking position. God has not blessed me, what can I say today? In ancient times, when a ruler's country was defeated, his family died, and his subjects were humiliated, the great justice was clear. I have no choice but to die in order to repay my country and to preserve the integrity of my subjects." (Ibid., p. 863.)

"To die before one's army is victorious is to bring tears to one's eyes." Lai Wenguang's autobiography is truly a 'song of injustice' for the heroes of the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom.

In the same era and under the same historical conditions, there were two very different characters. One would rather die than give in to justice, while the other capitulates and bows to the enemy. How can the latter be justified by "historical limitations"?

### **Why do heroes still surrender and defect?**

There have been heroes in history who have ridden their horses, galloped across the frontiers and fought their enemies to the death, but who in the end could not stand the test of defeat. "When the soldiers were destroyed, their name was already ruined". When the army was routed and in trouble, their windy ambition disappeared, and the loss of their division and humiliation ensued. This was not an isolated case in the history of the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom. The rebel general in Suzhou, Miao Yimu, the Ning King Zhou Wenjia, who repeatedly defeated the British and French invaders, and the above-mentioned Ting King Chen Wenbing, are all examples of this.

The surrender and defection of Li Xiucheng was no accident.

It is clear from his autobiography that although he had fought bravely, in his mind he had always lacked a clear understanding of and firm belief in the revolutionary ideals of the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom advocated by Hong Xiuquan, Yang Xiuqing and others. He gradually lost confidence in the revolutionary cause when the struggle became increasingly difficult in the late Taiping period. He described himself as "on a tiger whose back he could not get off". Therefore, once others were able to drag him down from the tiger's back, he could no longer uphold his revolutionary spirit.

Before he joined the revolution, he was infected by many feudal ideas. The so-called "Mandate of Heaven", "Heavenly Numbers", "a wise monarch and a loyal minister" and "In Qin, we are Qin, in Chu, we are Chu" were all reflections of this ideological legacy. They are all reflections of this ideological legacy.

Although he came from a poor peasant background, after he became a marshal, he gradually departed from his original class, first in terms of life and then in terms of thinking.

The magnificent Palace of the Heavenly Kings has long since disappeared, and Hong Xiuquan's palace is nowhere to be found. But the remains of the Palace are still to be found in Suzhou's "Humble Administrator's Garden".

"It was an unfinished project, built by thousands of workers over a long period of more than three years, and was still incomplete when Suzhou fell. The royal palace was a magnificent setting, with "forty or fifty rooms inside and out, decorated purely with gold and silver." (Yao Ji: The Little Canyon, vol. 2.) After the traitors had surrendered the city, Li Hongzhang entered Suzhou, and the reactionary general, who was so extravagant and lascivious, could not help but sigh when he saw the "King's Palace": "The palace is like a cave house of the gods, with its jade buildings and cavernous rooms." (Letter from Li Hongzhang to his younger brother Li Hechang, quoted in Luo Erzang, The Draft History of the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom (updated version), 1957 edition, China Book Bureau, p. 243.)

Li Xiuchang also had a lot of gold and silver treasures. On one occasion, he was ordered to hand over 100,000 taels of his pay because he had a falling out with Hong Xiuquan. Before the fall of Nanjing, he said he was out of silver and rice, but was able to come up with thousands of taels of silver at a time in order to pay the traitor Chen Defeng and others to ease the way.

One thing with symbolic significance is that Li Xiucheng's life was eventually ruined by a bunch of pearls and treasures.

"I was deserving of my fate. .... I had a treasure with me, which I had tied with a crepe sash around my body. I didn't know that my heart would be so obsessed with it this day, and I came to this broken temple and stopped and hung this pearl treasure under a tree. .... The people got my treasure, and the people saw the profit and fought over it. The people here took me to the people over there, and they wanted to me to share it. They said, "This must belong to the Great Heavenly King, and no other. You must have found him." ..... So I could not hide it, and it was taken by the two groups of traitors." (The Revised Version, pp. 110-111.)

This "obsession" is the result of the "obsession" of the past. If Li Xiucheng had not coveted the pearls and treasures, he could have returned safely to his unit.

In the late Ming dynasty, Hong Chengchou, captured by the Qing army, had his psychological secret discovered by Fan Wencheng for repeatedly brushing the dust from his clothes, "A garment is still so

lovingly cherished, what about his body?"<sup>241</sup> Sure enough, just as Emperor Chongzhen<sup>242</sup> was about to personally hold a tribute to Hong Chengchou's moral example, Hong had already been persuaded to become a lackey of the Manchu rulers. Such being the case, how can we expect Li Xiucheng, who could not forget his pearls and treasures when his country was in ruins, to uphold his revolutionary moral integrity?

Li Xiucheng's autobiography has important value as a kind of historical material of the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom. However, the issue at hand is not one of historical value, but of its fundamental evaluation.

As Li Xiucheng has become not only an object of study for historians, but also a figure that has been used by various parties for extensive propaganda among the masses, it is of particular importance to correctly estimate his performance.

The glorious tradition of struggle of the people of our homeland is the revolutionary tradition of resistance to class oppression and to national oppression. It is this tradition that is continued in many of the most celebrated revolutionary struggles in modern Chinese history. We also see this glorious tradition of struggle in the history of the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom, where Hong Xiuquan, Yang Xiuqing, Xiao Chaogui, Feng Yunshan, Lin Fengxiang, Li Kaifang, Chen Yucheng, Tan Shaoguang, Hong Rengan, Lai Manguang and thousands of other revolutionary fighters, despite their avoidable or unavoidable shortcomings and mistakes, persevered in their struggle against feudal oppression and foreign invaders, and contributed to the the victory of the Chinese people's anti-imperialist and anti-feudal revolution. When the revolutionary cause was defeated and their personal lives were threatened, they continued to fight and never defected. Their sincere revolutionary loyalty, their majestic revolutionary spirit, will always shine immortally in the history of class struggle. They are the beloved revolutionary heroes of our history, and it is this glorious tradition of struggle that we should carry on. What about Li Xiucheng? Although he played a great role in the history of the Taiping revolution, he eventually lost his revolutionary integrity and betrayed the cause of the Taiping revolution. His autobiography neither represents the glorious tradition of struggle in our history, nor can it serve as an example to inspire future generations to fight.

If we respect the history of the revolution and the truth of historical materialism, we cannot allow the "confessions" of the defectors to go down in the annals of the revolution.

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<sup>241</sup> In the last days of the Ming Dynasty, one of its senior officials, Hong Chengchou, was captured by the Manchu Qing army. The Qing Emperor Huang Taiji (aka Taizong) respected Hong Chengchou and wanted him to enter his administration. But Hong went on a hunger strike and refused to capitulate. Huang Taiji sent Fan Wencheng, his most favoured official, to persuade him to surrender, but Hong Chengchou roared at him and refused. However, Fan Wencheng noticed that at one stage, a piece of dust fell from a roof beam onto Hong Chengchou's clothes. While Hong Chengchou spoke, he "repeatedly wiped it off." Fan Wencheng said his goodbyes, and reported to Huang Taiji, "Chengchou is not dead. Chengchou still cherishes his robe, what about his body?" They knew from this that he would eventually give in, that he still valued his life. Once he joined them, the Qing rulers treated Hong Chengchou extremely well and made him responsible for the war in the south. Hong Chengchou adopted the strategy of "being kind for the most part, supplemented with suppression", and calmed the south at a relatively low cost. At the same time, Hong Chengchou suggested that the Manchus should "learn Chinese and know Chinese", understand Han etiquette and customs, advocate Confucianism, and play down the differences between Manchus and Hans.

<sup>242</sup> The last Emperor of the Ming Dynasty.

## Chapter 18: Transferred to the Red Flag magazine and participation in the "Four Clean-ups" campaign in Tong County

1. Transferred to the Red Flag magazine
2. Participating in the "Four Clean-ups" campaign
3. The storm caused by a critical letter
4. Trouble caused by criticism of "tedious philosophy"

### 1. Transferred to the Red Flag magazine

In the summer of 1964, my second article commenting on Li Xiucheng, "How to deal with the question of Li Xiucheng's surrender and defection?" was published. After writing it, Kang Sheng told me that he had wanted to transfer me to their anti-revisionist writing team. But when he was about to ask Gong Zirong, who was in charge of personnel in the Central Office, Chen Boda beat him to it and asked Chairman Mao to transfer me to the Red Flag magazine. Chen Boda reported to Chairman Mao that he wanted to transfer me to the Red Flag magazine as the head of the history section on the grounds that the current struggle in the field of history was sharp and complex and in order to strengthen the forces in the field, which was approved by Chairman Mao. Tian Jiaying told me that if I wanted to, I should go to Kang Sheng, not to Chen Boda. So, when Deng Liqun talked to me on behalf of Red Flag and wanted to transfer me officially, I told Deng Liqun that I did not want to go to Red Flag. As soon as Deng Liqun heard this, he put on his face and said: "This is a report to the Chairman. The Chairman approved it", so there was no more negotiation. Deng Liqun was also a veteran and had the Chairman's approval, so I had no choice but to go to Red Flag magazine.

I knew that Tian Jiaying and Chen Boda were in deep conflict, and Tian Jiaying had told me to my face that he was worried that I might be careless and say something against him in front of Chen Boda. Now that I was going to transfer to the Red Flag magazine to work under Chen Boda, I certainly needed to test the mood of Tian Jiaying, the old leader. So, before I left, I went to him to ask for advice on what I should pay attention to when I arrived at Red Flag, in fact, to assure him that he did not have to worry unnecessarily and that I would not say anything bad about him in front of Chen Boda.

Chen Boda was very active in getting me to go to The Red Flag, but in fact he was just making a gesture to show the Chairman that I would support whoever the Chairman supported. When I did go, he didn't pay much attention to me. When I went to report for duty, he didn't see me either, he just asked Deng Liqun to arrange for me to work inside a very large office of Fan Ruoyu, the deputy editor-in-chief. When I went to see him in his office after reporting for duty, he simply said, "You're here," and did not talk to me about specific work. Only later did he appoint me as the head of the history section of Red Flag (at the bureau level).

Kang Sheng did not ask for me, but he told me that you still have to do what we do here, and you have to come to Diaoyutai as often as Fan Ruoyu, the deputy editor-in-chief of Red Flag, to

participate in their work. So, after I was transferred out of the Central Office, although my establishment was at the Red Flag magazine, I had to come to Diaoyutai often to write articles for them. But in October of that year, Khrushchev suddenly stepped down. As a result, the task of the anti-revisionist writing team was lost, and they then served as the writing team for the five-member Cultural Revolution Group led by Peng Zhen, and the "February Outline" was drafted by this team in the beginning. Kang Sheng and Peng Zhen had a very good relationship. On a regular basis, Kang Sheng sat in the middle, while Xiu Cai sat on either side, discussing the article one by one. But the final draft of the "February Outline" was made by Peng Zhen, who took it home and had it revised by Xu Liqun and others, without going through Kang Sheng and the others. In Kang Sheng's case, the main writers were Wu Lengxi and Yao Qin. Wang Li was mainly the recorder. Later on, Wang Li said that he drafted the "February Outline", but that was nonsense. Wang Li's speciality was that he was good at taking notes and putting ideas together quickly afterwards. In this respect, others were no match for him. But when it came to writing, his penmanship was no match.

Yet Chen Boda never gave me anything to work with. Only once did He Long ask someone to write his biography of He Long. Chen Boda was so enthused that he asked me to take part, as I was the head of the history team of Red Flag, so he asked me to head the writing. I excused myself firmly at that time, saying that I was not familiar with the situation of the army. In fact, I knew something about the army at that time and knew that it was very complicated. Jiang Qing had also told me that even she herself was very cautious about the army and never spoke much about it. How could I write this biography of He Long?

Since I had nothing to do, and I was a man who could not afford to be idle, I asked to join the "Four Clean-ups" task force at the beginning of winter that year (1964).

## **2. Participating in the "Four Clean-ups" campaign**

I went to Tong County, a suburb of Beijing, to take part in the socialist education campaign there (later called the "Four Clean-ups" campaign). Deng Liqun was the leader of the group, Chen Maoyi (secretary-general of the Red Flag magazine) was the vice-leader, Su Xing, Guan Feng, Hai Bo, Zhong Lin and I were the group leaders, and there were a dozen other cultural fighters, Tao Wenpeng, Wang Mengkui, Deng Shaoying, Teng Wensheng, Wang Ruisheng and others. The group I led arrived at the Zhai Li brigade in Songzhuang Commune.

A vice captain of the Zhaili brigade called Deng Qingfu had been sharing and hiding a lot of grain, and there was a very strong public outcry. After we had obtained evidence through investigation, we raided his house after asking for permission. At that time, ordinary members of the community had very little food in their homes, but in Deng Qingfu's house there was everything in several rooms. The courtyard of his house was very large and he brought out many boxes, which were full of food when he opened them. In order to educate the cadres and members of the community, we held an exhibition and the members were astonished to see how many things they had never seen before, including food, things to use, things to wear, all kinds of fancy things, as well as tonics and valuable things, even a radio, which was quite advanced at that time. These things were so much more than the average peasant had at the time and the grain piled up like a mountain! At that time, the grain was first handed in by the team, and then the community members were given their share of the grain according to the work they had earned. The deputy brigade leader got the largest share. An ordinary cadre of the brigade actually got such a large share of the property.

What goes up must come down! There was a squad leader, a tanner, who also had a private share of grain. When the public exposed him, he refused to admit it and insisted that it was saved. We broke

through to the squad's accountant, who first refused to tell the truth. We said that if he didn't tell the truth, we would lead a raid on his home. As soon as he heard that we were going to raid the house, he took the initiative to explain. We went to the squad leader's house and found that the food was hidden in a cupboard. A cadre of a small team, with such a small amount of power, dared to take a private share of the collective's things under the noses of the community members. No wonder, the community members had no enthusiasm. They said, "We work so much for their cadres, our work points are so low, we only get a little bit of money and a little bit of food, they say it is for the collective, but in fact it is all for themselves". In fact, this is what Chairman Mao called the new landlords and the new rich peasants. Before liberation, they were openly exploiting, but this was hidden exploitation. After I saw this with my own eyes, I felt that Chairman Mao was right when he said that the focus was on fighting the capitalists.

The team under Guan Feng's control, the deputy chief also eats dirt, the situation is similar to the deputy chief of my team. There was also an exhibition, with stacks of silk and satin, leather boxes that didn't fit, new electrical appliances, and biscuits in steel boxes, so I couldn't count how many boxes there were. At that time, not long after coming out of the hard times, these were all very high class things. He had embezzled a lot of grain and sold it at a high price on the free market, so he had more money, so he naturally had more things at home. These things alone would have made him an embezzler. Of course, the amount of money he embezzled was not comparable to the amount he embezzled now. This man had made some achievements, he was well known in the commune, and he was well connected with people above and below him. So, although we had clear evidence of corruption, no one could do anything about it because someone above him backed him up. Whoever wanted to take him, he moved people from above and described taking him as rectifying the masses, while the people above actually listened to him. Guan Feng was furious about this and just had to pull this nail out of the coffin. This man was not only embezzling money and food, he was also doing a lot of things to oppress the people in general. Guan Feng was so careful that he asked Teng Wensheng to create a pamphlet, writing out all his vices and misdeeds, but finally he was taken down and expelled from the Party. After the Cultural Revolution, Beijing rehabilitated this man, and when he was rehabilitated, he did not talk about specific materials or the circumstances of the incident, but simply said that a group of ultra-leftists, under Guan Feng's leadership, had made false accusations and disinformation, and the charges added to xxx were all false accusations and untrue statements. The government's decision to take the case to the next level was not even convincing. He pointed to the pamphlet he had created and said: "I will write a book and put it in there, he can't overturn the case no matter how". But it was to no avail, he himself died, and the pamphlet was not released by him. The "truth" is relative, and whoever has the power is the "truth". Of course, this "truth" is in inverted commas. The real truth cannot be shaken.

Deng Qingfu, the deputy brigade leader of my brigade, was the same way. After the Cultural Revolution, the city of Beijing rehabilitated him, saying that he had not shared the grain privately and had not embezzled. Another man, who had been a lapdog of the landlord before Liberation, was in charge of the scales in the team's grain yard. He used this power and the food shortage at the time to take advantage of and oppress women by using the "high and low pressure" scales. When he saw a woman, he would make the scales rise high and give her more grain, using this method to entice her; if he failed to entice her, he would lower the scales and deduct grain from her. There was a woman nicknamed "Little Half Fairy", who was quite debauched. She did not marry, and she would sleep with anyone she liked, as long as they gave her something. She just didn't like this scale keeper, and she wouldn't do it even if he lifted the scale as high as he could. This man had no choice but to rape her in the end. This was such a bad guy, but after Deng Xiaoping returned to power, the city of Beijing actually rehabilitated him. As long as we were the ones who exposed them back then,

Beijing rehabilitated all of them, even the bad guys with proven evidence. The reason was that they were all people who were "persecuted" by us back then. This should be the other side of the truth that people don't notice, the truth that Deng Xiaoping and Hu Yaobang rehabilitated these "unjust and false cases". If we look at the rural areas of China today, we will see that in many places village bullies and bullying are rampant, oppressing the people. Is this not related to the fact that they did not distinguish between right and wrong when they "rehabilitated unjust and wrongful cases"? If you deny the Marxist theory of class struggle, can you stop the fermentation of these bloody facts?

In contrast, there was another one called Lao Liu who was not so lucky. Old Liu later died, and I always felt sorry and guilty about his death because I was the one who failed to handle it properly. After the investigation and handling of Deng Qingfu, some people said that there was someone you had not investigated. His surname was Liu, and although he was now a poor peasant, he had been a bandit before Liberation and often engaged in kidnapping. Generally speaking, "there is a way to be a bandit", and in those days there were rules for bandits, so you could not kidnap people from your own village. But this man did not follow this rule and used to kidnap people in his village, so no one in his village liked him. But we had no mandate to campaign against bandits in the "social education" movement. Besides, he was already a poor peasant and had done no bad deeds after Liberation. Moreover, one of his sons and one of his daughters were quite active in the "Four Clean-ups". However, the members of the community had expressed their views to me, and I had to respond to them. I said, "Well, let him give an account, explain the matter clearly and be educated". I asked Xiao Zhou from our task force to go and talk to him. As a result, he felt very nervous when we talked to him, thinking that we were going to do something to him after we had done something to Deng Qingfu, and within two days after Xiao Zhou talked to him, he jumped into the well and committed suicide.

The person died and things got bigger. Xiao Zhou said, "I did not force him, I just did as you said to let him explain the matter". The first thing you need to do is to get a good idea of what you're doing. Deng Liqun said, "It doesn't matter much, if the bandits died in the past, they died, but we have to report the case to the Beijing Public Security Bureau". After we reported the case, the Public Security Bureau came immediately, and a team of forensic doctors also came. The forensic scientist looked over and over, took photos and records, and then told us to bury the person once it was ready. I said what exactly did they find out? The coroner said that their task was to see if it was a homicide or a suicide, and that if it was a homicide a case would have to be opened for investigation, and if it was a suicide, then it would be a matter for the village. I asked, "Then how do you know he committed suicide?" The forensic scientist then told me that people who are pushed down a well have to struggle against getting put into the well, there must be mud and ash under their fingernails, this person's fingernails were clean and there were no signs of struggle, he jumped into the well by himself and did not struggle.

This old Liu, with a large family, had no strong labourers left once he died, and his family's life would be difficult. If he did not die, there was no problem in treating him as a bandit. Once he died, everyone felt sorry for him and forgave him for what happened decades ago. I didn't actually punish him, or arrest him, I just had someone talk to him. But when people die, it's all my responsibility. I had a review about it. Later, in order to stabilise his family's life, I found a job for his daughter so that his family could have security in their livelihood, but he himself died after all.

Through the "Four Clean-ups", we checked all the cadres in the brigade and found no major problems with the cadres in the Zhai Li brigade except for the deputy brigade leader, and the problem with him was not that big. Before the Four Clean-ups, the community members were still sporadic in their work when the bell was struck; after the Four Clean-ups, they waited under the bell

before the bell was struck. I saw with my own eyes that the motivation of the community members had indeed increased. The community members said that during the Great Leap Forward, the crops in the fields were not properly harvested, and the pumpkins were rotting in the ground, but no one was there to share them, so they all rotted in the end. It's true that in 1958 the wind and rain were good and there was a good yield, but people went to work on water conservancy and steel making, and things could not be collected. This was the case all over the country. There was a bumper crop but not a good harvest, and a good harvest but not a good share. The people did not actually get much of anything. The main problem was that the cadres themselves were corrupt and oppressed the members of the community. How could the community members be motivated? After the "Four Clean-ups", the cadres were reorganised and the members were motivated again.

Our task force itself was very clean, and wherever the task force went, the cadres did not dare to embezzle, so the community members got a larger share of the grain. They said, "It would be good if you came once a year, especially during the grain harvest, so that you could come and collect and distribute the grain with us". This means that once the production problem is solved, the big problem is the distribution problem, and once you solve the problem of the cadres' private share, the hearts of the members will be smoothed. After we left, they produced a good harvest year after year, which I am afraid was also the result of the "Four Clean-ups" campaign.

Just as I was going down to carry out the "Four Clean-ups" campaign, I came across a recent instruction from Chairman Mao: "The bureaucratic class and the working class and the poor lower middle peasants are two sharply opposed classes. These people are bourgeois elements who have become or are becoming people who suck the blood of the workers." When I read it, my mind went boom, as if I felt an earthquake. It was the most shaken I have ever felt in my mind. At that time, I had just written those articles commenting on Li Xiucheng and studied the history of the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom. But in my understanding, our Party had at best reached the state of Xiao Chaogui<sup>243</sup>, which was still revolutionary in general. Hong Xiuquan had completely deteriorated and had become a new landlord class riding on the heads of the peasants again. I had no idea that the Chairman had already raised the issue to the level of forming a new exploiting class in opposition to the workers and peasants. This instruction from Chairman Mao was in fact the conclusion of the debate with Liu Shaoqi. I asked Guan Feng, who said that theoretically this was the case. Theoretically it was that it had reached the point where a new exploiting class had emerged. I also asked Deng Liqun, who said he did not understand the Chairman's instructions. But it is said that Deng Liqun has slowly come to understand it over the years.

### **3. The storm caused by a critical letter**

The "Four Clean-ups" campaign was a mass movement, so the first thing we needed to do was to mobilise the masses. How to mobilise the masses? The "Taoyuan experience" invented by Wang Guangmei at that time was to hide from the majority of the people by conducting a secret so-called "root and branch" campaign. After they had made a clear identification, the task force held a mass meeting to fight against the "bad guys" that had been identified. The struggle was cruel, a jet-plane method<sup>244</sup>, a brutal physical struggle. The earliest "jet" was the "Taoyuan experience". Liu Shaoqi promoted Wang Guangmei's "Taoyuan experience" everywhere.

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<sup>243</sup> Xiao Chaogui (?-1852) was a famous general and military strategist in the early days of the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom. Hong Xiuquan was the leader of the Taiping Rebellion.

<sup>244</sup> The "jet plane" was a physical position forced upon people who were struggled against during the Cultural Revolution. The person was forced to bend forward at the waist at a 90 degree angle, with the legs straight

However, the masses and those "bad guys" who have made mistakes are usually villagers, so if you want to engage in "jets" and "physical torture", the masses will not be able to save face, but will resent and resist. This is why we, including Deng Liqun, did not agree with Wang Guangmei's "Tao Yuan experience". We first went to the masses to understand the situation and listen to their opinions, and then investigated and verified the problems according to their opinions. We only investigated and fought against these people after we had solid evidence. At most, they were left standing during the struggle, without any "physical torture" in the form of "jets". In this way, the public felt convinced, so it was easy to mobilise them.

But there were also those who were keen to learn from the Taoyuan experience. Such was the case with Liu Ren, the second secretary of the Beijing Municipal Committee. However, when he saw that their approach was being resisted by the masses and that the masses could not be mobilised, he thought that the awareness of the masses was too low. He then made a speech, saying that if you did not want to do it, then there was nothing we could do, so let's forget it and withdraw.

After the spirit of Liu Ren's speech was conveyed down, I listened to it with some reservations. At that time, I only knew that it was delivered by a leader in Beijing, but I did not know that it was delivered by Liu Ren. I felt that if the masses did not become aware, then you should go to work and mobilise them, instead of reprimanding them and withdrawing the task force at every turn. Such an approach is a totally lordly way of treating the masses.

Although I had already left the Rear Building Research Office, Chen Qizhang knew that I was working on the Four Clean-ups down there and asked me to communicate with them regularly about what I had learned down there. So I kept in touch with some of my comrades in the Rear Building, and often wrote to them to tell them about some of the situations I had encountered, mostly about trivial matters. In a personal letter to a comrade, I wrote out my views on Liu Ren's speech, and because it was a personal letter, I was more direct. After reading it, that comrade thought it was a good letter. He didn't say anything to me either, so he forwarded the letter to Chen Qizhang. After reading it, Chen Qizhang thought that my criticism was very reasonable and published the letter in the "Reflections", and also found Liu Ren's speech in the Beijing Briefing which was kept by the General Office and published it as an attachment.

Chairman Mao had always resented secrecy and the underhanded struggle in the socialist revolution. When he read my letter in the Situation Reflections, he gave it his approval, which was given to Peng Wu. The Chairman criticised Liu Ren, saying Liu Ren, you shouldn't talk like that. This made Liu Ren very nervous and he made a self-criticism. He also fell ill on the spot and was hospitalised. But he was soon cured.

Peng Zhen was very critical of this incident. He approached Chen Boda and said that Liu Ren was an old revolutionary. If you criticise our secretary, give me a heads up first, so I can go and talk with him. The first time you posted this, you showed it to the Chairman, and it made a big difference.

Chen Boda was a person who had no independence and he did, as the Chairman said, often switch between this and that faction within the Party. By criticising Liu Ren, we would be embarrassing Peng Zhen. And Peng Zhen was then the Standing Secretary of the Central Secretariat, not in the least bit less powerful than Deng Xiaoping. Therefore, Chen Boda became very nervous when he saw

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and the arms stretched outward like the wings of a jet plane. They were held in this position for as long as the struggle meeting lasted, and were not allowed to drink water or relieve themselves.

that Peng Zhen was dissatisfied. Of course, to be honest, at that time Chen Boda's fear of contradicting Peng Zhen was not entirely unreasonable.

Chen Boda called to criticize me: "What are you doing? How can you just give out declarations of war on people without my consent? I didn't ask you to write war letters either. You should have informed me before writing this. You are a member of Red Flag, and this involves the relationship between Red Flag and the Beijing Municipal Committee, the relationship between Red Flag and the Secretariat of the Party Central Committee, and the relationship between Peng Zhen and me. If you guys do this, Peng Zhen will think that I am trying to get rid of him and have a problem with me".

I explained to Chen Boda: "I understand, and I will inform you first of everything I write. I'll show you the full text of my correspondence, which was just a personal letter, spoken in a casual way, a bit on the line, not an official opinion. I didn't think they would publish it. I said in my letter that he was a lord. Now I take it back. I'd like to write to Peng Zhen to clarify that this is my problem and has nothing to do with you". Chen Boda said, "Don't write. You and Guan Feng hurry to Peng Zhen to make a self-criticism and admit your mistake". Since my letter also quoted a few lines from Guan Feng, which were also rather vehement, he asked me to ask Guan Feng to go with me.

At this point, Guan Feng and I also found ourselves in a difficult position. The Chairman had already given his approval for that letter, so how could we go and admit our mistake. As a matter of coincidence, Chen Boda asked us to go to Peng Zhen to make a review, and Peng Zhen was looking for us. Peng Zhen asked me and Guan Feng to attend the mobilisation meeting of the Beijing Municipal Committee for the "Four Clean-ups". I remember that it was a freezing day, and although we had been given a cooker to keep warm, we were still freezing cold. We were freezing for four hours out of a four-hour meeting. The other cadres were even worse off as they did not have a cooker. After the meeting, the host said, "You two please stay, a car will take you to Secretary Peng's house later, Secretary Peng wants to see you". Peng Zhen was a very big leader and wanted to see us, so we couldn't say no. A car came later and took us down to Peng Zhen's house.

It was the first time I went to Peng Zhen's house, and the heating in the house was on, as warm as spring. I had delivered documents to him more than once before, but they were all delivered to the municipal party committee and I had never been to his home. This time when I went to his house, it was really opulent, more so than a fancy room in a luxury hotel. The tables were all very high-class wood. The dining room was a special room, very large and stocked with many exquisite furnishings. I had seen my father's boss in Shanghai and his home was also very grand, but it was bourgeois and I had never seen anything so grand in the Communist Party. Tian Jiaying lived in a very poor place, there was no room for meals at all, and meals were served at his desk. Of course, Tian Jiaying was not a very high-ranking chief. However, the Chairman's home compared with Peng Zhen's home, were two completely different living environments, the heating was not warm, if you stayed in the house you would need to wear a cotton jacket. If you don't believe me, you can visit the former residence of the Chairman, with its wooden bed, old sofa ..... I have also been to the Premier's home, the West Flower Hall, where the Premier and Deng Yingchao live in a hut, both quite plain.

Peng Zhen was indeed a great leader. Not only did he not criticize us, he seemed to take us seriously. Guan Feng is an old cadre, and I originally thought he would take Guan Feng as his main focus. Unexpectedly, he left Guan Feng out in the cold and kept talking to me.

He started by chatting with us, asking us about our family life, even how my wife was, how old she was, how she looked, how her relationship was, and asking me to come to his house more often. When I said, "I don't know your wife's name," he said, "Zhang Jieqing. Then he asked me what I had

been reading recently. He first said that Guan Feng's articles were good and praised him a lot. Then he brought up my review of Li Xiucheng's article. He said to me, "I saw your article on Li Xiucheng and supported you at that time. Your article was well-written and so long that I read it in one go. It was really sharp, no wonder the Chairman appreciated you. I have read the Chairman's instructions. You are right, Zhou Yang and the others are not. The true loyalty to the revolution was to the peasant hero Chen Yucheng, who I support as much as you do, and who died unbowed. You are an emerging force that our party has nurtured, so you should work hard and not let the party down". When Peng Zhen said this, it brought us closer together at once. I also felt better about him all of a sudden. I took this opportunity to say, there is something I did not do well, I should have reported that opinion of Comrade Liu Ren to you first, I wrote a letter directly to the General Office and they posted it. This matter has nothing to do with Comrade Chen Boda". Before we went, Deng Liqun was still in Tong County and we informed him that Peng Zhen wanted to see us. The first thing I did was to tell Peng Zhen that the report we wrote was our own, not Chen Boda's. We also said that Chen Boda was very angry about this matter and that we had to clear it up for Chen Boda.

Peng Zhen said, what does it matter, you have opinions and have the right to write. He also said, your opinions are very good, how can you treat the masses with such a lordly attitude? He said, this person, Liu Ren, likes to talk ironically. He meant that originally to be counter-aggressive. When he said he didn't care, what he meant was that he still had to manage. You took it as his true words. In fact, that's not what he meant. It would be wrong if he really didn't care. He is a secretary, how can he really not care?

As we listened, we also felt that what Peng Zhen said made a lot of sense. I said that my level was low, and I was the one who spoke to Guan Feng at that time. Guan Feng didn't look at it carefully either. Both of us were not at a high level and might have misunderstood. The Chairman read our report and thought Liu Ren was wrong and criticised him. This is something we did not do well. Peng Zhen said, "It's okay, if you have done something, you should correct it. The Chairman criticised him, and it was a good criticism. It made him so nervous that he had a heart attack. From then on, he knew how to speak. If you want to inspire people, you should speak positively".

When Peng Zhen said this, Guan Feng and I felt overwhelmed because at that time we didn't have an opinion of Liu Ren one way or the other, we just felt that his words were spoken incorrectly. After hearing these words from Peng Zhen, I felt as if Peng Zhen did not care about this matter. So I stressed again that this criticism was not Chen Boda's opinion. He said it did not matter even if it was Chen Boda's opinion. "I think it's a very good idea to have a magazine called "Red Flag", where workers, peasants and soldiers learn philosophy, as the Chairman said, and I share that opinion". This attitude of Peng Zhen was very different from Chen Boda's rebuke, which made me feel even better about Peng Zhen. He also asked me and Guan Feng to be the advisors of the Four Clean-ups in the whole Beijing area, and we were welcome to attend all the "Four Clean-ups" meetings held in Beijing as long as we had time.

When we finished talking, we ate. It was the first time I had such a fine meal, and that tofu was better than meat. I always ate bean curd, but Guan Feng always ate meat, and that meat was also delicious. In Tong County, we all ate together, lived together and worked together, and ate in the homes of the community members. I thought the food was not too bad when we met at the Central Committee. In Zhongnanhai, we ate in a large canteen, which was good. I was invited by Tian Jiaying to eat at the Sichuan Restaurant, which was also good, but it was a far cry from the food at Peng Zhen's house.

When we were leaving, Peng Zhen also urged me, "In the future, if you see anything in Beijing, you should write to me directly, write to me personally and write your name on the envelope, so they won't block it". I understood him to mean that in future, you should not tell anyone else about Beijing, but talk to him personally. I did not resent this at the time, because Peng Gao<sup>245</sup> was very powerful in the Party at that time, and he was often the one who spoke at the meetings of the Central Committee, even more so than Deng Xiaoping. At that time, there was no such thing as the "February Outline" and I did regard him as the leader of the Central Committee. I was only in my thirties, and I was relatively simple and did not know that there would be so many conflicts.

When I came back, I said to Guan Feng, Peng Zhen invited us to dinner – it's so grand! He said, "It's not because the Chairman approved your letter. Peng Zhen has so much power that Chen Boda didn't dare to offend him. The letter was written by you about Liu Ren, and Chen Boda asked you to explain that it was not his intention, but your own. The reason for this is not because of the letter, but because the Chairman approved the letter. Peng Zhen's invitation to dinner was not because of the letter either, but because the Chairman had approved it. Didn't Peng Zhen say that in future, if anything is conveyed to him in Beijing, he should be informed first. In that case, can we still say that he is not good?" Guan Feng has sharper views on some things than I do, and he actually has more experience. I asked him, "Have I made it clear to Peng Zhen? He said, "You should make it clear to him that you were writing the letter personally with the comrades in the Central Office.

Inadvertently saying what I had thought was not an intention to make trouble in Beijing. It should be made clear what that means". I said, "Then why didn't you add something right then?" He said, "How can I add anything about you?" When I thought about it carefully, I felt that Guan Feng had made a good point. So, I wrote a letter to Peng Zhen, firstly, to make my letter a little clearer according to Guan Feng's meaning, which is also a kind of explanation to Chen Boda; secondly, after eating such a meal from someone, I should also say thank you. The letter to Peng Zhen was not written by Guan Feng, but I wrote that I was grateful for Peng Zhen's hospitality and hoped he would tell Comrade Liu Ren to clear up any misunderstanding. Since then, I have had no further dealings with Peng Zhen, nor have I written to him again.

As soon as the Cultural Revolution began, Peng Zhen was placed under isolation and his home was raided. All the letters from Peng Zhen's place were handed over to Kang Sheng, and among them was the letter I had written. At that time Peng Zhen was considered an anti-Party element, and all those who were close to him were subject to suspicion and censorship. Qi Benyu, a resounding leftist, actually had correspondence with him. Kang Sheng, Chen Boda and Jiang Qing all read that letter and said that I was kissing Peng Zhen's ass and surrendering to the bourgeoisie. Jiang Qing was still a bit suspicious and asked me: How did you write to Peng Zhen and get involved with him? I told Jiang Qing that Chen Boda had asked me to confess my mistake. I explained to her the process that was followed. Jiang Qing asked Chen Boda about this, and he said, "No, I don't remember".

Fortunately, that was when we were in a meeting together and Guan Feng was there. I said, "Comrade Jiang Qing, Comrade Guan Feng can testify to this". Guan Feng verified what I had said. When Jiang Qing found out the truth, he said to Chen Boda, "You old man, you asked people to go there yourself, and now you're talking about them." On that occasion, Kang Sheng was there, and so was Wang Li. Kang Sheng said he had read my letter carefully, and that Peng Zhen had invited me to dinner, a general thank you, nothing else was said, nothing else. When Kang Sheng explained this, the matter of the letter was over. But later Chen Boda said that Kang Sheng was harbouring Qi Benyu.

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<sup>245</sup> "Gao" (meaning "high" or "tall") is an honorific acknowledging a person's senior position in a hierarchy.

When I was arrested, at first Chen Boda berated me, but later the Premier, Kang Sheng and Jiang Qing spoke, saying that I had long since defected to Peng Zhen. Chen Boda also quoted a line from my letter, "In your home, it is like being in my own home", saying that Qi Benyu had already become family with Peng Zhen. In fact, that was just a polite remark. There were also rumours that I had written "most beloved Comrade Peng Zhen" in my letter. I don't even write that to the Chairman, so how could I write something like "most beloved" to Peng Zhen? The person who started the rumour is clueless, but it doesn't mean that other people are clueless too.

#### **4. Trouble caused by criticism of "tedious philosophy"**

The "Four Clean-ups" campaign of the Zhaili brigade was under the control of the Songzhuang Commune, and the "Four Clean-ups" of Songzhuang were under the unified control of the top, so we were often asked to report on our work and fill in various forms, some of which were repetitive, and we had to assign a person to deal with them. At that time, I was asked to write an article for Philosophical Studies, and I thought, "Nowadays, tedious philosophy is prevalent". The meetings were big and small, with endless statistics, forms and inquiries, and people from above were always coming to listen to reports, asking for this and that material, none more so than our leader Deng Liqun, who asked us to talk about anything, and did not often meet with us. Instead, they were endlessly boring us. One evening, growing angry, I wrote a short article criticizing tedious philosophy, and Guan Feng took it and read it and said it was good. So, I gave it to the Journal of Philosophical Studies. When Deng Liqun saw it, he asked me, "Did someone from the central government say something to you about your criticism of "tedious philosophy"? I said, "No." He said, "Chairman Mao is criticizing the philosophy of "tedium". He then said that Chairman Mao was criticizing Liu Shaoqi's "tedious philosophy".

What I wrote at that time was only out of my own feelings and I put it on a philosophical level to talk about this issue. What I didn't expect was that when the "23 Articles"<sup>246</sup> were formulated, Chairman Mao and Liu Shaoqi had a disagreement, and Chairman Mao said that the "Four Clean-ups" campaign was mainly about the question of whether to take the socialist road or the capitalist road, and that the main target was "those in power in the Party who take the capitalist road". Liu Shaoqi, on the other hand, said that whatever contradictions there were, they should be resolved. The main problem was to solve the problem of "four cleans and four unclean", and he also said that he wanted to solve the problem of "the intersection of internal and external contradictions in the Party". Chairman Mao then criticised him for engaging in "tedious philosophy".

The "tedious philosophy" I am referring to is a specific method of work and has nothing to do with the "tedious philosophy" of Liu Shaoqi, which the Chairman criticized. But because I am speaking from a philosophical point of view, I have used the term "tedious philosophy". Deng Liqun had been Liu Shaoqi's secretary, so he was very sensitive. As soon as he saw me talking about "tedious philosophy", he became alert, thinking that I was criticising Liu Shaoqi and that I was well-informed and must have heard Chairman Mao's criticism of Liu Shaoqi's "tedious philosophy". I asked him, "How did you know that the Chairman was criticizing the 'tedious philosophy'?" He said that Kang Sheng had told him that Chairman Mao and Liu Shaoqi had had a disagreement. Deng Liqun had a good relationship with Kang Sheng and often talked to him on the phone. Deng Liqun said, "This matter has not been made public by the central government yet, so you should not get caught up in the excitement". I told Deng Liqun that I was criticizing "tedious philosophy", and that I was

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<sup>246</sup> The "Twenty-three Articles" were issued on January 14, 1965 and provided that the "urban and rural socialist education movement" be abbreviated to the "Four Clean-ups", that is cleaning up politics, the economy, organisation and ideology.

criticizing the working methods, and that I didn't know anything about the differences between Chairman Mao and Liu Shaoqi, that I hadn't returned home from the countryside, and that I hadn't corresponded with the Office since the last private correspondence that had caused so much trouble. Deng Liqun said he believed me and said "Then you should hurry to withdraw the article so as not to cause misunderstanding. You see I have misunderstood you, so others will misunderstand you even more. Once the party document is communicated, and your article goes out, it will be as if you are against Liu Shaoqi. It would not be good to cause conflict within the Party in that case. This is a matter between the leaders of the Central Government, and now that it has not been officially communicated, it is better for us not to make an article on such a topic". I thought Deng Liqun's opinion was right and immediately called Lin Lushi of the Journal of Philosophical Studies to tell him to hurry up and take down the article. They said that the catalogue had been published and the printing costs had been paid. I said that even if it was printed, I would have to pull it down and I would pay for the loss. I said that this was what Deng Liqun had explained and that it could not be sent out. I couldn't say for fear of causing any misunderstanding, so I asked him to do me a favour, and that next time I would write a big article. He told me how much money it would cost, and I said I would make it up. He said that was not necessary, other magazines lose money, but they make money too and don't care about that. He finally withdrew the article.

Because of this episode, I paid particular attention to the differences of opinion between Chairman Mao and Liu Shaoqi. After reading the documents on their differences (i.e. the "First Ten Articles" and the "Last Ten Articles")<sup>247</sup>, I felt that Chairman Mao was right and Liu Shaoqi was wrong. When Deng Liqun read it, he engaged in reconciliation, saying that it was just a matter of how they put things. It was the same thing, but different statements. Liu Shaoqi didn't deny engaging in intra-party conflicts, either. Both Guan Feng and I disagreed with Deng Liqun's statement, arguing that the four cleans, four uncleans; the intersection of internal and external contradictions within the party; enemy conflicts, internal conflicts, conflicts between the cadres, corruption, private food distribution, historical problems of various people - what problems were there not in the countryside – if you wanted to find contradictions, you would find them. This is the objective situation, but our experience is that you can't do so many things in a day, and you have to focus mainly on solving the problem of corruption among the party cadres and getting the peasants to share more food, which is the main problem. Once this problem is solved, other problems will be

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<sup>247</sup> During the work conference held by the CPC Central Committee in Hangzhou in May 1963, the "Decision of the CPC Central Committee on Several Issues in Rural Work (Draft)" presided over by Mao Zedong was a programmatic document guiding the socialist education movement. This document contained ten questions, referred to as the "First Ten Articles", to distinguish them from the "Last Ten Articles" formulated in September of the same year. These were based on the issues raised by the socialist education movement in various regions. They emphasized "taking class struggle as the key link". On the other hand, it pointed out the importance of uniting more than 95% of the peasant masses and rural cadres, and stipulated policies such as relying on grassroots organizations and grassroots cadres, and treating the children of landlords and rich peasants correctly. In September 1964, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China revised the "Last Ten Articles" again. The purpose of the movement was to rectify the work style of cadres, resolve the contradictions between cadres and the masses, prevent revisionism and "peaceful evolution" in China, and consolidate the socialist system. The basic guiding ideology of the "last ten points" was to "dig out the roots of revisionism". At this time, Liu Shaoqi pushed a "left in appearance, but right in essence" line, and the original practice of relying on grassroots organizations and grassroots cadres was changed, and the work team led the entire movement, leaving the majority of grassroots cadres aside from the movement's leadership. This was very much the case with the Taoyuan experience under the leadership of his wife, Wang Guangmei.

solved. According to Deng Liqun, you have to lay out the various contradictions before you can identify the main one. How can we know what the main contradiction is as soon as we go in? The Chairman said that grasping everything is a tedious philosophy, but it is not a tedious philosophy when you lay out the various contradictions and go for the main one. We just talked about it casually, and no one was trying to grab anyone by the pigtail.

I was not satisfied with Wang Guangmei's "Taoyuan Experience" either, but I only saw it as a question of working methods. Why did Chairman Mao have such a big disagreement with Liu Shaoqi and call Chen Boda back from the countryside to write the 23 articles? It was only later that I understood the fundamental difference between Chairman Mao and Liu Shaoqi on this issue of "tedious philosophy", as Chairman Mao mainly wanted to solve the problem of the capitalist road among the leading cadres, and regarded this problem as the most dangerous to the socialist cause. Liu Shaoqi, on the other hand, denied that such a problem existed in the Party at all, and directed his campaign towards such and such problems among the masses and grassroots cadres.

Jiang Qing told me during the Cultural Revolution that right at that time, there was a time when the Chairman felt quite puzzled. The Chairman said to Jiang Qing that in the past, Liu Shaoqi had not been like this with him. Even if there was a difference of opinion, it was always said very politely. "And now it was that when I said one thing, he would contradict me".

What the Chairman said probably referred to discussions on the "23Articles". When the Chairman said that the focus of this campaign was to rectify those in power in the Party who had taken the capitalist road, Liu Shaoqi raised the question on the spot, "Who are those in power who have taken the capitalist road?" Chairman Mao named two people on the spot, saying that Zhang Linzhi from the Ministry of Coal and He Changgong from the Ministry of Geology were the ones. This was followed by another incident in which Liu Shaoqi did not allow the Chairman to speak at a meeting and Deng Xiaoping told the Chairman not to go to a meeting, while Chairman Mao went to the meeting with the Constitution and Party Charter in hand. The struggle between the two lines within the Party was thus formed.

In 1965, when I returned to Beijing from Tong County to participate in the "Four Clean-ups" campaign, I fell ill and vomited blood from my mouth. My family was very nervous and immediately took me to the hospital. To my surprise, Jiang Qing and Kang Sheng both came to see me in hospital. When I thanked Jiang Qing, she said, "Don't thank me, I'm not concerned about you". She wouldn't say anything further. I knew it was the Chairman who was concerned about me. Kang Sheng also gave an order to the Ministry of Health to ensure my health. The deputy minister of the Ministry of Health came personally. In fact, the examination came down later and it was nothing serious, a ruptured bronchus causing vomiting of blood, caused by overexertion.

When I got out of hospital, I returned to Red Flag and wrote the article "Researching History for the Revolution" while I was recuperating.

(End of First Part)

## Part 3 The Days and Nights of the Central Cultural Revolution Group

### Chapter 1 From "The Review of 'Hai Rui Dismissed from Office'" to the "February Outline"

1. The socialist revolution in the field of ideology
2. The Peking Opera Revolution under Jiang Qing
3. Jiang Qing and the Review of the New Historical Drama "Hai Rui Dismissed from Office".
4. Studying History for the Sake of the Revolution

Appendix: Studying History for the Sake of the Revolution

5. Tian Jiaying's unauthorized redaction of Chairman Mao's speech
6. Peng Zhen proposes the "February Outline"

#### 1. The socialist revolution in the field of ideology

Chairman Mao, the great Marxist theorist and leader of the proletarian revolution, always attached great importance to the struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie in the ideological sphere. He always believed that after the proletariat had seized state power and completed the socialist transformation of the system of ownership of the means of production, the struggle with the bourgeoisie in the ideological field had not ended. Especially as international capitalism was still very strong, such a struggle could not be completed in a short time. This is not only because the bourgeoisie still has a great advantage in this respect, but also because, as the Communist Party changed its status and gained state power, the old ideas and traditions of the exploiting class, the old ruling class, which had been in place for thousands of years, had to be reflected in the Communist Party. In a country like China, with its long history of feudal autocracy and its deep feudal culture, this ideological struggle was bound to be even more complex. If the proletarian ideology does not gain dominance through struggle, the power that has been seized is not secure and regression and restoration can occur at any time. However, not many people in our Party can understand the problem in the way that Chairman Mao did.

Judging from the Standing Committee of the Central Politburo at the time, Liu Shaoqi did not have a great deal to offer in this area. After he became President in 1959, he reprinted his book *On the Self-Cultivation of Communists*<sup>248</sup> in 1962. There are many controversial points in this pamphlet. When he first published this pamphlet in Yan'an in 1939, he relied mainly on the help of Lu Zhenyu and Yang Xianzhen. Yang Xianzhen was Liu Shaoqi's old subordinate in the Northern Bureau, and was Liu Shaoqi's main and most loyal assistant in ideology and theory. Lu Zhenyu is a historian. He worked

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<sup>248</sup> Part Three of his *How to Be a Good Communist*

with Liu Shaoqi as early as 1927, during the Great Revolution. He later served as Liu Shaoqi's secretary. Liu Shaoqi got much of his knowledge of history from him.

Liu Shaoqi usually did not put enough effort into the study of theory. The rumour of what Chairman Mao said: If you don't study for three days, you won't catch up with Liu Shaoqi. That was just a rumour that came out of nowhere back then. Wang Guangmei told us very seriously: that was all nonsense. Comrade Shaoqi said that he had never heard Chairman Mao say that.

Deng Xiaoping was known in the Party as a man who did not read books or newspapers. Whenever he had time, he just played bridge and had fun. But this man was very clever. He understood what other people did not understand after reading it several times, but he understood it at a glance. He was also particularly good at gauging the psychology of Chairman Mao and other leaders. Deng Xiaoping got much of his historical knowledge from Wu Han, and Wu Han and Deng Xiaoping were not just poker buddies at the table. Outsiders thought that Wu Han and Peng Zhen were on good terms because Wu Han was the deputy mayor of Beijing and was Peng Zhen's subordinate. In fact, Wu Han's relationship with Deng Xiaoping far exceeded that with Peng Zhen.

Premier Zhou was always busy with various matters, and he was, in his own words, "slow" on ideological matters.

The other members of the Standing Committee also did very little in this area.

Within the Party, Peng Zhen and Kang Sheng were still the strongest in the ideological field. Both of them were instrumental in the struggle against Soviet Khrushchev's revisionism.

I remember that after Peng Zhen was overthrown, Chairman Mao even said in one of his speeches to us that Peng Zhen had contributed to the issue of criticising (Soviet) revisionism, and this could not be denied to him.

Kang Sheng was familiar with the classical works of Marx and Lenin, and he had a deep knowledge of the ancient languages, which made him one of the best not only in the Party but also in the social sciences. Hu Qiaomu and Tian Jiaying were both self-respecting people who did not think much of Chen Boda, who was known as a theoretician at the time, but both of them had always had great respect for Kang Sheng. In fact, Chen Boda had his own strengths, as he was better than Kang Sheng in philosophy and economics.

The "Five Secretaries" of Chairman Mao, Chen Boda, Hu Qiaomu, Tian Jiaying, Jiang Qing and Ye Zilong, all of them, with the exception of Ye Zilong, had a good understanding of the ideological struggle. They were all concerned with the struggle in the ideological sphere, but there were differences in their specific expressions and roles.

In the early days of the founding of the country, the Chairman personally led the criticism of the film *The Legend of Wu Xun*. Before that, he gave several more instructions on the traitorous mistakes in the film *The Inside History of the Qing Court*. However, apart from Jiang Qing, Chen Boda, Hu Qiaomu and Tian Jiaying had been passive in this regard, and they had not written a single article.

When Chen Boda was in Yan'an, he wrote many sharply written academic articles that were valued by Chairman Mao. It should be said that Chen Boda was still learned. It was just that he was a selfish man who was more adept at seeing the wind and wavering easily in his political line of thought. At the 1959 Lushan meeting, he first sided with Peng Dehuai. As soon as the Chairman spoke, he immediately turned back and compiled a pamphlet to criticise Peng Dehuai. Originally he was

criticised at the meeting because Chairman Mao said that the Xiu Cais<sup>249</sup> were still our people and hand been liberated. After the Lushan Conference, he followed Chairman Mao closely again and did a lot of work on anti-revisionist theories. So, he later became the head of the Central Cultural Revolution Group.

Hu Qiaomu was originally Chairman Mao's most valued penman, and his theoretical thinking skills were the strongest among the Chairman's several secretaries. I heard Tian Jiaying say that at the beginning of the founding of the country, when Chairman Mao was writing six articles, including the "Why it is Necessary to Discuss the White Paper", Hu Qiaomu was required to be on call 24 hours a day, and he was called in as soon as the chairman had any new ideas. However, Hu Qiaomu's political line of thought was always in favour of Liu Shaoqi. At the 1959 Lushan Conference, he also sided with Peng Dehuai. Although he was later protected by Chairman Mao, he stayed home to recuperate after coming down from Lushan.

Tian Jiaying was quite accomplished in poetry, but when it came to writing articles, he was inferior to Chen Boda and Hu Qiaomu. He later fell back on Liu Shaoqi in terms of his political and ideological line. It is not difficult to understand that after Liu Shaoqi became the President, he still appointed him as the Deputy Director of the General Office of the President of the People's Republic of China and often sought him out. The accumulation of time had a considerable influence on his thinking.

Ye Zilong was mainly involved in secretarial work and his limited literacy level did not allow him to be overly demanding in this regard.

As mentioned above, Jiang Qing was the only one of the 'Five Secretaries' who had the deepest understanding of Chairman Mao's ideology of the struggle against the bourgeoisie in the field of ideology, which was related to his strict demands on her in terms of theoretical thinking. She was a drinker of "royal jelly". She grew up drinking "royal jelly".

## **2. The Peking Opera Revolution under Jiang Qing**

Back in the early 1950s, when the Chairman proposed to criticise the Legend of Wu Xun, Jiang Qing took people down to investigate Wu Xun, providing strong evidence for the criticism of Wu Xun's biography.

By the early 1960s, she began to start again with Beijing Opera, a traditional drama, to carry out a revolutionary transformation of old ideas and culture.

In the summer of 1964, Jiang Qing asked me several times to go to an observation performance of a modern Beijing opera. Jiang Qing said to me: This is also an important work of the Party, and you must also be concerned about it. She also asked me to write a review. But I didn't know how to do this. When I went to Shanghai in early 1966, she asked me to go with her twice to watch the rehearsals of the model operas she had directed and written. Later she asked Zhang Chunqiao to take me to see the model play again. Jiang Qing told me that she had greeted Peng Zhen and Deng Tuo when she was working on the modern Beijing opera in Beijing. But Peng Zhen and the others only dealt with her superficially; in reality, they did not welcome her and did not really set up the

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<sup>249</sup> The xiu cai was originally a term from ancient China that referred to boys who went to school and sat for the imperial exams. Prior to the Tang Dynasty it simply meant a person of talent; after the Song Dynasty it referred to anyone who sat the imperial exams. By the time of New China, it generally referred to scholars. Zhou Xiaozhou supported Peng Dehuai at the Lushan Conference and wrote a letter that Mao criticised for trying to drive a wedge between the scholars and the Party. Mao accused those in Peng's "military club" of wanting to dig out the xiu cai, and said "I don't think they can. The xiu cai are our people, not yours."

implementation of her proposals, so the leaders of some Beijing opera troupes did not actively cooperate. It was because neither the city nor the Ministry of Culture had given them this task.

But Jiang Qing's revolution in Peking Opera had the strong support of Premier Zhou. I heard Hao Liang (who was a difficult friend of mine in Qincheng) say that the name "model opera" was decided by the Premier himself, not by Jiang Qing. It was also the Premier himself who decided to set up the "Model Theatre Company". On one occasion, when Chairman Mao went to see a model opera, the actors asked Chairman Mao to allow them to join the People's Liberation Army. The Chairman replied very cleverly, saying that it was good that you asked to join the PLA. But the public does not necessarily want to see all the shows performed by the troops. When the Chairman said this, the people following him were in a difficult position: Is it better to give the troupe a chance to join the army? Or not? In the end, the Premier came up with a solution: all the "model theatre troupes" were issued uniforms by the General Administration, but not lapel pins and cap badges, and they were not considered active soldiers.

Jiang Qing did devote a great deal of effort to the model opera. The original Red Lantern Story was performed by Du Jinfang as Tiemei<sup>250</sup>, and her singing in the Mei role was absolutely excellent; no one else could reach her level. Mei Lanfang<sup>251</sup> even said that she sang better than him. Hao Liang told me that old Beijing opera fans only listen to your singing voice, regardless of how you look or how well you move, it's all about the singing. The relationship between Du Jinfang and Jiang Qing was always very good. However, Jiang Qing thought that the role of Tiemei should be played by an actor who was good at performing the role of a small "dan"<sup>252</sup>. Jiang Qing said to Du Jinfang, "I will definitely get a script suitable for you in the future, so that you can perform well. You would be the best to play a formal Qing Yi<sup>253</sup>. Li Tiemei is a girl, not suitable for you. I have played Du Liniang<sup>254</sup>, she is also young and beautiful". Jiang Qing said, "Your face is bigger and you don't look like a little girl when you dress up". When you dragged a semitone when you sang, she immediately heard it and said, "No, you're dragging". That's why the young actors obeyed her. She was really an expert. Cheng Yanqiu, who had a long association with Jiang Qing, said during his lifetime that Jiang Qing really knew Beijing opera. They never denied Jiang Qing, and they didn't follow the others in calling her names.

The appearance of Yang Zirong in "The Wisdom of the Mountain" was also designed by Jiang Qing. Jiang Qing said that the first appearance of the hero was like the opening stroke of an article and was an important part of the success or failure of the play. Yang Zirong's appearance was tried many times by Tong Xiangling, but even he was not satisfied, so Jiang Qing came on stage to teach him how to move. How to place his hands and legs. The appearance of Yang Zirong was completely

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<sup>250</sup> Li Tiemei is a character in "Red Lantern". She was an early member of the Communist Party of China, a martyr, from Fanjiazhuang, Beiluo Township, Shouguang City, Shandong Province.

<sup>251</sup> Mei Lanfang (1894–1961) was a notable Peking opera artist in modern Chinese theater. Mei was known as "Queen of Peking Opera", performing exclusively female lead roles (dan). Mei joined the Chinese Communist Party in 1959. His performances were much admired by Mao Zedong.

<sup>252</sup> For "dan", see note above.

<sup>253</sup> Qing Yi (blue clothes) is a kind of northern Chinese opera and named because the role is often played wearing cyan pleats. The characters played are generally dignified, serious, and decent. Most of them represented feudal values of good wives and mothers, or chaste women and the like. The performance is characterised by singing skills, with smaller movements.

<sup>254</sup> Du Liniang is the heroine of "The Return of the Peony Pavilion" by Tang Xianzu, a dramatist and writer of Ming Dynasty in China. She was born into a family of officials and was smart, demure and beautiful, unwilling to be constrained by feudal etiquette, and pursued an ideal love life.

different after Jiang Qing's guidance. He was applauded by the audience and the experts who watched the rehearsal.

When Jiang Qing sometimes watched rehearsals, she would lower her body from the side to watch. She said that this was the audience's perspective of the play, and that you had to see the play from the audience's point of view to know if it was well performed.

Jiang Qing actually changed some of the lyrics in consultation with the Chairman. The Chairman even changed a few parts himself. The Chairman did a really good job. Once the actors sang it, they found it catchy and the mood was very different. For example, the Chairman changed the phrases "to usher in the colours of spring and change the world" and "to spill blood to write the spring and autumn". But people didn't know that and thought that Jiang Qing had done it. They said that Jiang Qing was better than the choreographer. Jiang Qing said, "I couldn't tell people at that time that the Chairman had changed them".

Zhao Yanxia<sup>255</sup> turned out to be very close to Peng Zhen and the others, and she sang really well. I saw that Jiang Qing was also very nice to her, but it seems that she was motivated by someone and just didn't listen to Jiang Qing. When the Cultural Revolution began, the masses fought against her, saying that she was one of Peng Zhen's blackmailers and that she had to confess her relationship with him and the others. Jiang Qing said, "Don't fight". They still wanted her to play the role of Ah Qing's wife. But she still refused to change the play according to Jiang Qing's advice, and even worked without any effort. So, Jiang Qing had to ask Hong Xuefei to replace her. Jiang Qing told me that Hong Xuefei was not inferior to Zhao Yanxia, just a little notch below. But Zhao Yanxia couldn't fight for it, and there was nothing she could do about it.

I made a comment while watching *The White-Haired Girl*. I said that the play seemed to be a bit of a personal struggle for Heiyi to escape. How is she going to survive on her own? It's harder than *Robinson Crusoe* on an isolated island! It would have been better if she had someone to escape with her. The theatre people thought I had a point and actually changed it. They set up a girl to escape with her. When Jiang Qing found out about it, she criticised me, saying, "Don't give your opinion. It is well known to the public that the *White-Haired Girl* escaped alone, but if you get two people to run away, then it is still called the *White Haired-Girl*. If you have any opinions, you have to discuss them with me first. If you go down there and talk about it, people will feel that they have to change it". However, she thought that my opinion had a valid point and later added some crowd scenes to the play.

Jiang Qing didn't really know much about ballet, but she tried hard to learn. She watched the film of the English ballet "The Red Shoes" more than ten times, and always asked me to watch it with her. At first I thought it was quite good, but after a few times I got bored. But she still watched it intently,

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<sup>255</sup> Zhao Yanxia, (1928 - ), is the founder of the Zhao School of Peking Opera. In 1963, at Zhou Enlai's suggestion, she began to rehearse and perform "The Legend of the White Snake". In 1964, she went to the People's Liberation Army to experience life as a soldier, but continued to perform. On April 27th, Liu Shaoqi, Zhou Enlai, Dong Biwu, Deng Xiaoping, Chen Yi and other central leaders watched a performance. In 1965, she co-starred in the modern drama "Azalea Mountain", and at the end of the year, Jiang Qing asked her to rehearse "Sister Jiang". In the same year, he was elected as a deputy to the Third National People's Congress. However, she was criticised for supporting Peng Zhen and was temporarily imprisoned in Chongqing. Four years on a May 7 Cadre Farm followed. She was detained a second time as part of the May 16 Counter-revolutionary group and spent a further three years at a May 7 Cadre school. In 1973, Jiang Qing announced the liberation of Zhao Yanxia and arranged for her to teach in opera schools. In 1975, she was elected as the representative of the Fourth National People's Congress. In 1976, according to the requirements of Comrade Mao Zedong, she acted in several films and a TV drama, returning to the stage in 1977.

trying to find in it the characteristics of ballet, its art form, its way of expression. She said that a large part of the artistic language of ballet is in the toes, it speaks with the toes, and the body language is the soul of the art of dance. She also said that film acting is about the eyes, and that many close-ups in films are about the eyes; it speaks with the eyes. She also taught me that to look at a person is also to look at his eyes, the eyes are the windows to the soul. She said that Chairman Mao always quoted the saying from *Dream of the Red Chamber*, "All things in the world are learned, and human feelings are learned and written". She said, "You only know how to read books and write articles. If you go on, you will become a nerd". She looked on me like her little brother at that time. She said to me, "I don't have a brother, so I treat you like a brother".

The Peking Opera Revolution led by Jiang Qing was a great success, both ideologically and artistically. It had a great impact on the Cultural Revolution that followed.

### **3. Jiang Qing and the Review of the New Historical Drama "Hai Rui Dismissed from Office".**

In March 1965, when Jiang Qing was in Shanghai, she approached Yao Wenyuan through Zhang Chunqiao, Secretary of the Shanghai Municipal Party Committee and Minister of Propaganda of the Municipal Party Committee, asking him to write a review of "Hai Rui Dismissed from Office" and handing him a copy of the Beijing Literary Association magazine which published the script of Wu Han's "Hai Rui Dismissed from Office". This was strongly supported by Ke Qingshi's<sup>256</sup> people, the First Secretary of the East China Bureau. Chen Pixian and Cao Diqu of the Shanghai Municipal Committee at that time were also active participants and supporters in writing the article reviewing Hai Rui Dismissed from Office. After the end of the Cultural Revolution, it was said that Jiang Qing and her group had carried out this work "secretly" without the knowledge of the Shanghai Municipal Committee. This is not true. When the Shanghai workers revolted in 1966, Cao Diqu sent someone to Beijing to see me, saying that the Shanghai Municipal Committee actively supported the criticism of Hai Rui's dismissal, so they were on the "red line", not the "black line", and hoped that the Central Cultural Revolution would come out to work with the rebellious workers in Shanghai.

Others say that Jiang Qing initially approached Li Xifan<sup>257</sup> to criticise Hai Rui Dismissed from Office, but Li Xifan refused. This is also nonsense. Li Xifan and I knew each other very well, and I asked him in person in the 1990s. He said, "No way! Jiang Qing gave me the task and I was very happy at the time". He said, "Even if the editor-in-chief asked me to write it, I couldn't not write it, not to mention a request from Jiang Qing". But he really had other tasks at hand at that time and could not spare the time. He didn't know anything about Wu Han's "Hai Rui Dismissed from Office" and he was afraid that he wouldn't be able to complete the task. And Jiang Qing could not wait until he had finished

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<sup>256</sup> Ke Qingshi (1902- 1965) joined the Chinese Socialist Youth League in 1920 and the Communist Party of China in 1922. A former member of the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee, Vice Premier of the State Council, First Secretary of the East China Bureau of the CPC Central Committee, First Political Commissar of Nanjing Military Region, First Secretary of the CPC Shanghai Municipal Committee, and Mayor of Shanghai. He worked with Jiang Qing prior to the start of the Cultural Revolution, but became seriously ill in April 1965 and passed away in Chengdu at the age of 63.

<sup>257</sup> Li Xifan (1927- 2018) graduated from the Chinese Department of Shandong University in 1953, and graduated from the Philosophy Class of Renmin University of China in 1954. From 1955 to 1986, he worked as an editor in the literature and art department of "People's Daily", where he often came into contact with and discussed contemporary literary works and literary theories. He was blamed by colleagues at the newspaper for not taking the opportunity to write the criticism of Hai Rui Dismissed from Office, and was sought out several times by Jiang Qing, leading to the allegation during her trial that he had been protected by her. However, he continued his research and later published works on Lu Xun and on *A Dream of the Red Chamber*. He continued to uphold Mao Zedong Thought and criticised the anti-Mao views that were promoted after the Cultural Revolution.

the work at hand to familiarise himself with the material and write the article. So it was a matter of finding someone else. I have always been on very good terms with Li Xifan and I trust his word. I suggested that he write up the process, and he agreed. I don't know if he has written it out now.

Jiang Qing later told me that she had thought of asking me to come along to the writing. "But at that time, you were participating in a discussion on the criticism of Li Xiucheng. After the discussion on Li Xiucheng, you went to the countryside to carry out the Four Clean-ups. After you returned from the Four Clean-ups, you became ill and were hospitalised". Jiang Qing said this to me in December 1965, after I had published the article "Studying History for the Revolution". She said, "I didn't look for you, but you joined in yourself, which is good".

It is also said that the article "Review of the New Historical Drama 'Hai Rui Dismissed from Office'" was written in accordance with Chairman Mao's advance arrangement, and he personally changed it three times afterwards. Such a statement should not be true. Jiang Qing told me that she had discussed with Chairman Mao about organising people to write the article. But how exactly was it written? The Chairman was not very clear. The Chairman later said that the article "did not hit the nail on the head. The main point is 'the dismissal from office'. If the Chairman had read the article and personally corrected it three times, how could he not have revised the article for not hitting the nail on the head? As far as I know, after Yao Wenyuan's article was written, Jiang Qing did send it to the Chairman for review, and Chairman Mao said he had read it three times. However, from the available archives, I do not see that Chairman Mao revised the text of Yao Wenyuan's article, nor is there any surviving reminiscences of the Cultural Revolution in which he is quoted as having revised Yao Wenyuan's text. It is true that Chairman Mao read Yao Wenyuan's article but did not revise it.

After Yao Wenyuan's article was published in the Shanghai Wenhui Bao on 10 November 1965, it was firmly opposed and boycotted by Peng Zhen, who forbade the Central and Beijing newspapers to reprint it. Deng Xiaoping, who was also against the article, once told Wu Han that it was no big deal, and they played cards as usual.

Many people in the Party, such as Premier Ye Jianying, supported the criticism of Wu Han, and on 26 November 1965, Luo Ruiqing met Jiang Qing in Shanghai. Jiang Qing told him that Yao Wenyuan had written "A Review of the New Historical Drama 'Hai Rui Dismissed from Office'" in Shanghai, which was published in Wenhui Bao, but was ignored by the People's Daily and Beijing Daily in Beijing. Luo Ruiqing said on the spot that we, the PLA Daily, supported it. He immediately phoned the PLA News Agency and said that "Hai Rui Dismissed from Office" was a big poisonous weed, and told the PLA News to immediately reprint Yao Wenyuan's article in full on page one, with a very positive editor's note. Later, I also heard that Premier Zhou was in Shanghai on 26 November to report to Chairman Mao on his work. When Premier Zhou returned to Beijing on the 27th, he explained it to Peng Zhen and worked with him to review the editor's note of Yao's article in the People's Daily and reprinted it in the People's Daily and Beijing Daily on 30 November.

I also read Yao Wenyuan's article in the newspaper that day. At that time Ai Ling, a reporter from Wenhui Bao, came to Beijing and she approached me and Guan Feng and others separately to hear the reaction of the academic community in Beijing to the publication of the article. Ai Ling told me that she had heard about me from Comrade Jiang Qing. Guan Feng and I were not together at that time, and we had not discussed it, but we both expressed our support for Yao Wenyuan's article. Ai Ling was overjoyed to hear our views because she had travelled all over Beijing and found no one in the academic community to support Yao Wenyuan's article, and now she actually expressed support for Guan Feng and Qi Benyu! She then relayed the situation up. The Chairman and Jiang Qing were pleased with us and we became the leftists in Beijing. I supported Yao Wenyuan mainly from a

revolutionary standpoint. However, from the bottom of my heart, I thought Yao Wenyuan's article was not good enough in some areas, one of which is that it did not clearly explain the issue of "Qing officials". In addition, I think it is a bit far-fetched to link Hai Rui's "retreat from the fields" with the 1962 "household contract responsibility system" and the "going-it-alone style". Hai Rui asked Xu Ji, a big bureaucrat, to withdraw the land he had taken over and give it back to other officials and landowners. But at that time, those who advocated the "household contract responsibility system" and the "going-it-alone style" were asking the people's commune to return the land to the peasants. The two were not the same thing.

On 21 December 1965, Chairman Mao said that the "The crux of Hai Rui Dismissed from Office was the question of dismissal from office. The Jia Qing emperor dismissed Hai Rui from office. In 1959 we dismissed Peng Dehuai from office. And Peng Dehuai is Hai Rui too". "This is what brings out the theme of the play 'Hai Rui Dismissed from Office'".

I was enlightened by the Chairman's delivery of the key issues of "Hai Rui Dismissed from Office". I could not believe how Chairman Mao, who lived in seclusion, had such a detailed understanding of social trends. At that time, in the early 1960s, there was indeed a large force in society that was using the play "Hai Rui Dismissed from Office" to rehabilitate the 1959 Lushan Conference. They believed that Peng Dehuai was a modern-day Hai Rui. They didn't care what the difference was between what Hai Rui and Peng Dehuai advocated, they thought that retreating from the commune and going it alone was the way forward for rural China. They believed that Peng Dehuai was fighting for the people and that is why he suffered the same fate as Hai Rui: "Removal from office".

Wu Han always felt that his On Hai Rui was written on the orders of Hu Qiaomu, and that it was not a "wind of reversal" or "wind of going-it-alone". But in the social trend of the time, the undercurrents that went against the times did not care about this. They wanted to use the title of "Hai Rui Dismissed from Office" to stop the socialist transformation of China and to open the way for the revival of capitalism in China. So, both sides were on the line, and they were both on a very high level, except that one side was the open line and the other the undercurrent.

The key to why an article of literary criticism had caused such an historical reaction is the confrontation and conflict between the social forces represented by the two sides behind the article. This is the crux of the matter; everything else is a side issue. The personal fates of Wu Han, Deng Tuo, Peng Zhen, Yao Wenyuan, Zhang Chunqiao, Jiang Qing and so on were just the inevitable chapters in the overall confrontation and conflict between these two powerful social forces.

#### **4. Studying History for the Sake of the Revolution**

When I wrote the article "Studying History for the Sake of the Revolution", like my article "Commenting on the Autobiography of Li Xiucheng", I was not given any instructions by anyone, but was completely spontaneous. At that time, when I returned from the "Four Clean-ups" in Tong County, I was at home recovering from illness, and since I was not working, I often went to the library of the "Red Flag" magazine to read newspapers and magazines and to learn about the developments in the academic world at that time. The academic world was still very active. I saw Jian Bozan constantly advocating his so-called "historicism", which opposed a class perspective on history. I thought that this kind of historicism, divorced from a class perspective, was in fact bourgeois historicism. Chairman Mao emphasized class struggle and fully affirmed and praised the progressive role of the peasant revolution in the development of history. But they, the professors, thought that the peasant revolution, in history, had only played a destructive and retrogressive role. These were two completely different views of history. So, I wrote in my article:

You see, since Confucius, everyone has said that the peasant rebellion was unjustified. Many historians, for the sake of educating the living, have thrown innumerable shots and arrows at those peasant heroes who died in the cause of rebellion, portraying them as violent and sinful "rebels". Even some of the new culture fighters of the May Fourth Movement found it impossible to deny the word "rebellion" that had been placed on the heads of the rebels under the pressure of such a customary public opinion over the centuries.

With a bang, the Marxists rose abruptly and proclaimed to the crowd, "Rebellion is justified!"

My article was reviewed and signed by the editor-in-chief of Red Flag magazine, Chen Boda, and the deputy editors-in-chief, Hu Jiao, Fan Ruoyu and Deng Liqun, and was published in Red Flag magazine, No. 13, on 6 December 1965. When I wrote this article, I did not know that Yao Wenyan was in Shanghai writing an article on "Review of the New Historical Drama 'Hai Rui Dismissed from Office'". But my article was in line with Yao Wenyan's in terms of class position and historical outlook. And when it was published in Red Flag at this time, it was in fact the first article that echoed Yao Wenyan's.

On December 21, 1965, only half a month before my article was published, and only a month or so before Yao Wenyan's article criticizing Hai Rui's dismissal from office was published, Chairman Mao told Chen Boda, Hu Jiaying, Tian Jiaying, Ai Siqi and Guan Feng when they were in Hangzhou to talk about philosophy and history: "Qi Benyu's article is excellent, I read it three times. Its defect is that it does not name names. Yao Wenyan's article was also very good: it had a great impact on theatrical, historical and philosophical circles. Its defect is that it did not hit the nail on the head, the nail on the head of Hai Rui Dismissed from Office was the question of dismissal from office. The Jiajing emperor dismissed Hai Rui from office. In 1959 we dismissed Peng Dehuai from office. And Peng Dehuai is Hai Rui too." I did not take part in that conversation. That time when Guan Feng left Beijing, he told me it was because his mother was ill and he was going back to Shandong to see her. When he returned, I asked him, "Has your mother recovered from her illness?" He said, "Do you really think it was my mother who was sick? My mother is not sick, it was the Chairman who asked me to go to Hangzhou". Then Guan Feng conveyed to me these words from the Chairman.

When the Chairman met with us once after he returned to Beijing on 18 July 1966, he again talked about my article "Studying History for Sake of the Revolution". The Chairman said: "Your article is good in that it puts forward the idea that "the rebellion is justified". The phrase "the rebellion is justified" is the result of Marx's historical experience of class struggle. It is also an old saying that I have said. You have rehashed my old words". When the Chairman said this to me, I still did not really understand what he meant. It was only in August 1966, when Chairman Mao quoted this phrase again in support of the Red Guard movement, making "Rebellion is justified" the slogan and action programme of the entire Cultural Revolution, that I understood it profoundly.

After the Chairman pointed out the shortcomings of the article 'Studying History for the Revolution', I formed a group with Lin Jie and Yan Changgui and went on to write a second article under the title 'Studying History for the Revolution'. This article named Jian Bozan. After that, writing a third article went further up the line. This third article was written by Yan Changgui, but three people participated in the discussion and revision. It was also published with the names of three people. This article raises the issue of Jian Bozan's harbouring of landowning families during the land reform. I did not bother to check the materials sent to me by the local authorities, but said that he had harboured landlords and went on to describe him as a "class dissident". After the Cultural Revolution, the Party in his hometown verified that Jian Bozan was not a "class dissident", even

though he had views on the division of family status during the land reform. So I made a serious political mistake in saying that about him, and I am primarily responsible for it.

In the winter of 1968, Chairman Mao proposed to correct the excessive criticism of Jian Bozan, instructed that he should be protected and given a way out, and had the Premier send someone to Beijing University to convey his views. By that time I had been imprisoned in Qincheng for nearly a year. At that time, Nie Yuanzi<sup>258</sup> had lost power and the Military Propaganda Team, led by the soldier Wang Lianlong, was in control of the Cultural Revolution movement at Peking University. On the afternoon of December 16, 1968, Jian Bozan and his wife committed suicide. Although I was already in Qincheng prison with Lin Jie and Yan Changgui at the time of Jian Bozan's death, and the couple had not committed suicide because of the article we had written, our article did put pressure on him. I have always felt guilty about this.

### **Appendix: Studying History for the Sake of the Revolution, by Qi Benyu**

The proletariat is the gravedigger of the old world and the builder of the new, and it bears the greatest responsibility in human history. In order to fulfil its historical mission, the proletariat must be conversant with the laws of historical development. Without understanding the laws of historical development, one cannot be a conscious proletarian revolutionary. It is for this reason that the proletariat attaches importance to history and to the study of history.

In its own revolutionary practice, the proletariat has to draw lessons from the historical experience of past class struggles. The experience of history can inspire and help proletarian revolutionaries to correctly formulate their own strategies and tactics. The historical experience of the proletariat's own revolutionary activities is the most valuable reference for proletarian revolutionaries to guide the current revolutionary movement.

History is a textbook of the class struggle. Reflecting the history of class struggle, the people and the new generation of the revolution can be deeply educated about class and revolutionary traditions. The glorious struggles of the oppressed classes against the oppressor classes and of the oppressed nations against the oppressor nations throughout history have always been a source of inspiration for the people to participate actively and courageously in the revolutionary struggle.

The great revolutionary teachers of the proletariat have all attached importance to history and the study of history.

Engels put it this way: "History is all we have, and we value it more than any other school of philosophy, even more than Hegel" [1].

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<sup>258</sup> Nie Yuanzi (1921 –2019) joined the Communist resistance in Shanxi when the Second Sino-Japanese War broke out in July 1937, at the age of 16. She received military training at the National Teachers' College in Taiyuan and joined the Communist Party in 1938. In the 1940s, Nie moved to the Communist base in Yan'an, worked in the North-east after Liberation and was transferred to Beijing University in 1963. On 25 May 1966, Nie put up a big-character poster on the campus of Peking University attacking the bourgeois reactionary line of the university's leaders. It came to be regarded as the opening shot of the Cultural Revolution and was praised by Mao Zedong. She became a leader of a Red Guard faction at Beijing University and in 1967 put up a big-character poster attacking Deng Xiaoping. She was made an alternate member of the 9th Central Committee, but in 1969 was sent to do labour at the university's May 7 Cadre School, and in 1971 she was subjected to examination and her movements were restricted. When Deng Xiaoping came to power after the end of the Cultural Revolution, Nie was sent to Yanqing Prison on 19 April 1978. In 1983, she was convicted of multiple crimes including counterrevolutionary activities and defamation. This was Deng Xiaoping's retaliation and revenge. She was sentenced to 17 years in prison, but was paroled in October 1986. In 2005, she published her memoirs in Hong Kong.

Comrade Mao Zedong's approach to history and historical research is particularly dear to us. He told us more than once: "Not only must we know China today, but also China yesterday and the day before." [2] "From Confucius to Sun Yat-sen, we should give a summary and inherit this precious heritage. This will be of great help in guiding the great movement of the present." [3]

These words could not be clearer in illustrating the importance of history and historical research.

All views that belittle history, all views that are reluctant to study history, all views that think that the study of history is dispensable or that the teaching of history can be abolished, are all wrong and go against Marxism-Leninism and Mao Zedong Thought.

When we say that we should attach importance to history and the study of history, we are not telling people to lie on stale stacks of historical papers, burn incense to the ancients and follow them to look up the old accounts of the flow of history.

There is no supra-class study of history. In the past, all ruling classes interpreted history according to the interests of their own class. Their class interests were so irreconcilable with the interests of the people and so inconsistent with the demands of social development that it was impossible for them to know the true picture of history, and they wanted to distort it. If we lie on the heap of history and follow in the footsteps of previous generations of historians, we are bound to become the captives of the previous generations of historians and propagate for them views that are archaic and contrary to the spirit of the times.

The proletariat is the representative of the supreme interests of the people, and it proposes its own historical tasks in accordance with the laws of social development, so its approach to history is fundamentally different from that of all the ruling classes in history. The proletariat conducts the study of history in the interests of the people and in order to realise its great revolutionary task.

To study history for the sake of the revolution, we must take the stand of the proletariat and study history with proletarian views and methods. Whether there is such a standpoint, viewpoint and method is the most important issue for our study of history. You see, since Confucius, everyone has said that the peasant rebellion was unjustified. Numerous historians, for the purpose of educating the living, have thrown countless shots and arrows at those peasant heroes who died in the cause of rebellion, portraying them as violent, unscrupulous and evil "rebels". Even some of the new culture fighters of the May Fourth Movement found it impossible to deny the word "rebellion" that was placed on the heads of the rebels under the pressure of such a customary public opinion over the past century.

With a bang, the Marxists burst forth and proclaimed to the crowd, "The rebellion is justified." The peasant rebellions since the Qin dynasty have all been "peasant revolts", "peasant revolutionary wars". Comrade Mao Zedong pointed out, "In Chinese feudal society, only such peasant class struggles, peasant revolts and peasant wars are the real driving force of historical development." [4]

For thousands of years, emperors and generals have been glorified by historians, and history has become a hymn in their temples. No one dared to say "no" to them, except for a few thinkers who had quietly voiced their doubts. But the proletariat, with its great revolutionary spirit, looked with contempt at these sacrosanct so-called "masters" of society. "The people, and the people alone, are the driving force behind the making of world history." [5] This fundamentally breaks the superstition that has been held for thousands of years about the emperors and generals.

What a serious disagreement! It is amazing how the same historical events, studied from different positions, perspectives and methods, can lead to completely opposite conclusions.

There is a view that the study of history cannot be done only from the class viewpoint of the proletariat, but also from that of "historicism", and that if there is only a class viewpoint but no "historicism", one is guilty of "denying everything".

The question posed is surprising. How can the class perspective of the proletariat lead to the "negation of everything", to "ahistoricism", and therefore to the need for a "historicism" to remedy the situation? How can there be a "historicism" in the treasury of Marxism that is divorced from the class perspective?

On the question of historicism, the bourgeoisie and the proletariat have fundamentally different views. The bourgeoisie have various accounts of historicism, either as a natural process of development free from class confrontation, or as a process of conceptual development, and so on. The proletariat, on the other hand, understands history as it has developed.

Comrade Mao Zedong said, "China today is a development of historical China; we are Marxist historicists and we should not cut off history." [6] Marxist historicism requires that historical events be observed in the light of the process of development of history itself, in the light of the process of contradictory struggle in history itself, in accordance with the viewpoint of historical materialism. It goes without saying that the process of historical development and the process of contradictory struggle, as Marxism calls them, has class and class struggle as its real content. For in Marxism, in a class society, there is no historical development apart from classes and class struggle. Therefore, a "historicism" that is divorced from the class perspective of the proletariat, that is, a "historicism" without the content of class and class struggle, is in no way a Marxist historicism. Without the class perspective of the proletariat, there can be no Marxist historicism at all.

Marxist historicism, which looks at historical events in the context of the development of history itself, the process of struggle, requires that historical events be analysed in a specific way within a certain historical context, all depending on time, place and conditions. This requirement is characteristic of the class perspective of the proletariat. For the history of class fighting as the history of human civilisation is originally linked to a certain historical stage in the development of production. Comrade Mao Zedong said: "Class struggle, some classes have won, some classes have been eliminated. This is history, this is the history of civilisation over thousands of years." [7] This passage clearly clarifies that the class perspective of the proletariat is itself dissolved with the historicism of Marxism.

It can be seen that the study of history from the class viewpoint of the proletariat will never lead to the "negation of everything" or to "ahistoricism". To attempt to remedy the "bias" of the proletarian class viewpoint and to save the "ills" of the proletarian class viewpoint with a "historicism" that leaves the proletarian class viewpoint is only to replace Marxist historicism with bourgeois historicism. If there are deviations and shortcomings in the study of history because someone has not correctly grasped or fully grasped the class perspective of the proletariat, then the class perspective of the proletariat and its correct application in the study of history should be correctly clarified, instead of blaming the so-called deviations and shortcomings on the class perspective of the proletariat.

The misunderstanding of historicism and the class perspective is not just a matter of unclear concepts; here it essentially reflects a kind of scepticism and wavering, and in some cases even opposition, on the part of some people to the use of proletarian positions, perspectives and methods to study history.

Some people were uncomfortable with the use of proletarian positions, views and methods in the study of history because they were bound by old views, and some even reported antipathy. They were unhappy with the criticism of the emperors and the praise of the peasant uprisings, and put forward a whole set of erroneous views. On the one hand, they believe that feudal landlords can only be scolded and opposed when they are in a stage of decline and collapse; feudal landlords in a stage of rise and development cannot be scolded or opposed because of their progressive role. Therefore, when we study history, we should not "oppose feudalism when we see it and curse landlords when we see them". On the other hand, they considered the peasants to be also selfish, ignorant and backward, not good enough to be called revolutionary. In their view, the peasants' rebellion was motivated by nothing more than the desire to rise to power and wealth, to become the new nobility and emperor, and their programme of struggle was, again, feudalistic. Thus, they felt that in terms of the theory guiding historical research, a class perspective only would not do, and that something had to be used to remedy the deficiencies, and this is how the issue of so-called "historicism" made its way into the history forum. In fact, what they wanted to promote was exactly what Marxist historicism wanted to reject.

From a Marxist class perspective, the most essential relationship in feudal society, its main contradiction, was the opposition between the peasant class and the landlord class. The peasants were the exploited class and the landlords were the exploiting class. The landlords at the beginning of feudal society were different from those at the end in terms of their historical role, but they were the same in terms of their class nature. The early feudal landlords were also the exploiters and oppressors of the peasants. Where there was exploitation and oppression there was cursing and rebellion. The Qin and Han dynasties were the early days of feudal China, but how many peasants cursed the landlords and opposed feudalism at that time! Chen Sheng, Wu Guang, Chi Mei and Tong Ma rose up to deal a heavy blow to the rulers of that "wonderful" early feudal society, thus pushing it onwards. If the peasants at that time could curse and oppose the exploitation and oppression of the feudal landlords, why can't the proletariat now curse and oppose them? Of course, what we mean by cursing and opposing are not empty insults and simple denials, but concrete analyses and profound criticisms of their exploitative nature. What kind of class viewpoint or historicism is it to not allow analysis and criticism of the early feudal landlords? Calling out the early feudal landlords and opposing the early feudal landlords does not prevent the proletariat from recognising the historically progressive role they once played. Moreover, only the proletariat can scientifically analyse and evaluate the historical role of an exploitative system and its class nature. In his study of the history of the development of capitalist society, Marx attacked the early bourgeoisie in the harshest terms, describing them as "wolf-like" bloody dispossessors. But it was also Marx who most fully valued their role in history.

To scold the early feudal landlords and to oppose the early feudal landlords does not prevent us from properly acknowledging the role played by a few prominent figures among the emperors and generals in the development of history. Lenin said, "The proletariat is hostile to all manifestations of the bourgeoisie and the bourgeois system, but this hostility does not relieve it of the responsibility to distinguish between the progress and reaction of bourgeois persons in history." [8] This is the fundamental attitude of the proletariat towards the ruling class figures in history. We have never denied the historical role of a few prominent figures in the ruling class. Not only the emperors and generals of the early feudal society, but also the emperors and generals of the later feudal society, as long as any one of them played a role in promoting the development of history in his own lifetime activities, or even as long as his activities played some good role in the development of history in one way or another, we should acknowledge them all. Our acknowledgement of the historical role of the Guangxu Emperor and other figures of the Reformation in the late Qing Dynasty is a case in

point. However, by this acknowledgement we mean that we should critically assess the emperors and generals with a proletarian standpoint, viewpoint and method, and not just sing their praises. We recognise the historical role of a few outstanding figures among the emperors and generals, but we know that they were outstanding because some of their activities objectively corresponded to the requirements of social development or objectively to certain aspirations of the people. We have always believed that the people are the masters of history, and that the few outstanding figures among the emperors and generals are, in the final analysis, merely representatives of the ruling class, whose role in history is but a drop in the ocean compared to that of the people and the great revolutionary leaders who stand at the front of the locomotive of history. Only the people and the true revolutionary leaders are the great heroes who deserve our warmest praise. We recognise the historical role of a few outstanding figures among the emperors and generals, but we know that they, like all figures in the ruling class, were oppressors and exploiters of the masses, and that in offering something new to history they were often accompanied by brutal oppression, exploitation, and were acting in the current interests of the rulers. Therefore, when commenting on their historical role, we should also expose and criticise the atrocities of their oppression and exploitation as necessary. Of course, sometimes, in order to focus on a particular aspect, it is possible to focus on their progressive aspects; for those historical figures among them whose merits outweigh their faults, a realistic historical assessment should be made on the basis of their entire historical activities, rather than being arbitrarily harsh on just one point. However, in any case, we should not exaggerate their historical role in an unprincipled manner, or praise their civil and military achievements in a far-fetched manner, or even whitewash and justify their historical sins.

Some people, seeing some problems in the study of the emperors and generals, think that the emperors and generals can be left alone. This is not true. Not only the few outstanding figures among the emperors and generals need to be studied seriously, but also the most reactionary ones among them. The key to the problem is to study them from a proletarian standpoint, perspective and method. The book Yuan Shih-k'ai, *The Thief of the Nation*, was written about one of the most reactionary figures among the modern emperors and generals. As the author has used the standpoint, viewpoint and methods of the proletariat to conduct his research, he has not only written about the characteristics of the activities of a representative figure of the reactionary class, but has also written about the true picture of the history of the time from one aspect through a reactionary figure. The history of class society is the history of class fighting, and to understand the history of class struggle, one has to study both sides of the class conflict. Emperors, kings and generals or other antagonists are representatives of one side of the contradiction, and without studying them well, one cannot understand the other side of the contradiction well. The debate in history on the question of emperors and generals reflects the fact that there are still problems in the direction of research on this issue; to solve this problem is not to retreat in the face of research, but to do such research well with the position, views and methods of the proletariat.

Just as one cannot correctly understand the ruling class and the emperor in feudal society if one deviates from the class perspective of the proletariat, one cannot correctly understand the peasant class and the peasant wars in feudal society if one deviates from the class perspective of the proletariat. The peasants in feudal society were small private-holders and they had the shortcomings of small private-holders, such as narrow-mindedness, diffidence, conservatism and so on, which are the historical limitations we all often talk about. We are therefore not in favour of recasting them in the face of the proletariat, which would not only be historically untrue but would also deny the importance of the proletariat's leading role for the peasantry. But as Engels analysed in his book *The German Peasant War*, the peasants were the class that was crushed at the bottom of the social ladder in feudal society. In feudal society, the peasants' rebellion against the landlords was the

driving force behind the development of society. It is strange how such a small private-owner, crushed at the bottom of society, so poor that he had only a hoe and two shoulders left, has now become, in the writing of some historians, a private-owner like the feudal aristocrats who had thousands of hectares of land and thousands of houses. You see, the peasants rebelled in order to rise to power and become the new nobles and emperors, and their platform of struggle was feudalistic. If this is really the case, then what irreconcilable class antagonism and irreconcilable class struggle exists? How can we imagine that the millions of serfs, starving, tossing and turning, struggling to the death, when they are forced to rise up and fight for their lives against the feudal landlords who exploit and oppress them, are thinking of how to turn themselves into the lords who are being opposed by the masses?

Existence determines consciousness. The economic position of each class determines its own ideology. The exploited position of the peasants, as a class, fundamentally determines their ideology of resistance to the landlords, while the landlord class, in an exploitative position, can only produce the ideology of oppression of the peasants. Of course, the peasants in feudal society were in some ways influenced by the ideology of the ruling class, so in their struggle programmes there were often things that reflected the ideology of the feudal ruling class; and in the course of the development of the peasant revolutionary movement, there were often cases where members of the revolutionary leadership were transformed into feudalists, or where the revolutionary leadership was usurped by elements of the landlord class, so that the peasant revolution turned into a feudal ruling class's change of dynasty. This historical fact, as Comrade Mao Zedong has analysed, is due to the constraints of historical conditions. As for some of the things in the peasants' revolutionary struggle programme which reflect feudal thinking, they are no more important than their revolutionary slogans of "equalising the rich and the poor", "having fields to plough together" and "having food to eat together". "As for the revolutionary slogans of the peasants, they are not the main thing after all. The claim that the peasants' rebellion is for the sake of promotion and wealth is a complete distortion of the peasant revolutionary movement.

There is a view that in recent years history has been written only about the peasant rebellion and not or rarely about the emperors and generals. In this way, the bright side of history has been lost and turned into a pitch-black mess. This is really an alarmist view.

We have always believed that the peasant revolt and the rule of the emperor representing the interests of the landowning class are two sides of the feudal social conflict, and in order to fully reflect the true picture of history, both sides need to be written. For example, if, when writing the history of the emperors and generals, one continues to follow the example of the "Shilu" and "Qi Jue" of the feudal imperial dynasty and arbitrarily describes the "dragon's face" of the emperor, the "lady's virtue" of the concubines, and even the feng shui of their ancestral graves, then even if one does not write too much of this history, it is still wrong. Or if, in writing the history of the peasant uprising, one still holds the feelings of a feudal scholar and uses the tone of a feudal historian to smear the face of the peasant heroes for no good reason, then such history is wrong even if it is written more than once. And if we have to talk about how much is written, the truth is that we have so far written too little about the history of the peasants, the masters of feudal society. No one has even written a general history of the peasant revolutions, so how can it be said that only peasant revolts have been written? As for the history of the emperors and generals, it is not that too little has been written, but that much of it has been written incorrectly. Some historians so piously offer many beautiful laurels to the old feudal rulers, such as "wise monarchs", "sage prime ministers", "saviours of the people," "the upstanding man". Is such a lively and exaggerated phenomenon normal?

The fundamental question is not what is written more or less. The fundamental question is: Why does history lose its light and become dark when more is written about peasant uprisings and less about emperors and generals? Did not the light of history come from the millions of working people who created human civilisation, the millions of revolutionary masses who held aloft the torch of revolution? Could it be that in the long feudal society, history could only beg for a ray of light from the emperors and generals? Why is it such a great sin for anyone to write more about the history of the peasant uprising? Isn't such an accusation against our historical research work the result of deviating from the class viewpoint of the proletariat?

The criticism of so-called ahistoricism in historical research is, at first glance, confusing. But we only have to look into the facts to understand that the ahistoricism in historical studies in recent years has been none other than the phenomenon of glorifying the emperor and denying the peasant movement. The emergence of this ahistoricism is not, as some have accused, due to the proletariat's increased class perspective, but, on the contrary, to the lack of a proletarian class perspective.

"It is said that history likes to play tricks on people and likes to joke with them. One is supposed to go to this room, but instead one walks into another." [9] The same is not true of the study of history. You see, there are those who originally attempted to use some questions to prove that the study of history could not be done only from the class viewpoint of the proletariat, but it turns out that these questions prove that the study of history can never be done without the class viewpoint of the proletariat.

Does the use of proletarian positions, views and methods to study history affect the scientific nature of historical research? The bourgeois scholars have never failed to oppose us with the argument that class will get in the way of science. Hu Shih was one of the most vociferous. He argued that the study of history should be "super-class" and "purely objective", and that if one used proletarian positions, views and methods, one would be "led by the nose" by Marx and Lenin. This rag of his has long been criticised by Marxists as bankrupt; but the influence of this erroneous theory has still not been removed from the minds of some people, and even after Liberation there are still people who use it against the principle of party spirit in the study of history. In 1963 there were those who openly argued that the theory of class struggle could not be used to explain history. The argument that it is not possible to have only a class perspective in historical research, but also a kind of "historicism", is in fact related to the old question of scientific and class character in historical research.

To talk about the science of historical research, we must first talk about what science is in historical research, and how historical research becomes science.

Science in the study of history means nothing more than that our knowledge of history should correspond to the realities of historical development. The true picture of historical development is recognisable, but all exploiting classes, in their understanding of the course of history, are limited by the class position in which they find themselves. The interests of the exploiting class make it impossible for them to observe historical events scientifically and objectively. In order to safeguard their class interests, they often deliberately distort the true picture of historical development. Engels said: "The bourgeoisie turns everything into a commodity, and this is also true of historiography. It is the nature of the bourgeoisie, the condition of its existence, to falsify all commodities, and therefore to falsify history. The historical writings that were falsified most in the interests of the bourgeoisie were also the most rewarded." [10] People's understanding of history is usually also limited by the level of development of the productive forces at the time, and it is impossible to do so scientifically and objectively when science is not developed. Therefore, before the emergence of Marxism, although there were many historians who provided useful information for historical research, it was

still a pile of irregular and piecemeal facts. The study of history underwent a great transformation at the hands of the proletariat. The revolutionary mentors of the proletariat, Marx and Engels, applied the proletarian worldview to the investigation of history and discovered the objective laws of historical movement from the misty, complex, confusing and chaotic historical phenomena, turning the study of history into a science.

Why was the proletariat able to turn the study of history into a science? This is determined by the conditions of the times and the social position of the proletariat. The proletariat is the most advanced class in modern society, it participates personally in the practice of modern mass production, and all the knowledge accumulated by human civilisation and modern science has endowed the proletariat with the ability to understand the objective world beyond any previous era. The proletariat is also the most revolutionary class in modern society, the most oppressed and exploited, a social position which determines the consistency of its interests with those of the masses, with those of social development. Just as Engels said, "The more unconcerned and ecumenical science is, the more it will be in line with the interests and aspirations of the workers." [11] Only the proletariat, which represents the interests of the masses and the interests of social development in the world, can reveal the real course of historical development in an open and fearless manner. The class and scientific nature of the proletariat are entirely consistent.

The claim to study history in a "super-class" and "purely objective" manner is itself a strongly bourgeois objectivist theory. The slogans of "super-class" and "pure objectivity" are merely a cover for their own bourgeois class nature in the study of history. The reason for this pretext is that they are using a false face to deceive the working people, trying to make them accept what is full of bourgeois classness as something for all people and society as a whole. We can look at the facts. German von Ranke<sup>259</sup>, who is recognised in Western bourgeois scholarship as the "father of the modern Objectivist school of history", despite having spent his life buried in a dusty repository of historical sources, studied history with the ultimate aim of trying to use the best historical textbooks as a tribute to the German bourgeoisie and the loyal landowners. He himself was a supporter of Prussian hegemony and Bismarck's iron-blooded policies. His most famous work, *The History of the Popes*, is a summary of the experiences of the ruling class in ruling the people. And isn't Hu Shih, who always boasts of his "respect for evidence" and "respect for facts", the advocate of the fallacy that history is a pile of "big money" at the mercy of others? In order to justify the imperialist invasion of China and to defend all the surrenderists, he is free to manipulate the "big money" of his history and cry out for the traitor Qin Hui<sup>260</sup>. "Qin Hui has done great service, and the world has reviled him

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<sup>259</sup> Leopold von Ranke (21 December 1795 – 23 May 1886) was a German historian and a founder of modern primary source-based history.

<sup>260</sup> Qin Hui (1090 –1155) was a Chinese politician. He was a Chancellor of the Song dynasty in Chinese history. He is widely regarded as a traitor for his part in the persecution and execution of his political enemy, Yue Fei, a general who fought for the Song against the Jin dynasty during the Jin–Song Wars, resulting in him being condemned as corrupt by later generations. For their part in Yue Fei's death, iron statues of Qin Hui, his wife Lady Wang, and two of Qin Hui's subordinates, were made to kneel before Yue Fei's tomb (located by Hangzhou's West Lake). For centuries, these statues have been cursed, spat and urinated upon by young and old. But now, in modern times, these statues are protected as historical relics. There is a poem hanging on the gate surrounding the statues, it reads: "The green hill is fortunate to be the burial ground of a loyal general, the white iron was innocent to be cast into the statues of traitors." A popular breakfast snack, the *youtiao* or fried doughstick is said to have originated in the common people's hatred of Qin Hui. The doughsticks, originally in the shape of two human-shaped pieces of dough later evolved into two pieces joined in the

to this day, it is really an injustice." [12]. They are not "supra-class" or "purely objective"! Lenin said that it is impossible for any living person not to be in the position of this or that class, not to rejoice and grieve over the successes and failures of this or that class. It is so; there has never been a historical study without class. The lessons of historical research itself are worthy of our attention. The people have nurtured us, and we should not forget them. To write history for the people, to write history for the revolution, we must draw a clear line in our thinking with Objectivism, we must get rid of their ideological influence.

The study of history has always been a field of intense intellectual struggle. The feudal ruling class and the bourgeoisie never relaxed their grip on this field in order to safeguard their class interests and to paralyse the will of the working people to revolt. Classes and class struggles still exist in socialist society and the historical views of the overthrown ruling class will not automatically be withdrawn from the field of historical research. The fighters of the proletariat should, for the sake of the revolution and the interests of the people, hold high the invincible banner of Mao Zedong Thought and bravely go about occupying and consolidating all positions in the field of historical research. Our motherland is a great country with a long history and an outstanding heritage, our people are a great people with a glorious tradition of resistance to class and national oppression, and our Party is a great Party with a glorious revolutionary history and valuable historical experience.

In front of such an extremely rich treasure of history, we are still pupils. Let us study Marxism-Leninism and Mao Zedong Thought with an open mind, get a good grasp of proletarian positions, views and methods, and study history for the sake of the revolution.

#### Notes:

[1] The State of Britain Review of Thomas Carlyle's 'Past and Present'. The Complete Works of Marx and Engels, vol. 1, People's Publishing House edition, p. 650.

[2] Transforming Our Learning. Selected Works of Mao Zedong, vol. 3, People's Publishing House, 2nd edition, 1953, p. 801.

[3] "The Position of the Chinese Communist Party in the National War". Selected Works of Mao Zedong, vol. 2, People's Publishing House, 2nd edition, 1952, p. 522.

[4] The Chinese Revolution and the Chinese Communist Party. Selected Works of Mao Zedong, vol. 2, p. 619.

[5] On Coalition Government. Selected Works of Mao Zedong, vol. 3, p. 1031.

[6] "The Position of the Chinese Communist Party in the National War". Selected Works of Mao Zedong, vol. 2, p. 522.

[7] "Throw Away Illusions and Prepare for War". Selected Works of Mao Zedong, vol. 4, People's Publishing House, 1960, p. 1491.

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middle, representing Qin Hui and his wife. Thus, the *youtiao* is deep fried and eaten as if it is being done to the traitorous couple.

[8] "The Fall of Lushunkou". The Complete Works of Lenin, vol. 8, People's Publishing House edition, p. 34.

[9] "The Methods of the Bourgeois Intellectuals Against the Workers". The Complete Works of Lenin, vol. 20, People's Publishing House edition, p. 459.

[10] "A Fragment of the History of Ireland". The Complete Works of Marx and Engels, vol. 16, People's Publishing House edition, p. 573.

[11] "Ludwig Feuerbach and the End of Classical German Philosophy". The Complete Works of Marx and Engels, vol. 21, People's Publishing House edition, p. 353.

[12] Hu Shih, "The Military Expenses in the Early Southern Song Dynasty.

## **5. Tian Jiaying's unauthorized redaction of Chairman Mao's speech**

On 21 December 1965, Chairman Mao summoned five people, including Chen Boda, Tian Jiaying, Hu Jian, Guan Feng and Ai Siqi, to talk, the first time that Chairman Mao publicly expressed his attitude towards the criticism of Hai Rui Dismissal. He said that the "crux of Hai Rui's dismissal" was "the question of dismissal from office. The Emperor Jiajing dismissed Hai Rui from office, and in 1959 we dismissed Peng Dehuai from office, and Peng Dehuai is Hai Rui too." This points to the fact that the debate and struggle surrounding the issue of Hai Rui's dismissal was not simply an academic discussion, but a serious ideological and political struggle within and outside the Party.

While the Chairman was talking to them, Guan Feng and Ai Siqi were there to take notes. After they had compiled the notes, they handed them over to Tian Jiaying. Based on the notes they took, Tian Jiaying compiled an internal document of Chairman Mao's speech. Tian Jiaying was then the deputy director of the General Office of the Central Committee and had quite a lot of power. He issued this document to the leaders of the Secretaries of the Central Secretariat and the regional secretaries. However, in the talk of Chairman Mao issued by Tian Jiaying, he took the liberty of deleting the above passage of the Chairman about the importance of "Hai Rui Dismissed from Office".

When Chen Boda found out about this, he pursued it. As Ai Siqi had fallen seriously ill and died shortly after attending this talk, only Guan Feng was approached. Guan Feng said that this passage was on the transcript that both he and Ai Siqi handed to Tian Jiaying, and that Tian Jiaying had deleted it when he was putting it together. Guan Feng also said that both he and Ai Siqi had told Tian Jiaying that it was not good to delete this passage from the Chairman. But Tian Jiaying said that it was fine. Chen Boda asked Guan Feng to write a statement on what he said about the situation. Then Chen Boda handed this material to Jiang Qing. Jiang Qing said that this was a big problem and she suggested that Chen Boda should report the situation directly to the Chairman. At this time, there was also material from Wang Renzhong and Xie Fuzhi about Tian Jiaying's situation, and it was on the basis of Chen Boda's report and this material that the Chairman later approved the investigation of Tian Jiaying.

After the end of the Cultural Revolution, the Central Committee under Deng Xiaoping's control vindicated Tian Jiaying by saying that it was a case of Guan Feng informing on him and that it was a political persecution of Tian Jiaying by Jiang Qing and Chen Boda. But Tian Jiaying's unauthorised redaction of the Chairman's important speech was unwarranted, both in terms of the Party's work discipline and in terms of Marxist-Leninist theoretical principles. It was also not enough for Deng Xiaoping and others to use this incident as a reason for revenge.

## 6. Peng Zhen proposes the "February Outline"

In January 1966, Peng Zhen, in the name of the Central Committee's "Five-Member Cultural Revolution Group", held a meeting in the Great Hall of the People. The meeting was attended by Hu Jian, Tian Jiaying, Xu Liqun, Deng Liqun, Lin Jianqing, Gong Yuzhi and other leaders of the Propaganda Department, the press and the academia, with Peng Zhen specifically asking Guan Feng and Qi Benyu to attend. In total, there were about thirty people. At the meeting, Hu Jiao conveyed Chairman Mao's speech on December 21, 1965, about "Hai Rui Dismissed from Office". Hu Jiao spoke very carefully, starting with the recent situation of the cultural revolution and some of Chairman Mao's important instructions during this period. He then conveyed Chairman Mao's speech on December 21, and he did so in its original form. Hu also explained that Chairman Mao had said that Qi Benyu's article "Studying History for sake of the Revolution" had criticised Jian Bozan, but had not named him in the article. Hu Jiao's delivery was basically the same as what Guan Feng told me. After Hu Jiao's speech, Peng Zhen said: These words of Chairman Mao are the latest instructions on the ideological struggle, so we should study and discuss them.

After the meeting, Peng Zhen asked me and Guan Feng to stay behind. As we had met him not long ago, he treated us as if we were old friends and said: We've met again. I joked: Are you going to treat us to knife-cutting noodles again? He said: No, it's too late today, I won't bother you, we won't eat. Let's just talk about one thing. This time, I met Comrade Jiang Qing in Shanghai, and Comrade Jiang Qing asked me to come and see you. Comrade Jiang Qing specifically instructed that you two should actively participate in this academic debate. Peng Zhen went on to say that Wu Han had always been the object of our solidarity, we had a good relationship with him and there were some issues that I had often criticised him for. He was criticized again this time, but his attitude is still good. That article by Comrade Yao Wenyuan raised a lot of questions and caused me to think a lot. My understanding of what the Chairman said about Wu Han's article and the instructions for Peng Dehuai's dismissal were not yet deep enough. Peng Zhen didn't say that he disagreed with the Chairman's opinion, only that he was surprised after hearing it, and he didn't understand it thoroughly. He went on to say: Do your research and write it down clearly. Regarding Peng Zhen's words, I thought he was humble. But Guan Feng said, no, he did not agree with the Chairman's opinion. He was actually hinting at us, telling us to be measured in writing our articles. I have always respected Guan Feng's opinion, but still felt that he might have gone a bit too far with this view. But later on, the facts proved that Guan Feng was right about Peng Zhen and this conversation we had.

In mid to late February, during the Chinese New Year, Guan Feng went to Shanghai once again. Jiang Qing told him that the criticism of Hai Rui's dismissal was not only an academic issue, but also an issue of countering the 1962 "reversal of the verdict wind" in relation to Peng Dehuai's case. After the Chinese New Year, Ai Ling revealed to me and Guan Feng that the article criticizing Hai Rui's dismissal was supported by Jiang Qing and specifically organized by Zhang Chunqiao. However, she did not reveal this to us at our last meeting. She told us not to tell anyone else, and suggested that we write articles as well. She also said that Wen Weibao would publish it for us.

At this time, Mu Xin, who was the chief editor of Guangming Daily at the time, had heard something from Kang Sheng and he acted positively, also coming to ask us to write an article.

After attending the meeting chaired by Peng Zhen in the name of the "Cultural Revolution Group of Five", and after Peng Zhen had talked to us, I began to prepare materials for my article. I soon wrote

an article entitled "The reactionary essence of 'Hai Rui Curses the Emperor'<sup>261</sup> and 'Hai Rui Dismissed from Office'". My article was written in full compliance with Peng Zhen's request to "study it well and write it clearly". Because Peng Zhen was the central leader in charge of ideological work, I naturally assumed that Peng Zhen's speech represented the views of the central government. At that time, I did not even know that Peng Zhen and Jiang Qing had such a big disagreement. At about the same time, Guan Feng and Lin Jie also wrote the article "'Hai Rui Curses the Emperor' and 'Hai Rui Dismissed from Office' are two big poisonous weeds against the Party and socialism".

Both articles were submitted to Xu Liqun, but they were never published. After a while, I wrote a letter to Peng Zhen, reporting the above situation. Peng Zhen's secretary replied to me, "The chief is very busy with his work, I have put your letter and the articles on his desk, and he will read them when he has time". Then the matter dragged on like this.

The long delay aroused my suspicions. Xu Liqun was the deputy minister of the Central Propaganda Department and was Peng Zhen's most powerful cadre. If he did not publish our article, then there must have been instructions from Peng Zhen. This is exactly what I heard later. Peng Zhen instructed that Peng Dehuai's dismissal involved political issues and was very sensitive, so don't publish it yet. I then thought, "It was clearly you who gave us the task in person to write clearly about the key issues of Hai Rui's dismissal. It took me a few days and several nights to figure this out. When it was finished, you told Xu Liqun not to publish it. When I went to you, you ignored me, saying that you were busy with work. If I'm wrong, you can criticise me. Why don't you say anything and then not allow it to be published?" To be honest, I always had a very good impression of Peng Zhen before. After this, I had a different opinion of Peng Zhen and felt that Guan Feng had not misjudged him.

When I thought about it later, what Peng Zhen said when he approached me and Guan Feng after the meeting was indeed a hint to us to restrict our criticism of Hai Rui's dismissal to academic discussion. But then, because none of our articles were in line with what he meant, he did not allow them to be published. But he could not say these things to us explicitly. At that time I didn't quite understand this kind of high-level political rhetoric, so I was very unhappy at the time that Peng Zhen had not allowed the articles to be published.

I sent the article to Kang Sheng, whose attitude was very clear, telling him to publish it immediately. I said: What should I do if people won't let me publish it? He said, "Get Mu Xin to publish it. But when Mu Xin heard that Peng Zhen would not allow it to be published, he did not dare to publish it either. This was a stark contrast to his previous attitude. He was that sort of a person.

In late January 1966, Peng Zhen asked Xu Liqun<sup>262</sup> and his team to prepare materials and draft a document. Since the document was completed in February, it was called the "February Outline". While preparing the February Outline, they found seven materials that they considered problematic and prepared to forward them to Chairman Mao. It is said that these seven documents included a pamphlet I had written, "Sun Chengzong"<sup>263</sup>, as well as several miscellaneous articles written by

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<sup>261</sup> "Hai Rui Curses the Emperor" was an article written by Wu Han and published in the People's Daily on June 16, 1959, under the name "Liu Yingzhi".

<sup>262</sup> Xu Liqun (1917-2000), joined the party in February 1937, former director of the Institute of Philosophy of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, served as the secretary of the Beijing Municipal Committee of the Communist Party of China, and the Propaganda Department of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China Deputy Minister. During the Cultural Revolution, he was detained for 8 and a half years.

<sup>263</sup> At the end of the Ming Dynasty, military official Sun Chengzong led his family and the people of a city near the Great Wall in a fight to the death against the invading Qing Dynasty army. He was eventually captured. Then the Qing army slaughtered the city.

Guan Feng in 1962, such as "People's skill are as good as one's own"<sup>264</sup> and "From Chen Jia onwards", and a miscellaneous article by Deng Tuo, "The Great Empty Words".

Guan Feng's essays were written under the pseudonym "He Ming" and published in several newspapers, including the Guangming Daily. My booklet Sun Chengzong was published by the China Bookstore in 1964. Sun Chengzong was a military minister of the Ming Dynasty who led the Ming army in resisting the aggression of the Manchu Emperor Taiji. In the late Ming Dynasty, there were three commanders who had greater success in resisting the Manchu invasion, one was Xiong Tingbi, one was Sun Chengzong and one was Yuan Chonghuan. The rest (including that Ming commander, Hong Chengchou, who surrendered to the Qing army) were mostly defeated in battle. Many people have already written about Yuan Chonghuan and Xiong Tingbi, but no one has written about Sun Chengzong. On one occasion, Chen Bingzhen, the head of our secretary's office, gave Kang Sheng a painting by Sun Chengzong from his collection. Kang Sheng inscribed the painting with a postscript. Kang Sheng said that Sun Chengzong was not only a famous literary figure, but also a famous commander who defeated Huang Taiji, the successor of Nurhachi. Kang Sheng asked Chen Binchen to send me a message saying that no one even knows Sun Chengzong now, and I heard that you are interested in Ming history, so you should write an article. When I heard that Kang Sheng wanted me to write an article, I immediately took positive action. It was easy to write that article. I looked up Ming history and read his biography, and I finished it in a few days and submitted it to the Little Series of Chinese History. At that time Wu Han was the editor-in-chief of The Little Book of Chinese History, and he said that the article was very well written, popular and easy to read, and that it was well written. Jian Bozan also said it was good, and both agreed to publish it. Jian Bozan also gave me some advice, that I should cut down on my rhetoric and not have too many adjectives in my articles, and that one adjective was usually enough. His advice was right, and I still follow his advice in my writing. Jian Bozan was indeed of a high standard.

When Xu Liqun gave my pamphlet to Peng Zhen, he also added a note saying that we are now criticizing "Hai Rui Dismissed from Office" because Peng Dehuai had been dismissed from office and Wu Han used Hai Rui to voice grievances on behalf of Peng Dehuai. The man Qi Benyu wrote about, Sun Chengzong, was also the Minister of War, and the Minister of War is now the Minister of National Defence. And Sun Chengzong was later dismissed from office. Everyone is equal before the truth. Since Wu Han was criticised for writing "Hai Ru Dismissed from Office" Qi Benyu, Guan Feng and others also had to be criticised.

He really pulled it out of the bag. Hai Rui was dismissed because he cursed the emperor, Sun Chengzong was not. He was jealous and ostracised because he had made been successful against Huang Taiji. Moreover, he was not dismissed from office either, but retired home at an advanced age.

In early February, Peng Zhen and Xu Liqun took their "February Outline" to Wuhan with Lu Dingyi, Kang Sheng and Wu Lengxi to report to Chairman Mao. Although Kang Sheng and Wu Lengxi were also part of the group of five, they did not participate in the final revision of the "February Outline", which was done by Peng Zhen, Xu Liqun and Yao Qin. Peng Zhen reported all these materials to Chairman Mao, saying that Wu Han should be criticized; however, the leftists should also be

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<sup>264</sup> This is part of the "Qin Oath" delivered by Qin Mugong. In 627BC, he rejected the advice of others and had his army ambushed by the army of the Jin. The whole of his army was destroyed. Afterwards, Qin Mugong blamed himself and swore an oath that promised to recognise and use the skills of others.

rectified. Chairman Mao told him that the issue of the leftist rectification would be discussed three years later. The leftists here mainly referred to Guan Feng and me. Perhaps it was just a coincidence that after three years, both Guan Feng and I were isolated and investigated.

When recalling this incident, Wang Li said that he was worried that something might go wrong when he learnt that the article I had written on Sun Chengzong was among the seven materials Xu Liqun had submitted to the Chairman. He knew that Kang Sheng had asked me to write on Sun Chengzong because he had read the inscriptions on Sun Chengzong's paintings at Kang Sheng's place. In particular, he knew about the "Eight Secretaries Incident" in Zhongnanhai in 1958. He told Peng Zhen that Qi Benyu was one of the "Eight Secretaries" back then, and that the Chairman had rehabilitated him. "Now you want to accuse him again? The article he wrote on Sun Chengzong was requested by Kang Sheng and had nothing to do with Peng Dehuai. If you report him to the Chairman again, will there be another "Eight Secretaries Incident"?" The first thing I did was to ask Xu Liqun to remove my article "Sun Chengzong" from the materials reported to the Chairman. However, there were some signs later that Chairman Mao knew about the pamphlet "Sun Chengzong", and it seems that it was not removed.

## Chapter 2: Criticising the "February Outline" and drafting the "May 16 Circular"

1. Chairman Mao's Criticism of the February Outline
2. My trip to Shanghai in April 1966 and the drafting of the May 16 Circular
3. Participating in the Drafting Group of the May 16 Circular
4. How the list of members of the "Central Cultural Revolution Group" was drawn up
5. Jiang Qing tells me to go back to work in Zhongnanhai
6. The Hui'an child

### 1. Chairman Mao's Criticism of the February Outline

In March 1966, Yang Yongzhi, head of the Propaganda Department of the Shanghai Municipal Party Committee, was entrusted by Zhang Chunqiao to come to Beijing on an errand. When he met Xu Liqun, Xu Liqun said to him, "Yao Wenyan's article was published by you in Shanghai without any discussion by the Central Committee, without even a greeting. Where has the party spirit of the Shanghai Municipal Committee gone?" When Yang Yongzhi returned to Shanghai, he reported the criticism from Beijing to Zhang Chunqiao, who in turn reported it to the Chairman.

It was at this time that I told Ai Ling of Wen Weibao about Xu Liqun's refusal to publish our article, and I gave Ai Ling a copy of my article and asked her to bring it to Chunqiao. Soon Ai Ling brought back a letter from Chunqiao to me, and Ai Ling told me that she had also reported it to Jiang Qing.

Comrade Benyu.

I have received both the letter and the manuscript, but unfortunately, these days, I and other comrades are having difficulty in finding time to read them, and I guess that will be the case in the short term, so I am afraid that I will miss your business, so I am replying to you first: there is no need to wait for my comments.

Warmest regards for your health.

Zhang Chunqiao

January 28<sup>th</sup>

After Yao Wenyan's article was published, Beijing ignored it and refused to reprint it. To break the embargo, Chairman Mao suggested that the Xinhua Bookstore in Shanghai publish a pamphlet and order it nationwide. Beijing ordered only a few sample copies, which were again not distributed. This situation was already very abnormal. After Chairman Mao had given clear instructions to criticise Hai Rui Dismissed from Office, they again refused to publish our article in support of Yao Wenyan. All this shows that the Beijing Municipal Committee under Peng Zhen, and the Central Propaganda Department were already openly resisting the instructions of the Party Central Committee headed by Chairman Mao. The conflict had intensified.

On the afternoon of 30 March, Chairman Mao spoke with Kang Sheng, Zhao Yimin, Wei Wenbo, Zhang Chunqiao, Jiang Qing and others. During the talk, Chairman Mao made severe criticisms of the

"February Outline" and proposed to "defeat the King of Hell and liberate the little devils". The "King of Hell" referred to the Central Propaganda Department and the people behind it, such as Peng Zhen, while the "little devils" referred to Guan Feng and some of my people.

On 31 March Kang Sheng returned to Beijing on the order of the Chairman. The Central Political Bureau held an enlarged meeting at which Kang Sheng conveyed the spirit of Chairman Mao's talk in Shanghai. At the meeting, Kang Sheng said that the Chairman said that Beijing had written so many articles without consulting him. Why must Yao Wenyuan consult them when he writes an article? Do I represent the Central Committee? Or do you, the Beijing Municipal Committee, represent the Central Committee?

At this meeting, according to Chairman Mao's proposal, it was decided to scrap the original "five-member Cultural Revolution Group". The Cultural Revolution Document Drafting Group was re-established with Chen Boda as its leader, Jiang Qing and Liu Zhijian as deputy leaders and Kang Sheng as advisor.

After the meeting, Kang Sheng told Mu Xin to publish my article immediately. When the People's Daily heard the news, it also wanted to publish my article.

On April 1, 1966, I gave my article "The reactionary essence of 'Hai Rui Curses the Emperor' and 'Hai Rui Dismissed from Office'" to Chen Junsheng, a subordinate of Mu Xin and Wu Lengxi, and that evening I took a train to Shanghai. After a while, the train attendants went to each carriage to sell the newspaper, and I bought a copy, which contained my article in full. This was the first time I had seen my own article in a newspaper on a train. I then went around to all the carriages and saw that many passengers were reading my article. The masses at that time were very concerned about national events.

In the original article I wrote, I still affirmed that Wu Han used to be a fighter for democracy, only that his current views were wrong. I hoped that he, a former democracy fighter, will rethink his present position and come to a revolutionary stand. This paragraph was in the draft I gave them, but it was not there when it was officially published on April 2, perhaps because Kang Sheng and his colleagues had deleted it.

## **2. My trip to Shanghai in April 1966 and the drafting of the May 16 Circular**

I had two reasons for going to Shanghai at that time. One was to attend a symposium on philosophy for workers, peasants and soldiers held in Shanghai jointly by the History Section of Red Flag magazine and the Philosophy Institute of the Academic Department. After Chairman Mao had issued a call for workers, peasants and soldiers to learn philosophy, Red Flag was going to publish a group of articles on philosophy for workers, peasants and soldiers, so we organised a symposium in Shanghai for workers and soldiers of the "Good Eight Companies on the Nanjing Road" of the PLA. I was informed by Ai Ling that Jiang Qing wanted me to meet with her in Shanghai.

I was joined at the symposium by Pan Zinian<sup>265</sup>, Director of the Institute of Philosophy in the Department of Philosophy and Social Sciences, Wu Chuanqi, Chief Editor of the Journal of

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<sup>265</sup> Pan Zinian (1893-1972), a native of Yixing County, Jiangsu Province, a famous philosopher and outstanding news fighter in modern China, and a cousin of Pan Hannian. He founded the "Xinhua Daily" and was appointed by Mao Zedong as its first president, so he was called "the first newspaperman of the Communist Party of China." In 1954, he transferred to the Chinese Academy of Sciences and served as director of the Institute of Philosophy, and prepared for the publication of "Philosophy Research". He founded the "Natural Dialectics

Philosophical Studies, and two young editors, a group of five people. When we arrived in Shanghai, the Secretary General of the Shanghai Municipal Party Committee came to meet us at the station and arranged for us to stay at the Jinjiang Hotel. That evening, the Mayor of Shanghai, Cao Diqu<sup>266</sup>, and the Secretary of the East China Bureau, Wei Wenbo<sup>267</sup>, invited me to dinner at the Jinjiang Hotel, but not Pan Zinian and Wu Chuanqi. The invitation to dinner at the Jinjiang Hotel was arranged by Gu Zhigang, the head of the Shanghai Municipal Committee's Interaction Department. When Gu Zhigang saw me, he joked with me, "Here comes a good comrade". I told Cao Diqu that Gu Zhigang was my introduction to the party when I was in the Shanghai underground, and Cao Diqu said they had already heard about it from Gu Zhigang. At that time, I was only a bureau-level cadre, and the Shanghai Municipal Party Committee had given me an unprecedented reception. During the meeting, we talked about Li Xiucheng and the reactionary essence of "Hai Rui Dismissed from Office". They were all very supportive and put in a good word for me, and I was naturally modest. On that occasion, it was the second time I met Cao Diqu and Wei Wenbo, and I got on well with them. Cao Diqu was a very modest man with academic training; Wei Wenbo was very familiar with history and had his own understanding of ancient poetry, and he could recite all the poems of Chairman Mao by heart.

When I came back after the meal, I said to Pan Zinian, I was so embarrassed that I didn't invite you to dinner. Pan Zinian said that we are only members of the Faculty of Philosophy and the Journal of Philosophy Research, and we have no working relationship with them. You are one of the persons in charge of the "Red Flag" magazine, a publication of the Party Central Committee. Please comply with the rules of etiquette.

For the night, I was given a large suite with a hall, a separate room for Pan Zinian, and a standard room for Wu Chuanqi and the other two youngsters. I felt that Pan Zinian's qualifications were much older than mine, so I was determined to give him the big suite, and since Wu Chuanqi was a researcher, it was not appropriate to live with the two youngsters. Pan Zinian was determined not to do it. I then said, "Wu Chuanqi and I have to discuss some issues in the evening, you are old and go to bed early". Only then did he reluctantly agree. Pan Zinian was a cadre during the Revolutionary period. When Chairman Mao went to participate in the "Chongqing negotiations", he was the president of the Xinhua Daily News, while I was only a junior member who joined the Party during the Liberation War, and he was several notches above me. Pan Zinian was Pan Hannian's cousin, and because Pan Hannian had been arrested at that time, he had some ideological baggage.

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Research Newsletter", which promoted national philosophical research. After the Cultural Revolution broke out, he was criticised and imprisoned. On April 10, 1972, he died in Qincheng Prison at the age of 79.

<sup>266</sup> Cao Diqu (1909-1976) joined the Communist Party of China in 1929. Served successively as the first secretary of the Chongqing Municipal Committee of the Communist Party of China and the mayor of the Shanghai Municipal People's Government. During the Cultural Revolution, Cao Diqu was struggled against and was imprisoned for six years.

<sup>267</sup> Wei Wenbo (1905-1987) was a native of Huanggang, Hubei. He was admitted to the middle school affiliated to Wuchang Zhonghua University in his early years. Joined the Chinese Communist Youth League in December 1925. Joined the Communist Party of China in August 1926. After the founding of the People's Republic of China, he served as the chief prosecutor of the East China Branch of the Supreme People's Procuratorate, secretary of the Secretariat of the Shanghai Municipal Committee of the Communist Party of China, and Secretary of the East China Bureau of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China. During the Cultural Revolution he was subjected to investigation and criticism. In 1979, he was completely rehabilitated and served successively as Deputy Secretary and Secretary-General of the Commission for Disciplinary Inspection of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China, and Minister of the Ministry of Justice of the State Council.

The next day I went to see Jiang Qing in the small auditorium of the Jinjiang Hotel. Jiang Qing had her own residence in Shanghai, but meetings and meetings with guests were usually held in the small auditorium of the Jinjiang.

I told Jiang Qing about the situation in Beijing, how we had written our articles and how Xu Liqun had suppressed our articles, and also told her about our views on the February Outline, and about the changes that had taken place in Beijing after Kang Sheng had conveyed the Chairman's instructions. After listening to me, Jiang Qing said, "Benyu, it is fortunate that we still have Chairman Mao, without him, what would we do?" I said to Jiang Qing, "They say that Guan Feng and I are some kind of academic warlords. But we are small people, so what kind of academic warlords are we? In my opinion, when they say this academic warlord, they mean someone bigger than us, perhaps including you and Chunqiao?" Jiang Qing said, "They hate me several times more than they hate you. But in their eyes, Chunqiao and I are not considered to be any learned warlords". I was really shocked by this statement. I said, "They wouldn't dare, would they? Chairman Mao is the leader of the whole nation and the mentor of the revolution, they have the guts to do that!" Jiang Qing said, "You say they don't dare, but I think they are like that". She said, "Who is he in Peng Zhen's eyes?" I was shocked to hear this.

Jiang Qing talked to me again about her commission from Comrade Lin Biao to convene a forum on the literary and artistic work of the troops and to publish the minutes of the forum. She said, "To criticise the 'black line of literature and art in the 17th year', we must criticise Zhou Yang<sup>268</sup>". She told me about how Zhou Yang and others had persecuted Lu Xun. I said that comrade Xu Guangping<sup>269</sup> had a strong opinion of Zhou Yang. At that time, I had some dealings with Xu Guangping and knew that Xu Guangping had a poor opinion of Zhou Yang and the others. Jiang Qing asked me how Xu Guangping's attitude and performance were. I said that her attitude was very firm and she had behaved very well. Jiang Qing asked me to arrange for Xu Guangping to come to Shanghai to meet with her after I returned to Beijing to discuss the criticism of Zhou Yang.

After meeting with Jiang Qing, I went with Pan Zinian and Wu Chuanqi to hold a symposium on the philosophy of workers, peasants and soldiers. We held two seminars. The people who came to the symposium were really good at speaking, and they made a good point of criticising "Hai Rui

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<sup>268</sup> Zhou Yang (1908–1989) was a Chinese literary theorist, active from the founding of the League of the Left-Wing Writers in 1930. In the 1930s he was notable for his sharp disagreements with other leftist writers, including Lu Xun, concerning literary theory. In 1937, he went to Yan'an and was appointed President of Yan'an University. After the founding of the People's Republic of China, he served as the Deputy Minister of the Propaganda Department of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China and the Vice Minister of the Ministry of Culture. He was criticised and imprisoned during the Cultural Revolution. After Deng Xiaoping began the process of restoring capitalism in China, he was given a number of positions including Vice Chairman of the Chinese Writers Association, using these platforms to promote bourgeois "humanism" in opposition to Marxist-Leninist proletarian politics.

<sup>269</sup> Xu Guangping (1898- 1968) was the partner of Lu Xun, who had previously been forced into an arranged marriage with a woman he did not love. In 1919 Xu participated in the "May 4th Movement" under the leadership of Zhou Enlai. In 1923 she enrolled in a course taught by Lu Xun and they fell in love and moved in together in 1927. . In 1929, she gave birth to Zhou Haiying (Zhou was Lu Xun's family name). After 1949, she served successively as deputy secretary-general of the State Council, member of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress, member of the Standing Committee of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, vice chairperson of the All-China Women's Federation, vice chairperson of the Democracy Promotion Association, and member of the Presidium of the All-China Federation of Literary and Art Circles. She joined the Communist Party of China in 1960.

Dismissed from Office". After the meeting, I said to Pan Zinian that we should not underestimate the peasants and workers, for they were all becoming experts. Pan Zinian said, "Don't you know, they have been preparing for a long time. All those articles have been changed by scholars and they have memorised them". Later, when I met Zhu Yongjia, I asked him, "I think the standard of Shanghai workers is very high, I attended their symposium and the workers' speeches were very good. But Pan Zinian said that the speeches had been revised with the help of other people. Is that true or not?" Zhu Yongjia said, "I didn't change them. But someone really did. The municipal committee heard that you were coming to talk, so they specifically found someone to coach them, I don't know who. I don't know who it was". He told the same story as Pan Zinian's analysis.

We didn't make many changes to the articles from the symposium, and they were all later published in the Red Flag magazine. After the articles by the workers and peasants were published, Guan Feng told me that there was a worker in Shanxi, a female comrade, called Xie Yue. "Originally I also thought that someone else had written her articles for her. I went to discuss it with her, and she had no manuscript, yet she was able to speak clearly about the articles she had written. I didn't think a young girl that pretty could be that good". I said, "Is it also like what Pan Zinian said, that people gave her coaching and then made her memorise it?" Guan Feng said, "No, the questions I asked were all impromptu, and she spoke very well. Xie Yue joined the rebellion during the Cultural Revolution and later became a member of the Standing Committee of the Shanxi Provincial Revolutionary Committee, and then suffered the same as we did.

I went back to the "Good Eight Company on the Nanjing Road". The good character of the soldiers of the Good Eight Company made me feel ashamed, the soldiers did things that I could not do, they were not even half individualistic. I wonder if they are limiting themselves too much and putting the interests of the country and the people first in every way. Some soldiers did not go home for the Chinese New Year for two or three years for the safety of the citizens of Shanghai during the Chinese New Year, and he did not even want to be given leave. I later wrote a special report praising the good qualities of the soldiers of the Good 8th Company. This report was sent to Jiang Qing and the Chairman to read. Jiang Qing said she was very touched. After reading that report, the Chairman said, "The Good Eight Company is good."

### **3. Participating in the Drafting Group of the May 16 Circular**

By mid-April, our task of convening a symposium on philosophy for workers, peasants and soldiers had been completed. We were ready to leave Shanghai and return to Beijing to compile and publish an article on the philosophy of workers, peasants and soldiers and a critique of "Hai Rui Dismissed from Office". At that time, Zhang Chunqiao sent his secretary to inform me that Chairman Mao had instructed us to meet together to discuss and write a document criticising the "February Outline". He also said that Chen Boda, Kang Sheng, Wu Lengxi and Wang Li were all coming to Shanghai soon. Kang Sheng and Chen Boda were the leaders, and Guan Feng and I were asked to join them. It was also said that the troops were coming too, with Liu Zhijian, Chen Yading and others. So I asked Pan Zinian and Wu Chuanqi to go back to Beijing first to sort out the draft of the symposium. I continued to stay in Shanghai.

When I was in Shanghai this time, I met with Zhang Chunqiao. When he met me, he was instantly familiar with me. He welcomed me very warmly to his home, saying that his children had read my book "Review of Li Xiucheng's Autobiography" and wanted to meet me too. So I went to his home. He lived on Kangping Road at that time and had a nice house, but his home was sparsely furnished and empty, except for books and an old table. He was already the secretary of the municipal party

committee by then, but I didn't think he would still live so simply. I asked, "Is your East China Bureau so tough? Were the homes of other leaders like this?" He said that Ma Tianshui's home was even more shabby and not as good as his. However, he told me that it was different for Chen Pixian and his family. Although I had never been to see Chen Pixian's home, I could imagine it. In Zhongnanhai, I know that the Chairman's place was shabby, Dong Lao's (Biwu) house was also shabby, and the Premier's house was not old, but it was not luxurious either. Liu Shaoqi's home was luxurious. Chen Boda's house was also very sophisticated; Tian Jiaying's house had many treasures; Hu Qiaomu's house was also more expansive. To be honest, at that time, I was rather disgusted with those cadres whose homes were richly decorated, and I thought that cadres with simple homes were generally good cadres. We talked about many issues together. We talked about limiting bourgeois right and I was more able to understand his thinking. He was not talking about the idea of bourgeois legal rights in a legal sense, but mainly about how to limit the creation of a new bourgeoisie under the socialist system. The Chairman was also most afraid of the creation of a new bourgeoisie and of the creation of a new class of privileged bureaucrats in the Party. How can this be restricted? It can only be restricted economically, restricted in terms of power, restricted institutionally. Something old, like the wage differential, the eight-grade wage system, if it is not handled properly, if it is not properly restricted and if it is allowed to expand, will become a bourgeois legal right. Rank itself is a legal right.

There were quite a few people who came to the meeting to draft the document, some of whom I can't remember, but Yao Wenyuan didn't come to the meeting. During the meeting, Yao Wenyuan came to see me at the Jinjiang Hotel. He walked over early in the morning and came at six o'clock. When he arrived, he didn't let the waiter wake me up and just sat outside and waited for me to get up. But I didn't go to bed until 2am that day. One of the waiters thought it was inappropriate to keep a celebrity waiting outside, so he came in and woke me up, saying, "Chief, there is a man waiting outside, Yao Wenyuan, who wrote an article criticising Hai Rui's dismissal, and he has been waiting for several hours. I said, "Then why didn't you wake me up earlier?" I hurriedly put my clothes on and brought him into the room. I was sorry to make him wait so long and said I was sorry. He said, "It's okay, I was sitting there thinking about the problem too, it didn't take long". Although he was already a celebrity, he still looked like a secondary school student, very simple and modest, not at all pretentious, and he spoke with propriety. I was very impressed with him. We talked together about 'Hai Rui Dismissed from Office' and exchanged views on what each other had written and what needed to be improved. All in all, I thought he was a very nice person.

When all the participants had arrived, Chen Boda called the meeting to order. He first explained that the Chairman had instructed us to criticise the "February Outline" written by Peng Zhen and Xu Liqun, and to write a document to reject it. He then said that it was the first time since Liberation that a document issued by the Central Committee had been scrapped and criticised. He further explained that this would certainly do great damage to the prestige of the Central Committee, but there was nothing that could be done about it, as it was a matter of principle.

After Chen Boda's mobilisation, we began to discuss and criticise the "February Outline", beginning with a sentence-by-sentence, article-by-article discussion, analysis and criticism of what was wrong and what was wrong with what sentence. This went on for a day. To be honest, there were a number of things that were so grand that you couldn't easily see the errors just by looking at them literally. So analysing and critiquing one sentence and one line like this would be a bit tedious. I suggested at the meeting that we could focus on a few major issues for analysis and criticism, so that we could work more efficiently. But whether this was the main issue or not, I didn't think, and I

would ask everyone to study it. Chen Boda felt that my opinion was somewhat reasonable and asked everyone to express their own views on my proposal. Wang Li said, "The 'February Outline' is just an outline. We need to grasp the essence and the main issues to criticize, and let go of the general, specious and irrelevant things, otherwise the criticism document will be too long". Wu Lengxi followed up Wang Li's remarks by saying that the issues of judging who was an academic warlord and the so-called "equality of all before the truth" were indeed crucial issues. The paragraph on equality and academic authority in the document that later criticised the February Outline was drafted by Wu Lengxi and later revised by the Chairman before it became an article of a certain theoretical level.

In this way, instead of refuting one line at a time, the main issues were first identified and then discussed one by one, issue by issue. Everyone spoke enthusiastically and in their own way. Wu Lengxi and Guan Feng were good at theoretical overviews and made their points very thoroughly. Wu Lengxi spoke the most and Guan Feng also spoke a lot. Later on, in the "May 16 Circular" document, several important issues were covered by Wu Lengxi and Guan Feng. Wang Li was a very good record keeper and organiser, and he was also a fast writer. He had the characteristic of being able to take other people's ideas and turn them into his own, and if you gave him an outline, he could speak impassioned for half a day, and if you give him one point, he will give two points, and speak better than you. But he is not very good at forming his own independent thinking. Once Jiang Qing asked me how Wang Li was doing. I said, "Wang Li is quite good. He was very active in criticizing the 'February Outline' and spoke sharply". Mu Xin did not speak much, and Chen Boda did not ask him. Chen Yading spoke a lot. Liu Zhijian did come, but he was more stable and did not speak much. At that time, I thought Wang Li was a kind man and a veteran, so I respected him, but I didn't expect him to be so powerful in suppressing the rebels at the General Administration later. At this meeting, except for a few comments at the beginning, I listened more than I spoke. I always felt that they were all old cadres and I was a young man, so I couldn't always do anything.

Once everyone had finished speaking, they each collated their speeches into words first, then linked up the paragraphs and handed them to Chen Boda to summarise. Chen Boda was a very good writer, and he was good at doing post-organisation. After he had summarised it, he then asked Kang Sheng to read it.

Kang Sheng changed a lot on the document. He was very disciplined in his corrections, underlining them with a line and then writing them carefully in the margins in cursive.

When it was all done, it was sent to the printing plant, where it was typeset and printed, and then Chen Boda and Kang Sheng wrote another text message to the Chairman, which was then sent to Jiang Qing for transmission to the Chairman.

Jiang Qing did not come to the meeting very much, she only met with people in the small auditorium of the Jinjiang Hotel, mainly Kang Sheng, Chen Boda, Chunqiao and a few of them. The final text of the meeting was sent to the Chairman by Jiang Qing, who was responsible for liaising with him.

The Chairman lived in Hangzhou. Chairman Mao made a lot of changes to the text we sent him. It was then printed and sent to Beijing for the other leaders of the Central Committee to read. They were invited to make further amendments.

#### **4. How the list of members of the "Central Cultural Revolution Group" was drawn up**

While we were discussing and drafting the May 16 Circular, it was decided at a meeting of the Standing Committee of the Central Political Bureau that a new "Central Cultural Revolution Group" (the "Central Cultural Revolution") would be set up.

The composition of the Central Cultural Revolution was first nominated by Kang Sheng, Chen Boda and Jiang Qing. Kang Sheng nominated Wu Lengxi, Wang Li and Mu Xin. Jiang Qing nominated Zhang Chunqiao, Guan Feng and I. In addition, she nominated Chen Yading. Chen Yading was the Vice Minister of the Cultural Department of the General Administration, he worked with Jiang Qing on the model opera and also participated in the "Symposium on the Literary and Artistic Work of the Troops" chaired by Jiang Qing and the drafting of the minutes after the meeting. Jiang Qing said that he had performed well in these activities, so she proposed that he participate. However, Liu Zhijian was firmly against his participation in the Central Cultural Revolution. This was because they were from the army system. So, Jiang Qing had no choice. Chen Boda mentioned Yin Da<sup>270</sup>. I remember that Wang Renzhong was nominated by the Premier. The Premier did not attend the drafting group meetings, but once he came to see us and happened to talk about it. The Premier said that Chairman Mao trusted Wang Renzhong.

After the nominations were made, the list was sent to the Chairman. The Chairman said that the Central Cultural Revolution could not consist of only writers, but that all regions, provinces and municipalities should be represented. So, this led to a second nomination.

By the time of the second nomination, Wang Li, Guan Feng and Mu Xin and I were already in office at Diaoyutai. The first time, Yao Wenyuan was not on the list. I then thought, "When we started the Cultural Revolution, Yao Wenyuan was at the forefront. How come he was not in the Central Cultural Revolution?" In my heart, I wanted Yao Wenyuan to be included in the Cultural Revolution, but in the first list, I was the only young man, and the others were all old cadres. I wanted a young man to be with me. Therefore, when I nominated him for the second time, I raised the hope that Yao Wenyuan would be included. Jiang Qing agreed with me. But Chen Boda opposed it on the grounds that Yao Wenyuan's father, Yao Pengzi, had historically committed acts of defection. This issue was brought to the attention of the Chairman, who said, "If the old man is reactionary, can't the son be revolutionary? These are two different things. There are many sons who are revolutionary because their fathers are reactionary. Chen Duxiu later defected from the Party, but his two sons were revolutionary martyrs! Chairman Mao made a final decision and Yao Wenyuan was admitted to the Central Cultural Revolution.

The fact that Wu Lengxi did not join the Central Cultural Revolution may be related to the fact that the Chairman once said at a meeting that he was a "half-Marxist". He had also made some mistakes in the past under Peng Zhen. In fact, his theoretical level was very high, and he was good at making theoretical generalisations, not only speaking thoroughly but also writing well. I attended two meetings of the Diaoyutai "anti-revisionist writing team", and he and Yao Qin were the two people who played the biggest role. I was still young and didn't know much about it. Wu Lengxi had a bad eye and always wore tinted glasses. Once I asked him, "Lao Wu, why do you always wear tinted glasses, what's wrong with your eyes?" He then explained to me in a pleasant voice. When Wang Li found out, he told me, "You're really something, why are you asking people this question. It was the last question he wanted people to ask. He would get angry with anyone who asked him". I felt sorry

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<sup>270</sup> Yin Da (1906-1983) was an archaeologist and historian. He went to Yan'an in 1938 and held various posts after Liberation including deputy director of the Institute of History of the Chinese Academy of Sciences, and deputy director and director of the Institute of Archaeology. He continued to work in these areas through the 1970s and 80s.

for Wu Lengxi at that time, but I was also grateful to him for treating me like a child, for not losing his temper with me, and for explaining to me patiently.

Now, of all the memoirs I have read, I think the best written is Wu Lengxi. He has a theory, speaks fairly, and is very fair in his assessment of Chairman Mao. The Chairman criticised him for being half-Marxist. This is actually not so simple anymore. None of us dare to claim to be completely Marxist, and Chairman Mao also said that he himself was at best 70 or 80 per cent Marxist.

The nomination of Chen Yading by Jiang Qing was rejected by Liu Zhijian, who said he was politically unstable and had some problems with his personal style, and replaced him with Xie Bengzhong. Chen Yading hated Liu Zhijian for this, and many of the materials used to bring down Liu Zhijian were created by Chen Yading together with the rebels of the General Administration. Xie Bengzhong was the head of the Cultural Department of the General Administration, an old Red Army man and revolutionary with a strong party spirit. But the man was so honest that when he went to deal with the troops during the Cultural Revolution, neither faction would listen to him.

### **5. Jiang Qing tells me to go back to work in Zhongnanhai**

When I was about to return to Beijing, Jiang Qing asked me to meet with her again. At this meeting, she told me that I should not go back to work at Red Flag magazine after I returned to Beijing. She wanted me to go directly to Zhongnanhai to report to Wang Dongxing. She said that the Central Government had other arrangements regarding my work. I had already heard at that time that Tian Jiaying was in trouble and that the Central Committee had decided to examine him. But what I did not expect was that the Central Government had also decided that I would take over Tian Jiaying's job as head of the Chairman's secretary's office.

By this time, the Central Committee had already met and decided to examine Luo Ruiqing. Jiang Qing told me that the last time she met Luo Ruiqing, she told him about Peng Zhen's boycott of Yao Wen Yuan's articles and that Luo Ruiqing had supported her. So, she thought Luo was quite nice. But to my surprise, it turned out that they were in cahoots. From Jiang Qing's words, I could tell that she did not know beforehand that Luo Ruiqing had problems. I then asked her how the Central Government knew about Luo Ruiqing's affairs. She said that Lin Biao had asked Ye Qun to come and tell Chairman Mao. She said that Ye Qun was also secretive and talked to the Chairman alone, not even letting us know. I think Chairman Mao decided to deal with the issue of Luo Ruiqing after Ye Qun reported the conversation, otherwise, he would have greeted Jiang Qing first.

### **6. The Hui'an child**

I was on a special flight back to Beijing with Chen Boda and a few other members of the team who had been involved in drafting the document. During the flight, Chen Boda and I had an interesting conversation.

When I asked him about his experiences as a young man, he was very interested in talking about them. Because of the accent barrier, he spoke and wrote at the same time. As there was no paper to write on the plane, he wrote on the back of the "flight report" on the special plane. These papers, which I later included in a book, were among the personal effects returned to me after my release from Qin Cheng.

Chen Boda wrote above: "Recently I read a letter from a bureaucrat of the Qing Dynasty, in which he said that one day, I stayed in Hui'an, the city was as small as an urn and the county as clear as water.

This shows that I live in an environment that is very narrow and too small in vision. In my county, prior to the Qing Dynasty, we had the largest number of children students, numbering 3,000, who went to Quanzhou every three years to take the Xiucai examination, and many of them did not pass, and many jokes were circulated. The counties that belonged to Quanzhou called those who couldn't pass the exams, 'Hui'an children'. I was one of the Hui'an children."

This short essay is rather a humorous sketch that was quite rare for Chen Boda to have related. Why did he say these things to me? Shortly before that, during the discussion of the May 16 Circular, Tian Jiaying's unauthorized deletion of Chairman Mao's speech criticizing the importance of Hai Rui's dismissal was a central issue for the participants. After Chen Boda's report was handed over to the Chairman, Jiang Qing had a telephone conversation with Chairman Mao in Hangzhou about it. "Slander is like water, it appears gradually". Jiang Qing didn't understand, so the Chairman told her again, word by word, but she still seemed not to understand, but couldn't ask again. But Jiang Qing learnt that the words quoted by the Chairman meant that bad words could influence people because they were like the infiltrating power of water, which was occurred slowly. Jiang Qing's understanding was correct, but she pronounced the word spoken by Chairman Mao 'zen' (slander) as 'chan'. At a meeting, Jiang Qing talked about her conversation with the Chairman, and Kang Sheng said that the word "slander" should be pronounced as "zen", and that "slander" should not be pronounced as "chan". Chen Boda said, "These two words were interchangeable in ancient times, right?" Kang Sheng did not say anything more. A few days later, when we met again, Kang Sheng took out a piece of paper on which he had copied the ancient pronunciation of the words "slander" and "slanderous" from the Shuowen Jiezi and Kangxi Dictionary, as well as a sentence copied from the Zhengzitong: "'Zen' is not commonly said as 'chan'". Jiang Qing looked at this piece of paper and said, "Yes, I can't quite understand the Chairman's Hunan dialect, but he seems to have pronounced the word 'zen' as 'chan'". This incident made Chen Boda embarrassed. He must have felt humiliated in his heart. I knew in my heart that he was using the term "Hui'an child" in front of me because he was afraid that I would be influenced by Kang Sheng. So, I told him, "You are not a Hui'an child. When I was proofreading Mao's Selected Works, I saw your contribution in compiling and editing the On Practice and On Contradiction, and later on, I also saw your contribution in compiling On the Correct Handling of Contradictions Among the People". When I said this, Chen Boda was quite pleased.

## Chapter 3: Before and after the adoption of the "May 16 Circular"

1. Criticism of "Peng, Luo, Lu and Yang"
2. The May 16 Circular adopted at the Central Committee meeting
3. Lin Biao's "May 18 Speech"
4. Liu Shaoqi presided over the criticism of Zhu De
5. Establishment of the "Central Cultural Revolution Group"

### 1. Criticism of "Peng, Luo, Lu and Yang"

On May 1, 1966, I returned to Beijing. After May Day, I went to Zhongnanhai to report to Wang Dongxing. Wang Dongxing conveyed to me the Central Committee's decision that I should take over from Tian Jiaying, whose affairs had not yet been made public at this time. Later the Premier approached me and he told me that the Central Government had decided to set up a Secretarial Bureau in Zhongnanhai and put Tong Xiaopeng and I in charge of leading the work of the Secretarial Bureau. Tong Xiaopeng was in charge of the Secretarial Bureau, and I was asked to head the Letter and Visit Bureau. The General Office of the Central Committee arranged offices for us in the A building where Liu Shaoqi used to live. At the same time, in order to prepare for the establishment of the Central Cultural Revolution Group, the Central General Office arranged offices for Guan Feng, Wang Li, Yin Da and me in Diaoyutai. My office was at first in Building 15 at Diaoyutai, and then moved to Building 16.

On 3 May, the Central Committee told me to attend the enlarged meeting of the Central Political Bureau. This meeting started on 4 May and I remember that it was chaired by Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping in turn. The venue was sometimes in the Great Hall of the People and sometimes in Huairan Hall. The first part of the meeting was to discuss the issue of Peng (Zhen), Luo (Ruiqing), Lu (Dingyi) and Yang (Shangkun). Peng Zhen's downfall may seem sudden, but in fact it was not. There had been a process of change and development going on.

As early as 1963 and 1964 Chairman Mao had two directives on literature and art. These two directives were supposed to be warnings issued by Chairman Mao to Peng Zhen, who was in charge of ideological work in the Central Committee. But Peng Zhen did not take it seriously and continued to obstruct the reform of Beijing opera and other matters. After the publication of the article "Review of Hai Rui's dismissal", Peng Zhen again resisted. This is why the Chairman said that Beijing was an "independent kingdom" where "no needle can be inserted and no water can be poured in". After the Chairman spoke publicly in support of Yao Wenyuan's and others' articles, Peng Zhen came up with the "February Outline" and continued to suppress the leftists under the banner of "equality before the truth", trying to restrict criticism to the academic sphere. The issue of the "February Outline" should have been the direct cause of the Chairman's decision to dismiss Peng Zhen. In fact, I think that Peng Zhen and Liu Shaoqi had a big conflict. Before the "Seven Thousand Cadre Conference", Peng Zhen organised a group of people to collect and collate the errors in the central government documents since the "Great Leap Forward" at the "Changguanlou" in the western suburbs of Beijing. According to those who took part in the collation, they thought they could find many mistakes of Chairman Mao in the central documents, but they did not expect to find many mistakes of people like Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping, such as "tens of thousands of kilograms per

mu", "running into communism" and other fallacies. The fallacies such as "several tens of thousands of kilograms per mu", "running into communism" and so on, even the popularization of "small blast furnace" were first proposed by Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping.

After the incident of Liu Shaoqi contradicting Chairman Mao during the discussion of Article 23 at the end of 1964, Peng Zhen criticized Liu Shaoqi severely, saying that it was disrespectful to Chairman Mao and that Liu Shaoqi always wanted to go it alone on rural issues, etc. Peng Zhen was qualified to criticise Liu Shaoqi on rural issues because Peng Zhen had always been against going it alone. Liu Shaoqi asked Chairman Mao, "You always talk about capitalists, but who are the 'capitalist-roaders'?" Chairman Mao said, "Zhang Linzhi<sup>271</sup> is". Peng Zhen said, "You, Liu Shaoqi, pushed Chairman Mao to say this, but you ended harming these cadres".

So, at this meeting, Liu Shaoqi was very aggressive in dealing with Peng Zhen. Liu Shaoqi had said that Peng Zhen was not only anti-Chairman Mao, but also did not take him and other central leaders into account at all.

On the issue of Luo Ruiqing. At one point during this meeting, Ye Qun came to see me, Guan Feng and Wang Li, accompanied by Chen Boda. Ye Qun said to us that she was a student of Chen Boda. But we had the impression at the time that Chen Boda and Ye Qun did not know each other very well. Chen Boda introduced Ye Qun to us with great enthusiasm. Ye Qun revealed to us how "Elder son Luo" had opposed Chairman Mao. Ye Qun said that Lin Biao had been so kind to Luo Ruiqing at the beginning, but Luo Ruiqing was ungrateful and went to be with another old marshal. This "other old marshal" referred to Generalissimo He. Chen Boda once asked our history team to write a biography of He Long. Once Ye Qun left, he came to me and said, "We have never been very clear about the struggles within the army". I said, "I just briefly mentioned it, but I haven't made any specific arrangements yet". Chen Boda immediately said, "Cancel all of them, no more! Don't tell anyone else about this in the future".

The main reason for Luo Ruiqing's affair was that he was too close to He Long. And He Long was so close to Liu Shaoqi at that time that at one time there were rumours in Zhongnanhai that they were going to become in-laws. During the Cultural Revolution, when the Chairman, Lin Biao and the Premier were meeting together, I was on the sidelines. I heard the Chairman say with my own ears that if Guan Xiangying<sup>272</sup> was still around, "beard" (referring to He Long) would not have fallen over.

Jiang Qing told me that Guan Xiangying, Ren Bishi and He Long were all from the Second Front Army. Guan Xiangying died in Yan'an after a long illness. Before he died, he approached Ren Bishi and He Long and urged them to follow Chairman Mao in the Party and never to oppose Mao. Both Ren Bishi and He Long respected Guan Xiangying. He Long was a very righteous man. After the victory of the

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<sup>271</sup> Zhang Linzhi (1908-1967) joined the Communist Party of China in December 1929. At the time that Mao identified him as a capitalist-roader he was Minister of the Ministry of Coal Industry and Secretary of its Party Leadership Group.

<sup>272</sup> Guan Xiangying (1902~1946) was an early military leader of the Communist Party of China. He joined the Chinese Socialist Youth League in 1924, and joined the Communist Party of China the following year. After working in Henan Province, he was elected as a member of the Central Committee at the Sixth National Congress of the Communist Party of China. In 1932, he went to the Western Hunan and Hubei Revolutionary Base as the chairman of the Western Hunan and Hubei Military Commission and the political commissar of the Red Army. During the Long March, he served as the deputy political commissar of the Second Front Army and resisted Zhang Guotao's wrongful act of establishing a separate central government and splitting the Red Army. In 1937, he served as political commissar of the 120th Division of the Eighth Route Army and opened up the Jinsui base area together with He Long. He died in Yan'an on July 21, 1946.

war against Japan, Chairman Mao had sent him and Nie Rongzhen<sup>273</sup> to fight several important battles against the Guomindang in North China, but neither of them were particularly successful. But He Long actively supplied food and ammunition to the North Shaanxi Liberation Army when Chairman Mao was fighting in North Shaanxi, and also placed a special unit on the Yellow River, ready to cross the river to meet Chairman Mao.

In the early 1960s Lin Biao's health was not good and the Central Committee decided that He Long should take charge of the day-to-day work of the Military Commission during Lin Biao's recuperation. Luo Ruiqing got on better with He Long at this time and was not as constrained as he was with Lin Biao. It is likely that Luo Ruiqing advised Lin Biao to have a break because he thought that Lin Biao was not going to get well. If he had known that Lin Biao's illness could be cured, then I guess he would not have told Lin Biao that. It is said that Luo Ruiqing asked Liu Yalou<sup>274</sup> to come forward to persuade Lin Biao to take time off, because Lin Biao trusted Liu Yalou. I heard Yang Chengwu say that Liu Yalou was a very capable person, and Lin Biao had to rely on him to organize and implement the decisions he took when he commanded the war. The words that Luo Ruiqing said to Liu Yalou had to be very mild and without any harshness. When he was later criticized, his words were tweaked<sup>275</sup>, as though was really against Lin Biao.

I had a good impression of Luo Ruiqing, who was the head of the Zhongnanhai Security Bureau for a long time after the founding of the country, and he always said hello to me when he met me in Zhongnanhai in the 1960s, always greeting me by my full name. His wife, Hao Zhiping, was also very polite when she met us. I always felt a bit flattered in front of them. After the "May 16 Circular" was conveyed, a criticism meeting of Luo Ruiqing was held in Zhongnanhai, chaired by Tong Xiaopeng. Someone from below handed me a note saying that Hao Zhiping should be asked to go up to the stage to be criticised. Tong Xiaopeng gave me the note and asked for my opinion. I told him that criticism of Luo Ruiqing was criticism of Luo Ruiqing, and that it was not good to get Hao Zhiping out, and that it was not within the spirit of the central government. Tong Xiaopeng thought I had a point, so he screwed up the note and didn't bother with it. The man handed another note up, but Tong Xiaopeng still ignored him. I don't know what kind of problems this person had with the Luo family. Luo Ruiqing had always been very good to the Chairman. I heard Jiang Qing tell me that the Chairman told Lin Biao that Luo Ruiqing was against you, but not yet against me. This statement was also known to Chen Boda. The Chairman had always trusted Luo Ruiqing. The Central Committee had

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<sup>273</sup> Nie Rongzhen (1899-1992), joined the Communist Party of China in March 1923, and studied in the Soviet Union in 1924. He took part in the Long March and fought against the Japanese, most notably during the Hundred Regiments Campaign when his troops discovered two very young orphaned Japanese girls. Nie cared for them and ensured that they were returned to the Japanese troops in Shijiazhuang. Forty years later he was to be reunited with the elder of the two. In the Chinese Civil War he commanded the Northern China Military Region, and with his deputy Xu Xiangqian, his force defeated Fu Zuoyi's forces in Tianjin near Beijing. During the Korean War, Nie took part in high level command decision making, military operations planning, and shared responsibility for war mobilization. Nie was made a Marshal of the PLA in 1955 and later ran the Chinese nuclear weapons program. An English translation of his memoir *Inside the Red Star* was published in China in 1988.

<sup>274</sup> Liu Yalou (1910-1965) graduated from Anti-Japanese Red Army University and broke through the four blockades around the Central Soviet Base area to join in the Long March. His forces captured the Luding Bridge, a crucial step in the eventual success of the Long March. After the founding of the People's Republic of China, he served as commander of the Air Force and Deputy Minister of National Defense. He was awarded the rank of general in 1955. He died of illness in Shanghai on May 7, 1965, at the age of 55.

<sup>275</sup> Qi Benyu uses a Chinese idiom, which means to remove the two parts from the front and back, and it is also a metaphor for removing the useless parts.

a most confidential "protection from explosives group", headed by the Premier, but Luo Ruiqing was responsible for it.

When Luo Ruiqing was overthrown, Ye Jianying was the first to benefit, taking over Luo's post as Secretary General of the Military Commission and also rising to become Secretary of the Central Secretariat. When Luo Ruiqing committed suicide by jumping off a building, Ye Jianying even composed a metaphorical and sarcastic poem. I felt uncomfortable when I heard it. He had committed suicide, so what could you do to gloat about it? At that time, the Central Government set up the "Capital Working Group", whose business was similar to that of the former "Protection from Explosives Group". The "Capital Working Group" was under the specific responsibility of Ye Jianying. It was a very secretive body, which was not open to the public. It only reported to the Chairman, Liu Shaoqi, Deng Xiaoping and the Premier.

The problem of Lu Dingyi was triggered by the anonymous letters written by his wife, Yan Huibing. Ye Qun once showed us some of the anonymous letters written by Yan Huibing. The letters were so nasty that some of their vocabulary was copied from the unabridged version of *The Golden Lotus*. What was particularly uncalled for was Yan's rumour that Ye Qun was not Lin Doudou's real mother. It is cruel that this couple, both moral leaders, would not even spare a naive girl. Anyone who looked at them would feel that it was unbecoming of them to do such a thing. Therefore, after the issue of Lu Dingyi and Yan Huibing was taken out at the enlarged meeting of the Central Politburo, no one who sympathised with them thought they were excusable. For this was indeed very serious mental torture for the Lin Biao family.

Ye Qun herself told us about the investigation and punishment of Yan Huibing. At that time, there was a Friendship Store, which supplied special-needs goods to the head of the Central Government above the level of Vice Premier. One day, both of them went to the Friendship Store to buy special-needs goods. One went in and the other came out. Probably Yan Huibing had bought a lot of things and was just looking at things without looking at the person in front of her, while Ye Qun was also in a hurry and the two bumped into each other. Ye Qun said it was Yan Huibing who cursed her first, what a bitch, stinky woman and other words, cursing quite badly. She got angry too, and they started to swear at each other. Neither of them recognised the other at the time, and after being persuaded to leave, they went their separate ways.

When Yan Huibing was leaving, she took down Ye Qun's license plate number and then wrote a letter to report it. The letter was forwarded to Lin Biao according to his license plate number. When Lin Biao's secretary received the letter, he took it and showed it to Ye Qun, saying that there was a letter from the masses that raised a criticism of you. Ye Qun took a look at the handwriting and it turned out to be exactly the same as the handwriting on the anonymous letter sent to her. She immediately went to Xie Fuzhi<sup>276</sup> and said, "Your Ministry of Public Security has been investigating the case for so many years, but you have failed to solve it". Xie Fuzhi immediately called several handwriting experts, and once compared, the experts unanimously concluded that the two handwritings were from the same person. Xie Fuzhi reported it to the Premier. The Premier

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<sup>276</sup> Xie Fuzhi (1909-1972), joined the Red Army of Chinese Workers and Peasants in 1930 and joined the Communist Party of China in 1931. During his revolutionary career, he served in a series of senior military and political leadership roles. He participated in the Long March, the Hundred Regiments Campaign, and many other important battles. After the founding of the People's Republic of China, Xie Fuzhi served as vice premier of the State Council, Minister of Public Security, Secretary of the Beijing Municipal Committee of the Communist Party of China, and the first political commissar of the Beijing Military Region. During the Cultural Revolution, he was accused of being part of Lin Biao's and Jiang Qing's groups. He died of illness on March 26, 1972, at the age of 63. He was posthumously expelled from the party in October 1980.

immediately instructed that Yan Huibing be arrested and a special case be opened for examination. This made Lu Dingyi nervous, and he offered to go and see Yan Huibing. But without the Premier's consent, no one could go and see her. Lu Dingyi then approached Xie Fuzhi and said he wanted to send her some clothes and so on. Xie Fuzhi said it was difficult. Lu said, "Can I write a letter to her?" After receiving permission, he wrote. The letter said: "I don't know what mistakes you have made, you should listen to the party and the government, cooperate well and hope for leniency. I went to Wuxi some time ago and bought you a domestic watch, a semi-steel one. Just watch the watch, rest on time, get up on time and maintain your health".

Xie Fuzhi reported the situation to Kang Sheng. Kang Sheng was really good. He told Xie Fuzhi that you don't understand Shanghainese. Both of them are southerners and have lived in Shanghai. The "half steel" written by Lu in the letter means "half-speaking" in Shanghai dialect. That means that Lu Dingyi told Yan Huibing to speak about only half of the letter, not all of it. Kang Sheng thought that since the matter had been exposed, Lu Dingyi asked Yan Huibing to tell only her half of the story and not his. Otherwise, why would he send the watch? It's not as if Yan Huibing didn't have a watch on her hand.

When Xie Fuzhi reported to the Prime Minister, he talked about half-steel and "half-speaking." After hearing this, the Premier also said that Kang Sheng's analysis was correct, and that it was probably the case.

Lu Dingyi used to oppose the Wang Ming line. But at the Lushan Conference, Lu Dingyi was secretly in support of Peng Dehuai. He named his son Lu Dede, and according to his own words, one De was the De of Zhu De and one De was the De of Peng Dehuai, but after the Cultural Revolution they denied this claim of theirs. But the matter of writing an anonymous letter shows that the couple, both of them, did not speak of even one "de"<sup>277</sup>.

The main reason for Yang Shangkun's trial was the issue of secretly planting a wiretap around Chairman Mao, and the issue of leaking secrets.

Yang Shangkun planted bugs in the bedroom and bathroom of the Chairman's Chrysanthemum Study House through Wu Zhenying (Liu Shaoqi's confidential secretary) and Kang Yimin (the Premier's confidential secretary), who were both in charge of the Security Office. In the summer of 1964, during a break in the middle of the day, many people were cooling off in the forecourt of the Zhongnanhai C Building. I heard Kang Yimin saying loudly to someone, "Damn it, when things go wrong, you act like a shrinking violet, and let me take the blame for such a big thing. It's obvious that you guys told us to do it, and now you're fine, but I'm not". Kang Yimin was a little red devil<sup>278</sup> by birth, and his mouth was unstoppable. When I returned to the secretary's office, I told Tian Jiaying about it. Tian Jiaying said to me, "Don't get involved, because something big is going to happen in their security office this time". But he didn't tell me exactly what was going on. Later, Yang Shangkun talked to Kang Yimin, and Kang Yimin stopped talking.

Before the Chairman returned to Beijing in July 1966, he asked Jiang Qing to make a special phone call to me, asking Xie Fuzhi and me to go and see for ourselves again whether the Chairman's residence in Zhongnanhai was all cleaned up and whether it was still bugged. I immediately called Xie Fuzhi. Xie Fuzhi said that he would immediately send someone to test it with an instrument.

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<sup>277</sup> The same character "de" is in the names of both Zhu De and Peng Dehuai and means "virtue".

<sup>278</sup> In the Red Army's Long March, they were a special group of people who, despite being children, climbed snowy mountains and crossed grasslands with the troops, grew up during the trek, matured during the battle and were said to have written a song of life with their unusual childhood.

Afterwards, he called to say that the inspection was complete and there were no more bugs. I said to Xie Fuzhi that we should go to the site again and I would take a car to pick you up and go with you. So, I took a car out of the south gate of Zhongnanhai to the Ministry of Public Security to pick him up and together we went to Fengzeyuan where the Chairman lives. I said to Xie Fuzhi while looking at it, "We can't make any mistakes, or we'll both be disciplined". Xie Fuzhi said, "I'm sure there's no problem". He had already asked someone to double check it with special instruments. I gave Jiang Qing a detailed report of what I had seen with Xie Fuzhi. However, when the Chairman returned to Beijing in July 1966, he did not go to live in Fengzeyuan, but first stayed in Diaoyutai. At the end of September 1966, the Chairman also went to a meeting at the Yi Nian Hall in Fengzeyuan, but after the meeting he stayed back at Diaoyutai. The Chairman seemed to have developed a psychological barrier against that other place.

Later, during a meeting of the Central Cultural Revolution Group, we asked Jiang Qing about this wiretap. On the spot, Jiang Qing asked Wang Dongxing to bring her a very large envelope with words written in the Chairman's own handwriting: "To be kept by Jiang Qing". In addition to the small recorder, there were several rice-grain-shaped bugs inside, which were so small that even Xie Fuzhi said he had never seen them before. There was also a soapbox with the bug hidden in it. This was most likely imported from overseas by Yang Shangkun through the Central Investigation Department, of which he was the leader. Also in the envelope was an review written in the handwriting of the person in question, Kang Yimin, and others.

In 1964, after the "wiretapping incident" was discovered, Chairman Mao ordered Yang Shangkun to be transferred from the Central Office. However, in 1965, when the Chairman found out that Yang Shangkun was still working in Zhongnanhai, he became angry and Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping then transferred Yang Shangkun to the Secretariat of the Guangdong Provincial Committee.

After Yang Shangkun was transferred to Guangdong, he still kept calling Tian Jiaying late at night, and Tian Jiaying told Yang Shangkun about some of the things that the Central Committee and the Chairman had discussed. It was not until later that Tian Jiaying felt that things were getting serious and he got scared. He told Yang Shangkun, "Let's stop talking on the phone, what if people hear us". But Yang Shangkun continued to call and Tian Jiaying couldn't help but answer. These circumstances were later uncovered by Tian Jiaying's secretary. Before Tian Jiaying's death, his secretary refused to expose Tian Jiaying too much. After Tian Jiaying's death, he told the organisation that he was liberated and had to give an account of Tian Jiaying's affairs to the organisation in their original form. According to his revelations, the problem was very serious. The materials he wrote for his denunciation should, by definition, be in the Central Archives by now, but I wonder if they were destroyed. At that time, when the Central Committee decided to examine Tian Jiaying, it was filed as a subsidiary case to the Yang Shangkun case.

After Yang Shangkun left the Central Office, who was to take over the post of Director of the Central Office? At that time, Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping advocated that Tian Jiaying should take over the post. The Premier did not agree that Tian Jiaying should take over, but preferred Gong Zirong to do so. He was an old cadre who had joined the revolution during the Red Army and had done underground work. He had originally worked in the Northern Bureau and was on good terms with Liu Shaoqi and Peng Zhen, but Chairman Mao did not agree. Jiang Qing told me that it was she who cast the crucial vote for Wang Dongxing at this moment. Jiang Qing said that there were people around the Chairman, like Ye Zilong and the others, who did not take her seriously. All these people had joined the revolution very early. Wang Dongxing was the only one who always treated Jiang Qing with respect. However, Chairman Mao had an opinion about Wang Dongxing. Jiang Qing said that the chairman told her that Wang was apparently obsequious, but in fact he was very tactful and

not so consistent on the inside. However, Jiang Qing felt that Wang was still a relatively straightforward person, someone who could be controlled. Later on, Chairman Mao decided that Wang Dongxing should be the head of the General Office of the Central Committee. So Jiang Qing said that her vote was a crucial one. Of course Jiang Qing later paid a painful price for her crucial vote.

When I took over Tian Jiaying's job, Wang Dongxing said to me, "Now there are only two of us in the General Office, I am not of a high standard, so I can manage the Security Bureau and that's it. The Secretarial Bureau and the Bureau of Secretarial Affairs should all be under your control". I knew he was worried that I would divide his power, so I said to him, "Director Wang, I have already shared a lot of your work in the Central Cultural Revolution Office. Besides, I have to be busy writing articles, I can't even manage the secretary's office. I was afraid that he was still unsure, so I told him again that I had a weakness as a person, and that was my fame. The thing I want most is for the articles I write to please the Chairman. There are so many affairs in the office that I am really not capable of managing, so it is better for you to manage them". Seeing my sincerity, he accepted it and did not play hide and seek with me any further.

After the revelation that Yang Shangkun had planted a wiretap at the Chairman's residence was revealed at this Central Committee meeting, everyone was very shocked and angry. The Premier did not allow Yang Shangkun to attend the meeting, at which he announced that Yang had been isolated. Because he had some issues that were important Party secrets, it was not convenient for him to give a public account of them at the meeting.

On 24 May 1966 the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China issued document Zhongfa (66) No. 277, announcing the problems of Yang Shangkun. The document clearly stated that "Yang Shangkun disregarded the repeated decisions of the Central Committee concerning the prohibition of the installation of wiretaps and, behind the back of the Central Committee, set up a private wiretap to record the remarks of Chairman Mao and Comrade Standing Committee members, stealing Party secrets." But in 1980, after Deng Xiaoping came to power, the then Central Committee issued another document saying that it was "all untrue" that Yang Shangkun had "secretly recorded Chairman Mao's talks". Yang Shangkun himself and some of the people involved, either in talks or in articles, described the "bug incident" as a normal recording exercise. Even Ye Zilong wrote a memoir in which he conflated the "bug incident" discovered in 1964 with the normal recording of meetings of the Central Office in the 1950s. Chairman Mao, on the other hand, was described as being inconsistent and unpredictable, advocating and agreeing to recording at one time, and firmly opposing it at another. On 24 May 1966 the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China issued document Zhongfa (66) No. 277, announcing the problems of Yang Shangkun. The document clearly stated that "Yang Shangkun disregarded the repeated decisions of the Central Committee concerning the prohibition of the installation of wiretaps and, behind the back of the Central Committee, set up a private wiretap to record the remarks of Chairman Mao and Comrade Standing Committee members, stealing Party secrets." But in 1980, after Deng Xiaoping came to power, the then Central Committee issued another document saying that it was "all untrue" that Yang Shangkun had "secretly recorded Chairman Mao's talks". Yang Shangkun himself and some of the people involved, either in talks or in articles, described the "bug incident" as a normal recording exercise. Even Ye Zilong wrote a memoir in which he conflated the "bug incident" discovered in 1964 with the normal recording of meetings of the Central Office in the 1950s. Chairman Mao, on the other hand, was described as being inconsistent and unpredictable, advocating and agreeing to recording at one time, and firmly opposing it at another.

## **2. The May 16 Circular adopted at the Central Committee meeting**

After Peng, Luo, Lu and Yang were criticised at the Central Committee meeting, the text of the "May 16 Circular" was discussed.

After the "May 16 Notice" was drafted, the Chairman personally revised it several times and added large paragraphs to it. After several discussions and revisions, it was discussed and approved at the enlarged meeting of the Standing Committee of the Central Political Bureau before being submitted to the enlarged meeting of the Political Bureau for discussion. After collecting the opinions and suggestions of the various groups, amendments were made. After thorough discussions in the group meetings, a consensus was reached before it was adopted by a show of hands at the Central Committee.

"The official name of the May 16th Circular was "Notice of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China", which was adopted at a meeting on 16 May and has since been referred to as the "May 16th Circular".

In the official documents issued by the Central Committee, the words added by the Chairman during the revision are printed in boldface type.

### **3. Lin Biao's "May 18 Speech"**

On 18 May 1966, the third day after the adoption of the May 16 Circular, Lin Biao made a speech at the enlarged meeting of the Political Bureau, which was unique. The Chairman was in Hangzhou at the time, and after reading Lin Biao's speech, he said that no one had ever talked about a coup in this way, and that some of it was an old view of history and not in line with Marx and Lenin. The Chairman originally did not want to approve it, but many leaders of the Political Bureau wanted to approve it, so the Chairman approved it for distribution.

After Lin Biao's speech, the Premier instructed that the Secretary Bureau of the Central Office had to put together a draft of the speech the very next morning. After receiving the Premier's instruction, I immediately worked with Liang Chuan, a staff member of the Central Office, to compile it overnight. Lin Biao's speech did not have a written script, he just wrote some strips. When we were collating it, it was mainly based on the shorthand I made myself at the scene. When I was studying at the Central Youth League School and working as a secretary, I worked out a shorthand method on my own to make it easier to record, formulating some simple symbols that no one else could understand, and I have always followed this method of recording when I was studying and working on my own. I looked at my notes and read them sentence by sentence, and Liang Chuan wrote them sentence by sentence. Lin Biao spoke very smoothly this time, and there was no need to add anything to the actual transcript, which was a very fluent script. All that needed to be checked was some historical allusions, dates, names and so on. And that is what I am good at. So it took only one night for us to put together this speech.

Liang Chuan was censored for a long time during the Cultural Revolution because he was implicated by me. Now he still holds his views on the Cultural Revolution, but behaves rather negatively. He said that with our individual strength, you and I, we could not mess with Deng Xiaoping and the others. Even Chairman Mao had not fought Deng Xiaoping, so what could we do? He said that his family had been broken, his lover had died, and he had been in labour camps for so many years. The Cultural Revolution was still a failure? It looks like we can't decide the socialist fate of our country. Forget it, let's pretend it was a dream!

In fact, he only went to the May 7 cadre school, which is not really a reform through labour. He said that if he had been involved in science and technology, he would be doing well now. I had read so many books on Marx, Lenin and Mao, but I still couldn't convince him.

I sent the collated speeches of Lin Biao to the printing house of the Office of Machine Affairs for printing and sent them to Lin Biao for review. Lin Biao found it very satisfactory and said that it was a high standard of collation. Lin Biao's office even called to ask who had compiled it. The comrades in the office told him that Qi Benyu had put it together himself. Later, Ye Qun and Lin Biao's secretary Zhang Yunsheng said that Lin Biao had told them at that time that they could send anything they wrote in the future to Qi Benyu for review.

It was also at this enlarged meeting of the Politburo that I made a speech in the panel. In my speech, I talked about my feelings after listening to Lin Biao's speech at the Seven Thousand Cadres Conference a few years ago, and I used the metaphor of "sturdy grass withstands high winds"<sup>279</sup> to describe Lin Biao's speech. This speech was published in the conference newsletter. I thought I had made a good speech myself. But I was criticised by Jiang Qing. Jiang Qing said to me on the phone, "It's not that what you said was incorrect. Now that you are in a different position, you have to give us a heads up before you make such a statement". Guan Feng told me when we had returned to the lower level that Jiang Qing's criticism was right. "A sensitive speech like yours will lead to speculation from all sides".

#### **4. Liu Shaoqi presided over the criticism of Zhu De**

On 23 May, the meeting adopted the decision to deal with "Peng, Luo, Lu and Yang" by suspending them from the Central Secretariat. At the same time, Tao Zhu<sup>280</sup> and Ye Jianying were added to the Secretariat and Li Xuefeng was appointed as the First Secretary of the Beijing Municipal Committee.

It was after dealing with "Peng, Luo, Lu and Yang". As the Chairman added in the Circular that "figures like Khrushchev are sleeping beside us, the Party committees at all levels must pay full attention to this". So Xu Shiyu and some others asked who the "Khrushchev" was that Chairman Mao said was sleeping beside us, and why wasn't he uncovered? When they asked the Premier, the Premier said that the Chairman was only referring to him in general, that is to say, not specifically. But still, people kept asking questions, saying that the Chairman had said this several times, and now it had officially seen the light of day. And on one occasion the Chairman himself even told us, "If revisionism comes out of the Central Committee, you have to rebel and be like Cai E"<sup>281</sup>. "From these

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<sup>279</sup> This is an established saying which indicates that a person's strength of character is tested in a crisis.

<sup>280</sup> Tao Zhu (1908 – 1969) In 1926, he entered the Huangpu Military Academy, and in the same year he participated in the local military movement in China. From 1929 to 1933, he served successively as Secretary-General and Secretary of the Fujian Provincial Committee of the Communist Party of China. He eventually became a member of the Politburo Standing Committee but was criticised and attacked during the Cultural Revolution, most notably in Yao Wenyuan's 1968 article A Comment on Tao Zhu's Two Books. He died on cancer in 1969.

<sup>281</sup> Cai E (1882- 1916), was a famous politician, military strategist, and democratic revolutionist, an outstanding military leader in the early years of the Republic of China. Cai E did two major things in his life: one was the New Army uprising that overthrew the Qing Dynasty in Yunnan during the Revolution of 1911; the other was four years later, when he actively participated in the defense of the Republic against Yuan Shikai's proclaiming himself emperor.

words, the Chairman must have been referring to something. So they went and asked Liu Shaoqi again. It is said that Liu Shaoqi said that when the Chairman said "a figure like Khrushchev", he was probably referring to Zhu De. Zhu De was "ambitious" and he had opposed Chairman Mao at Jinggang Mountain.

In this way Liu Shaoqi and the others organised a small meeting to criticise Zhu De. Lin Biao, Deng Xiaoping and Chen Yi all attended this meeting. Chen Yi was the harshest, saying that Zhu De was ambitious and dangerous when he was in Jinggang Mountain. When Chen Yi said so, the atmosphere of this meeting became very intense and the fight was fierce. I later heard from Cao Quanfu, Zhu De's military secretary (he was a descendant of the Chairman's mother, the Wen family, and was related to the Chairman), that Kang Keqing complained to him that they fought Zhu De even more than they fought Peng Dehuai on Lushan. It was only a few months later that I heard the Premier talk to me about this.

### **5. Establishment of the "Central Cultural Revolution Group"**

The list of the Central Cultural Revolution Group was finally decided by the Standing Committee of the Central Committee, which met and discussed the matter, and was adopted at the closing meeting of the enlarged meeting of the Central Political Bureau on 26 May 1966. After its adoption by the enlarged meeting of the Politburo, a notice of this list was sent by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China to the whole Party on 28 May 1966.

#### Notice on the List of the Central Cultural Revolutionary Group

The Central Committee has decided to establish a Central Cultural Revolutionary Group under the leadership of the Standing Committee of the Politburo. You are hereby notified of the list of the Central Cultural Revolutionary Group.

Team leader: Chen Boda

Advisor: Kang Sheng

Vice leaders: Jiang Qing, Wang Renzhong, Liu Zhijian, Zhang Chunqiao

Group members: Xie Bengzhong, Yin Da, Wang Li, Guan Feng, Qi Benyu, Mu Xin, Yao Wenyan

Members (four) from the four regions of North China, Northeast China, Northwest China and Southwest China who will participate will be notified when they are confirmed.

Soon afterwards, the Central Committee decided that Guo Yingqiu (Secretary of the New Municipal Committee for Culture and Education in Beijing) in North China, Zheng Jichao (Secretary of the Jilin Provincial Committee for Culture and Education) in the Northeast, Yang Zhilin (First Secretary of the Qinghai Provincial Committee) in the Northwest, and Liu Wenzhen (Head of the Propaganda Department of the Southwest Bureau) in the Southwest would be members of the Central Cultural Revolution Group.

In August 1966, at the 11th Plenary Session of the 8th Central Committee, the Central Committee issued a notice that Tao Zhu was also the advisor of the Central Cultural Revolution Group, and at the end of August it issued a notice [66] No. 439 that Jiang Qing would act as the head of the group while Chen Boda was recuperating from his illness.

## Chapter 4: Chairman Mao's "May 7 Instructions"

1. Emergency flight to Shanghai
2. Hearing Chairman Mao's "May 7 Instructions" in person
3. The great and far-reaching significance of the "May 7th Instruction".

### 1. Emergency flight to Shanghai

On the afternoon of 12 May 1966, Chairman Mao's confidential secretary Xu Yefu<sup>282</sup> called me at Diaoyutai to find me. Xu Yefu told me on the phone that the Chairman had summoned Chen Boda, Yang Chengwu<sup>283</sup> and me on an important matter. I was told to inform them that the three of us had to be in Shanghai early tomorrow morning.

When I received the call from Xu Yefu, I immediately told Chen Boda. Then I called Yang Chengwu again. Yang Chengwu said that he had also received a call from Xu Yefu and had already arranged for a plane. He told me and Chen Boda to go to a military airport on the outskirts of Beijing in the early hours of tomorrow morning and then take a special flight to Shanghai together. At that time we were both used to working at night, so I simply stayed up that night. By about 3 a.m. on May 13, Yang Chengwu called to urge us to leave. Chen Boda and I went to the airport by car to meet Yang Chengwu. We had just boarded the plane when it took off. It was a medium-sized special plane called the Viscount and it flew very steadily. There were small rooms on the plane where you could work and rest. During the flight, I kept wondering what the Chairman had summoned us for on such an urgent basis. At that time, there were rumours of a military coup in Beijing, and this time the acting Chief of General Staff was travelling with us, was it related to a military coup?

After about three hours of flying, we arrived at Hongqiao Airport in Shanghai. Xu Yefu was already waiting for us at the airport. We got into a three-row car together, with an open car and an escort

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<sup>282</sup> Xu Yefu (1916-1974), a native of Anhui, joined the Red Army of Chinese Workers and Peasants in April 1930, and joined the Communist Party of China in April 1927. At the beginning of 1968, he participated in the "Three Branches and Two Armies" activities. This was the abbreviation for the People's Liberation Army performing the tasks of supporting the Left, supporting agriculture, supporting labor, and military training, and military management during the Cultural Revolution. In more than five years from March 1967 to August 1972, the People's Liberation Army sent more than 2.8 million people to various fronts to carry out the "three branches and two armies" mission. In 1972, he returned to the Secretariat of the Central Office and went to Mao Zedong's side as a confidential secretary. Xu Yefu was a Long March veteran, and he was deeply trusted by Mao Zedong. He and Mao Zedong had a common hobby - smoking. Mao Zedong suffered from bronchitis in his later years. He coughed badly when he smoked. Xu Yefu asked Mao Zedong to try his Sichuan cigar. Mao Zedong looked at the thick and long cigar and smiled and said, "Maybe it's a paper tiger!" When he smoked it, his cough really eased. After that, Mao Zedong switched to Sichuan cigars. In April and May 1973, Xu Yefu was hospitalized due to illness and was in a serious condition. He died in Beijing on June 7, 1974.

<sup>283</sup> Yang Chengwu (1914-2004), joined the revolution in 1929 and joined the Communist Party of China in 1930. At the age of 17, he became the political commissar of a regiment. Later, he served as the political commissar of the 1st Division of the Red 1st Army. Was awarded the rank of general in 1955. In 1958, he participated in the organization and command of the bombardment of Jinmen. In 1959, he participated in the organization of the Tibetan counterinsurgency operations. During the Cultural Revolution, Yang Chengwu was criticised and struggled against. He resumed work at the end of 1974 and served as the first deputy chief of the general staff. He became a supporter of Deng Xiaoping's and Zhang Zemin's capitalist-roader lines.

car in front of and behind our car. In the car, Xu Yefu handed out to us the documents that had been printed. When we opened it, it was a report from the General Logistics Department of the PLA forwarded by Lin Biao to Chairman Mao, and an instruction from Chairman Mao on it, which was written to Lin Biao. We read it in the car.

Chairman Mao arrived in Shanghai from Hangzhou a few days before us, and his instructions to Lin Biao must have been written in Shanghai. As a rule, such documents had to be printed by a special factory that had been vetted. I don't remember any such factory in Hangzhou, but there was one in Shanghai. So the document was printed in Shanghai, or it was sent by plane to Beijing.

## **2. Hearing Chairman Mao's "May 7 Instructions" in person**

Around 7am, we arrived at Building 12 of the Xijiao Hotel, where the Chairman was staying. When we arrived, the Chairman was not yet up. But the Chairman had explained beforehand that we would get him up as soon as we arrived. So Wu Xujun, the head nurse, told us to sit down in the living room first, and then she went to the Chairman's bedroom and knocked on the door to tell him that we had arrived. The living room was not very big, on one side of the living room were two single sofas, opposite a three-person sofa, and next to this three-person sofa was a reclining chair. Yang Chengwu insisted that I sit on the three-person sofa and he himself sat on the chair next to it. I thought he was an old revolutionary and I was a young man, so how could I sit on the sofa and let him sit on the chair? After some concessions, I finally took the chair. After we sat down, we both continued to bury our heads in the papers. A while later we saw the Chairman come out of his bedroom in his pyjamas. We knew that the Chairman usually worked at night and rarely got up so early.

When the Chairman came out, he shook hands with each of us and greeted us. As he shook hands with me, the Chairman said that it had been a long time since I had seen him. The Chairman said this because I had not seen him since the summer of 1964 when I was transferred to work for Red Flag magazine. When I was working in Zhongnanhai, I lived very close to Fengzeyuan and I used to ride my bicycle through the back door of Fengzeyuan on weekdays to go outside for business. Sometimes when I saw the Chairman taking a walk there, I would get off my bike immediately and try to pass quietly by the wall so as not to disturb the Chairman. But whenever the Chairman saw me, he would always raise his hand to greet me. The Chairman also said that the last time we discussed a philosophical issue, we asked the Red Flag to send someone to attend, but you did not come. The Chairman was referring to the autumn of 1964, when he had called some people to give a talk on philosophy. I could tell from the Chairman's words that he probably thought I would be there for that talk on philosophy. But at that time, Chen Boda of Red Flag magazine was asking Wu Jiang and Shao Tiezhen to go there, not me. After greeting everyone the Chairman took a seat on a single sofa, and then patted another single sofa next to him and asked me to sit next to him. As it was the Chairman who asked me to sit, I couldn't push it, so I sat down next to him. It turned out that the chair I was sitting in was angled towards the door of the Chairman's bedroom. When the Chairman came out, I always felt that there was someone else in the bedroom. Sure enough, not long afterwards, Jiang Qing also came out of the bedroom. I immediately got up from the sofa and offered her a seat, but the Chairman gestured with his hand that I should still sit next to him. Jiang Qing then sat down in the chair opposite to where I was sitting.

After I was released from Qincheng, I heard a transmission of a speech by Deng Xiaoping, saying something about how Chairman Mao and Jiang Qing had been living separately since the beginning of the founding of the country, and were in fact divorced. But I saw with my own eyes that in 1966, when he was in Shanghai, he was still living with Jiang Qing. At that time, he was 73 and Jiang Qing was 51. When the country was founded, the Chairman was 56 and Jiang Qing was 34. Jiang Qing lived with the Chairman all the time and they were very close. When the Chairman was living in Diaoyutai, Jiang Qing often lived with him too. It was not until 1967 when I wrote the article "Patriotism or National Betrayal?" I often went from Diaoyutai to Zhongnanhai to look for the Chairman and Jiang Qing, and I still saw her living with the Chairman. Although Jiang Qing usually lived in the 11th building of Diaoyutai and the Chairman lived in the "swimming pool" of Zhongnanhai, Jiang Qing still went back to see the Chairman from time to time.

At that moment, Wu Xujun, the head nurse, brought breakfast to the Chairman. I saw that she was carrying a cup of dairy products, pale yellow in colour. There was also a small plate with a few slices of toasted buns on it. Later, Wu Xujun told me that the dairy product was horse milk, which the Chairman liked to drink, with some cereal. Alas, a glass of muesli and a plate of baked buns was the breakfast of this great historical figure. The breakfast we had just had on the plane was far richer.

The Chairman took a few sips of cereal horse milk and began to speak. He said, "I have come to you today to study the document you are reading in your hands. He went on to say that since time immemorial, mankind has not had any long-term plan for social development, and that there should be a visionary plan for the development of human society, which is what human civilisation is all about. The human civilisation we are talking about is communism. It was conceived by Marx in the light of the development of the modern productive forces, and Marx spoke of some concrete ideas about communism in books such as 'Critique of the Gotha Programme'. Only a communist society is a civilized society. I have talked about Zhang Lu before. Zhang Lu was a peasant leader in the late Eastern Han Dynasty, with the Yellow Turban Party, and he also had some communist ideas, which probably came from the ancient books about the World of Great Harmony<sup>284</sup>, but the ancient books were very vague about the World of Great Harmony, because there were no new productive forces at that time, and it was impossible to concretize this future World. Zhang Lu lived in a time when society had progressed a bit, so Zhang Lu's universal world became more concrete than before. In Zhang Lu there was no money required for medical treatment and no money needed for food, but you could not eat indiscriminately, you could just eat enough. Some people, such as some noblemen and rich people, eat so much and waste so much, it's never good!" The Chairman said, "We have now found a better way than Zhang Lu. This experience summed up by the General Logistics Department of the PLA is the germ of a future communist society, where everyone's division of labour is not so stereotypical, where one job is the mainstay and where development is all-round. Apart from military training, PLA soldiers can also do work and farming, and they can also learn about culture and develop their artistic talents. The work of the workers should not be so intense, they should not work all day long, they should combine labour and study, there should be division of labour and cooperation. Those who are leaders must also work, regularly, to mingle with everyone. A little difference in distribution is allowed, but not too much, so that you don't make it special and become a special class." I noticed that although the Chairman had previously spoken of a privileged class of bureaucrats, this time he was still talking about a special stratum. Then the Chairman said,

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<sup>284</sup> An ancient book depicting an ideal world where everyone is virtuous, everyone respects the elderly, everyone loves the young, there is no unevenness, and no one is full of warmth.

"Comrade Lin Biao has a report coming over and I have written a few sentences for him, so please come and revise it together." The Chairman asked what we had to say after reading the document.

Chen Boda spoke first. Chen Boda was indeed politically astute. He said that he had just got the document and although he was reading it for the first time, he felt that this instruction from the Chairman was very important. He said that we had explored the mode of transition to communism during the Great Leap Forward. This is a new exploration, and the Chairman's instruction this time is very clear and feasible. He said that the "half-work and half-study" programme advocated not long ago was also a kind of exploration, but it was like working and studying, and did not go as high as the communist ideal. The communist transition in the Chayashan People's Commune in Henan Province was too complicated and not very feasible. Chen Boda's words reminded me that in 1958 the Chairman had asked him and Zhang Chunqiao to go and see the communist transition in the Henan's Chayashan Commune, but when they returned they were not very positive about Chayashan. They only said that the commune secretary was quite a braggart and had obvious reservations. Had they not held this attitude at the time, I am afraid that they would have earlier on promoted Chayashan. Chen Boda went on to say that the concept of Chayashan was not as good as the Chairman's instruction. The Chairman's instruction pointed out how to achieve the all-round development of man under the present conditions of production, and was fully in line with Marx's theory of the all-round development of man under the new system. In all fairness, although Chen Boda was a ponderous thinker in his early years and could not stand the test in the severe struggles after joining the Party (e.g. the Lin Biao affair), his theoretical level, especially his philosophical level, was much higher than the average person's.

After Chen Boda finished speaking, Yang Chengwu spoke. Yang Chengwu did not speak much about theoretical things, but only about specific issues. He said, having troops engaged in production is very meaningful, and according to this, we no longer have to direct food to the military, which is very meaningful for war preparation. This is when the Chairman interjected, I have always advocated the army be self-sufficient in relation to food. Yang Chengwu then said, for soldiers to learn culture is good, that the army's cultural level could be improved, that the troops currently lack culture, and can grow food and learn about culture. This is good. He also said that there was a unit in the northeast that was doing even better than what was reported by the General Logistics Department. Upon hearing this, the Chairman asked him to bring the materials to him for inspection. He replied that it had already been sent up, but it might not have reached the Chairman yet.

I was next to speak. I had read a bit of scientific socialist theory when I was young. Moreover, I had copied all of the Chairman's criticisms in Zhang Lu's biography and read them so many times that I could recite some of the words by heart. So, I started with the Chairman's criticism of Zhang Lu's biography, saying that Zhang Lu started the Five Dou Mi religion and set up a "righteous house", where the poor people went to eat for free and were well-fed; he used herbs and charms to cure illnesses for free. Charms were superstition, but sometimes they could also cure the sick, because they were a form of psychotherapy, or at least they gave the patient confidence to fight the disease. When I said that Zhang Lu "did not have any permanent officials" in the area he ruled, and that "they were all ruled by sacrifices and wine", the Chairman interjected: "That is, there were no officials, but people elected by the public to run the various local affairs." Then I talked about how when I was working at the Erqi Locomotive Factory in Changxindian, I saw that there was a lot of land right next to the factory, and if it could also be used for agriculture, then the workers' lives would be greatly improved. As I listened to Yang Chengwu talk about learning culture in warfare, I thought to myself that the Chairman's instructions did not just say that the soldiers should learn culture, but also that the bourgeoisie should be criticised. I said that the other day I had just been to the "Good Eight

Companies on the Nanjing Road" to experience life, and I didn't expect that our soldiers would be able to criticise Hai Rui Dismissed from Office. I thought those ancient things might not be clear to the military, but I didn't know that the soldiers were well aware of them. The Chairman listened attentively to what I said about the soldiers, and then he asked, "Could it be that they knew you were going and their instructor had invited someone to come and lecture to them beforehand and make some preparations?" I said, "I don't know about that, but some of the issues raised by the soldiers were very good, even better than the article I had written. For example, the soldiers said that the "clean officials" were also oppressing the people, and some of the "clean officials" were oppressing the people even more. Because the "Qing officials" had popularity and were supported by the people, they were often more carefree and cruel in suppressing peasant uprisings, killing them as soon as they came, more vicious than corrupt officials." The Chairman said, "Yes! Zeng Guofan was such a great killer that Fan Lao (Wenlan)<sup>285</sup> said that the common people called him "Zeng the head shaver". The Chairman also said that the book "The Travels of the Old and Disabled" also talks about "Qing officials" killing people. He said that the red tops of the "Qing officials" were dyed with blood. At this point, Chen Boda added that the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom's Hong Xiuquan's Tianchao Tianmu System<sup>286</sup> and Kang Youwei's Book of Great Harmony were not given the same approval by the Chairman. The Chairman then said that the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom had ideals at first, but after setting its capital in Nanjing, its upper echelons soon became corrupt and the leaders themselves became the rulers of the new dynasty, so why would they still be serious about the Tian Chao Tian Mu System? "We have asked everyone to criticise the bourgeoisie in order to prevent the creation of a new bourgeoisie again. Although the Communist Party is the vanguard of the proletariat, if it is detached from the masses and does not continue with the revolution, or even becomes corrupt and turns to oppress the people, then the people will still rise up in revolt, and there will still be Chen Sheng and Wu Guang and Wagang Zhai<sup>287</sup>."

I went on to say, following the words of the Chairman and Chen Boda, that the Chairman's vision was quite good. People should not keep doing the same work day in and day out, but learn while working, those who learn to work can learn to farm, those who learn to farm can learn to work, and also learn culture and criticise the bourgeoisie, then people can be developed in all aspects. If

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<sup>285</sup> Fan Wenlan (1893-1969), was one of the pioneers of Marxist historiography and is known as the "master of new historiography." In 1917, he graduated from the Peking University Liberal Arts Department. In the following 20 years, he served as a professor at Peking University, Beijing Normal University, Henan University and other universities. In 1939, he joined the Communist Party of China, and went to Yan'an the following year as the director of the History Research Office of the Central Marxist-Leninist Academy of the Communist Party of China. After the founding of the People's Republic of China, Fan Wenlan served as the director of the Institute of Modern Chinese History of the Chinese Academy of Sciences, and was a member of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress, a member of the Standing Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, and was elected a member of the Ninth Central Committee of the Communist Party of China in 1969. He died the same year. Although they were both born in 1893, Mao referred to Fan Wenlan as Fan Lao, the word "lao" ("old") coming after his surname showing great veneration.

<sup>286</sup> This was the "Celestial field system, The Land System of the Heavenly Kingdom" a programmatic document issued during the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom period. It is based on the idea of equality with all land and wealth belonging to the emperor. It proclaimed that food, money, and land should be equally divided, that men and women should be equal, and abolished feudal marriage customs. Although it was promulgated many times in the occupied areas of the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom, the regulations for the equal division of land were not been implemented.

<sup>287</sup> The Chen Sheng and Wu Guang Uprising fired the first shot of the peasant uprising in the end of Qin Dynasty, opened the prelude to the demise of the Qin Dynasty, and became the first large-scale peasant uprising in Chinese history. The Wagangzhai Uprising was a peasant uprising that occurred in the last years of the Sui Dynasty. It occurred over seven or eight years, mobilized millions of people, and greatly contributed to the struggle to overthrow the Sui Dynasty.

factories, communes, institutions and schools could all follow this vision of Chairman Mao, then this society would become more and more ideal. I feel that Chairman Mao's vision of society is better than Tao Yuanming's "Peach Blossom Garden"<sup>288</sup> and Kang Youwei's "Book of Great Harmony". Moreover, it was feasible, for at least it had been realised among our PLA troops.

The Chairman smiled at this and said to me, "You are a young person, you may be able to see the dawn of a communist society if you carry out the spirit of constant revolution and carry it through to the end."

The Chairman was very interested in the conversation that day. Jiang Qing didn't say much, but mainly the Chairman spoke. Whenever the Chairman was present, Jiang Qing usually did not speak much, but listened respectfully, and it was the same that day. I took a brief note of the Chairman's speech, which was later taken away by Wang Dongxing and the others. I asked for it several times, but it has not been returned to me so far. Because I often thought back to this speech of the Chairman when I was in Qincheng prison, I can still remember some of it, but that is all. There may be some misremembering of Chen Boda's and Yang Chengwu's talks, as I have a shortcoming of remembering more of myself and less of others. You can refer to their own recollections of their conversations.

When it was time for lunch, the Chairman asked us to revise the document in the afternoon to see what else we could add, and then submit it to the enlarged meeting of the Central Political Bureau for discussion, and after it was approved, send it out as a central document.

After lunch, the three of us sat down together to discuss the Chairman's speech and the document. We didn't make any changes to the Chairman's instructions, only minor changes to individual words and punctuation in the General Logistics Department's report, and then we discussed drafting a text for a central circular.

At such times, Chen Boda was often the most energetic, and he drafted them himself. Tian Jiaying once told me that whenever something was written to the Chairman, Chen Boda must write it himself, so that the Chairman could see that it was his handwriting and know that he had written it. On that day, Yang Chengwu and I were just participating in the discussion and letting Chen Boda write it. I remember that Yang Chengwu and I only made one comment, that is, we added a paragraph at the end of the original manuscript, saying that the Chairman's instruction was of strategic importance to anti-imperialism, anti-revisionism and the strengthening of national defence preparedness, which was adopted by Chen Boda and later written in the central document.

The Premier also arrived in Shanghai that day and stayed at the Jinjiang Hotel as well. That evening, Cao Diqu and Wei Wenbo invited the Premier to join us for dinner. The Premier said he had to go to the Chairman's place after dinner, and Chen Boda asked the Premier to take the things we had written to the Chairman. At this time, the Premier told me and asked me to go to the balcony on the top floor of the Jinjiang Hotel to get some fresh air the next morning. I went there the next morning after 7am. To my surprise, the Premier was already waiting there. I said, "I'm late and I've become a sleepy little Zhang Liang<sup>289</sup>." The Premier smiled at me and he chatted with me for a few minutes

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<sup>288</sup> "The Peach Blossom Garden" is one of the representative works of Tao Yuanming, a writer of Eastern Jin Dynasty. Through the description of the peaceful, happy, free and equal life of the Peach Blossom Garden, the author expresses his ideal of pursuing a better life and his dissatisfaction with the real life at that time.

<sup>289</sup> Zhang Liang (?-186) was a founding hero and politician of the Western Han Dynasty. He lived in the south of today's Jiangsu province as a child. According to legend, he met an old man on a bridge who threw his own shoes into the river, and then asked Zhang Liang to retrieve them. When he did, the old man again threw his shoes in, and Zhang Liang again retrieved them and placed them on the old man's feet. The old man told the

before asking me about my family situation and work experience. Then the Premier told me seriously that during the discussion on the issue of Li Xiucheng, he had corrected his understanding after reading the 16-word instruction given by the Chairman. He said to me very sincerely that he apologised to me in this matter and that he had approved Zhou Yang's meeting to criticise you. "In fact, I also think your article is well written and has momentum. But they all wanted to criticise it, giving many reasons. I also approved it without studying it properly. Fortunately, the Chairman found out in time, otherwise I would have made a big mistake." I was very moved by what I heard and felt deeply that the Premier was broad-minded and open-minded.

The next day, 14 May, the Chairman's approval came down, saying that what we had written was useable and that we should take it back to Beijing. We took a plane back to Beijing that morning. As soon as we got back to Beijing, Chen Boda immediately reported to the Central Political Bureau, I conveyed it to the Central Cultural Revolution Group, and Yang Chengwu went to report to Lin Biao.

Soon afterwards, on 15 May 1966, the document was unanimously adopted at an enlarged meeting of the Central Political Bureau and formally issued to the whole Party in the name of the CPC Central Committee. Because Chairman Mao gave this instruction on May 7, 1966, it became known as the "May 7 Instruction".

### **3. The great and far-reaching significance of the "May 7th Instruction".**

The reason why the Chairman summoned us to Shanghai so urgently was that an enlarged meeting of the Politburo was being held in Beijing at that time to discuss the May 16 Circular, and the Chairman wanted to bring this document to this meeting for discussion and adoption, and then issue it to the whole Party immediately.

The "May 7th Instruction" was indeed issued as a very important central document at that time. However, as the Central Committee issued the May 16 Circular immediately afterwards, a series of political events took place in Beijing, so that everyone's attention was diverted to other matters.

It was probably in May 1967 that Chen Boda offered to write an editorial or something about the "May 7th Instruction" together with me. I was very much in favour of this. When drafting the outline of the editorial, Chen Boda put forward the concept of the "May 7th Instruction" as a "grand blueprint for the realisation of communism", arguing that the previous idealistic socialism had no concrete plan and that the Chairman's "May 7th Instruction" was a concrete plan, a grand blueprint for realising the communist ideal. I said, "This is a very good formulation and very instructive." Chen Boda said, "Hey, you can still appreciate me." I said, "Of course, you are an old master." So, according to the outline written by Chen Boda, I organized someone to write an article, which was later published as an editorial in the People's Daily. I don't remember whether the article was read by other central leaders before publication, but at least Guan Feng and Wang Li, who were in charge of propaganda, did read it.

In hindsight, we did not understand the importance of the "May 7 Instructions" well enough at that time. At that time, we did not even think about the relationship between Chairman's "May 7 Instructions" and the Cultural Revolution. Only later did we realise that, at the very beginning of the Cultural Revolution, the Chairman had envisaged the kind of society that would be built after the

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boy to meet him just after dawn in three day's time, but the boy was sleepy, and was late, so the instruction was repeated. Only on the third attempt did he get there on time. Then the old man said he was worthy of a special gift -an ancient book on warfare – which he was able to use later on the overthrow the Qin Dynasty.

Cultural Revolution, and that by giving us the "May 7 Instructions" and talking about communism, he was actually showing us the prospects of the Cultural Revolution.

Having worked in Zhongnanhai for so many years and having attended countless meetings, I have rarely heard any leader think as constantly as the Chairman about how to realise the ideals of communism. Liu Shaoqi seldom spoke of communism in general. He did talk about communism during the Great Leap Forward, but when he did, it was all about the separation of men and women into camps, the elimination of the family and so on. However, he later obstructed the co-operative and people's commune movements and advocated the "three freedoms and one guarantee", which is why Chairman Mao said that he had failed to live up to his words. Although the Premier did not talk much about communism, I think he was a communist who believed in and practised it. Chen Boda, who was probably influenced by Chairman Mao, often spoke of communism, but what he practised was personal enjoyment and did not care much about the people. Tao also sometimes spoke of communist ideals, and could bring specific issues to the level of ideals. When the Central Office was under the leadership of Tao Zhu, I had more contact with him and he often chatted with me, talking about reading and ideals, and his attitude was sincere. However, he was in favour of the Cultural Revolution in the abstract and against it in concrete terms, and was extremely protective of some cadres who were corrupt and suppressed the masses. Among other central leaders, and provincial party secretaries, even fewer spoke of ideals, and when they did, it was about concrete work. I had contact with all the local bigwigs, like Li Jingquan and Wei Wenbo, but I never heard them speak of any communist ideals. Perhaps it was because they did not come across the right opportunities.

The Chairman himself attached great importance to the "May 7th Instruction". He was always thinking about how to mobilize people's enthusiasm without widening the gap. At a meeting of the Central Committee, the Chairman asked me how much workers were paid now. I told him that it was about 30 or 40 yuan on average. He said, "Oh, I'm more than 400 yuan, that's a difference of ten times, which is still far from the principles of the Paris Commune. He said to us that there was such a big difference in wages and that this problem had to be studied to see how to solve it. He specifically told me to get someone to look into it and see how it could be solved. I hurriedly got Meng Xiangcai and others from the Department of Philosophy and Social Sciences and organised a team to go and make a research study. Later on, a proposal was also put forward, the main content of which was to lower the wages of the top and increase the wages of the workers. I met him some years ago and he told me that he still had all the materials from the research we had done back then. I remember that the proposal we made was to reduce the wage at the level of Chairman to about three hundred, which would make the difference with the workers only seven or eight times. The Paris Commune proposed a difference of eight times. In fact, ten times should still be more reasonable. As soon as this proposal was put forward, Chen Boda looked at it and opposed it, saying that we could not even live on the basis of such a proposal as yours. Chen Boda was a fourth or fifth class, I can't remember, only a little less than the Chairman. According to the price level at that time and Chen Boda's living expenses, he would indeed be in a situation where he could not make ends meet. So the proposal we studied was subject to further refinement. Then the Cultural Revolution movement underwent a major change and the proposal was put off.

During the Cultural Revolution, the "May 7 Cadre School" was set up in accordance with the "May 7 Instructions". But most people saw it as temporary, and some even saw it as a "cattle shed", a "reform through labour" and a form of political persecution. Few saw it as an effective way to prevent cadres from becoming detached from the masses and from labour, and to prevent the creation of a privileged interest class.

During the Cultural Revolution, the development of industry in the countryside and the development of community enterprises (the forerunner of the later township enterprises) was also based on the "May 7th Instruction". The present Nanjie Village<sup>290</sup> in Henan Province and Huaxi Village in Jiangsu Province were set up in this way, with agriculture, industry and schools.

Half a century has passed since that conversation between the Chairman and us. I myself have reached my twilight years. Back then, the Chairman told me with confidence that it was possible for a young man like me to see the dawn of communism as long as he persisted in the revolution. Unfortunately, what I have seen so far is not the dawn of communism, but only the rampant resurgence of capitalism in many areas, and the ominous signs of US and Japanese imperialism encircling and attempting to evolve and divide China as they did in dismantling the Soviet Union.

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<sup>290</sup> Nanjie Village is one of the top ten famous villages in the country. It is synonymous with collectivist economy, one of the famous red tourist attractions, and a national agricultural tourism demonstration point. From 1981 to 1984, the village trialed China's household responsibility system, where the village's land and factories were privatized, but Nanjie officials reported that such a system resulted in a decline in agricultural output, an increase in crime, and general hostilities in the village. Following the re-collectivisation of Nanjie, the village saw its economy grow exponentially, and the village's government began supplying its villagers with free electricity, food, water, tuition, furnished apartments, healthcare, and life insurance. In 1984, the total output value of village-run enterprises was only 700,000 yuan, and by 1995 it had reached 1.2 billion, achieving a leap in development.

## Chapter 5: Tian Jiaying's Suicide

1. The Story of the Suicide of Tian Jiaying
2. The Bulletin of Pang Xianzhi on Tian Jiaying
3. The Tian Jiaying I Knew

### 1. The Story of the Suicide of Tian Jiaying

At the same time as the enlarged meeting of the Central Political Bureau decided to set up a special task force to examine the issues of Peng, Luo, Lu and Yang, the Central Committee decided to set up a special group consisting of An Ziwen<sup>291</sup>, Wang Li and myself to examine the issue of Tian Jiaying. The Premier asked me to go to Xie Fuzhi, the Minister of Public Security, and ask him to cooperate with our three-member team. This was the first time I had dealt with Xie Fuzhi. After I had gone to the Ministry of Public Security to talk to Xie Fuzhi about my work, he warmly invited me to his home for lunch.

On the morning of 21 May 1966, An Ziwen called to inform me that I should meet him and Wang Li at the Organization Department of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China at 2.30 p.m. and then go together to Zhongnanhai to talk to Tian Jiaying. After receiving the call from An Ziwen, I spoke to Wang Dongxing to inform him of the situation. Wang Dongxing said that he would inform the gatekeeper to give Minister An clearance and that he could be approached again if there were any problems after the conversation. When I arrived at the Organisation Department, Wang Li was already there. An Ziwen said that the Premier had explained that he would talk to Tian Jiaying immediately and that he should be suspended from his post for some introspection, and that you should take over his work. Don't make any mistakes, especially with Chairman Mao's manuscripts. At that time, An Ziwen's prestige was very high, and he was a man of his word.

Tian Jiaying lived in Zhongnanhai Yongfu Hall, which was originally the Marshal's residence where Peng Dehuai lived. When we arrived there, only Tian Jiaying's wife Dong Bian was there, she told us that Jiaying had gone out with Secretary Pang (Xianzhi) and would be back later. Dong Bian was an old subordinate of An Ziwen and they knew each other very well, so she offered us tea and we sat down and waited. A little later Tian Jiaying and Pang came back, Tian Jiaying looked at the three of

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<sup>291</sup> An Ziwen (1909-1980) joined Communist Youth League in 1925. He joined Party December 1927. After the victory of the Anti-Japanese War, in August 1945, he was appointed as the head of education of the Party School of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China. From October, he served as Deputy Minister of the Organization Department of the CPC Central Committee. An Ziwen firmly opposed Gao Gang and Jao Shushi's separatist activities. After the Eighth National Congress of the Communist Party of China in September 1956, he served as the head of the Organization Department of the Central Committee. During the Cultural Revolution, An Ziwen was attacked as one of the "Sixty-one Traitors" (he had been jailed four time by the Guomindang.) In 1967, Kang Sheng allegedly demanded that he should produce evidence that Liu Shaoqi had been a traitor. He was arrested and imprisoned in January 1968 and sent to Qincheng Prison where Kang Sheng made two more attempts to obtain evidence from him against Liu Shaoqi. In May 1975, he was transferred to Huainan City, Anhui Province; in December 1978, after the Third Plenary Session of the 11th Central Committee, which put China on the road to capitalism, he was rehabilitated. In January 1979, he was appointed as the vice president and deputy secretary of the Party Committee of the Party School of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China.

us, his face showed an anxious expression. On the contrary, An Ziwen acted like the master of the house, invited Tian Jiaying to sit down, and asked Dong Bian and Pang Xianzhi to sit down as well, then said calmly, "Jiaying, you have made a mistake. The central government now decides that you will stop working and will conduct an investigation with immediate effect. Your work will be taken over by Comrade Benyu, and the documents you have on hand, especially the manuscripts of the five volumes of Mao's Selected Works, will be handed over to Comrade Benyu, and the handover formalities will be done later". An Ziwen added, "The size of your problem and how to deal with it will be decided according to the results of your examination and your attitude. You have to trust the Central Committee and the Chairman. Stay at home for the next few days and do not go out". When An Ziwen finished speaking, I asked, "How many of the Chairman's manuscripts do you still have here?" Tian Jiaying said that all the Chairman's manuscripts had been returned to the archives, and he only had a clean copy of the fifth volume of Mao's Selected Works there.

Tian Jiaying asked An Ziwen which areas he should start to examine. An Ziwen said, "Think about yourself first, from the Lushan meeting to now, those mistakes you have made". During the entire conversation, An Ziwen's attitude was calm. He only talked about Tian Jiaying's mistakes and did not talk about exactly what they were, let alone ask Tian Jiaying to move out of Zhongnanhai. Tian Jiaying acted helpless and aggrieved at the time, but was not agitated, let alone saying a word of resentment against Chairman Mao. According to his experience of working in the Central Committee, he knew that no one could suspend him for examination without Chairman Mao's consent. Wang Li, me, Dong Bian and Pang Xianzhi did not say anything. On such an occasion, no one else would have said anything either.

When An Ziwen finished his talk, I spoke to Wang Dongxing on a red machine at Tian Jiaying's residence, informing him of Minister An's talk with Tian Jiaying and asking him to send his confidential staff to assist in the inventory of documents. He immediately sent over Wang Miaoqiong, a confidential officer from the confidential office, and together with Zhang Chun, director of the Political Department Office of the Central Guard Corps, to assist me with the handover. Wang Dongxing himself did not show up. At about four o'clock in the afternoon, Wang Miaoqiong and Zhang Chun arrived, and I explained that they and Pang Xianzhi would count the documents in Tian Jiaying's office together and register them one by one.

Then, An Ziwen and Wang Li went back in separate cars. I also went back to Zhongnanhai A Building after the explanation and approached Wang Dongxing to inform him of the situation and asked him to make corresponding arrangements for the security of Yongfu Hall, the access of personnel and the security of Tian Jiaying. Wang Dongxing smiled at my words and said that these were all his jobs and that he had arranged them long ago. Wang Dongxing also said that he was going to call an emergency meeting in the evening with cadres above the section level of all units in Zhongnanhai to announce the Central Government's decision to suspend Tian Jiaying from his post and reflect on his work. He asked me if I could participate, and I said that I would like to check Tian Jiaying's documents with Wang Miaoqiong and others, as well as various materials in the fifth volume of "Selected Works of Mao". It might not be too late to attend the meeting. He said, do that first and tell me about the meeting later.

At around five or six o'clock, Wang Miaoqiong called to say that the documents at Tian Jiaying's office had been counted and registered. She also said that the documents had been sorted out a long time ago, so they were all very clear and the handover was quick. I asked her to bring back the documents after she had completed the handover procedures with Pang Xianzhi. When I came to work on Monday, I handed over the documents of the Central Government to the Security Office,

handed over the documents of people's letters and visits to me, and deposited the clear samples of the fifth volume of Mao's Selected Works to the A building.

At seven o'clock in the evening, Wang Dongxing convened a meeting of cadres above the section level from various units in Zhongnanhai, announcing that Tian Jiaying had been suspended from his duties for inspection and that he would be replaced by Qi Benyu. Wang Dongxing spoke at the meeting about Tian Jiaying's various mistakes and his various struggles with him, as well as Chairman Mao's criticisms of Tian Jiaying. Some of what Wang Dongxing said was known to me, but much of it was unknown to me, especially what happened during the period when I left Zhongnanhai (1964-1966). I regret that I did not go to this meeting. Ma Zhisun, the wife of Pang Xianzhi, was also a section-level cadre, so she also attended this meeting.

At about eleven o'clock late on May 22, Tian Jiaying called me on a red machine and said that he had found some more leftover documents that he had forgotten to register and that he wanted to give them to me immediately. I said, "Then I will send someone over to register them". He said, "No, you have to come for a while, I want to give you an account in person." I said, "That's fine". So I informed Wang Miaoqiong and asked her to come along to Tian Jiaying's place. Wang Miaoqiong, a diligent girl, was already resting, but when she received my call, she went to Tian Jiaying's place instantly.

My office was only a hundred metres or so away from Yongfu Hall and I arrived in a few moments. When Tian Jiaying saw me coming, he explained to me about some of the documents left behind. As the documents were to be handed over through his secretary, I got up and went out to look for Pang Xianzhi who lived in the east wing of Yongfu Hall. Seeing this opportunity, Tian Jiaying immediately followed me over, and as he walked around the corner to the bathroom, he asked me nervously what had happened and who was causing him harm. This move of his was against discipline. He dared to do this because the two of us had, after all, had a relationship of many years. At this point, I couldn't tell him what was going on, so I could only say to him, "Minister An told you very clearly this afternoon, did you have ears?" I said this while pulling my own ears. He understood and knew I was talking about Chen Boda. In fact, the Central Committee decided to review Tian Jiaying at this time, and it is true that Chen Boda wrote a report to Chairman Mao.

After the Cultural Revolution, Tian Jiaying's wife Dong Bian wrote that late at night after An Ziwen's talk, Qi Benyu called and asked Tian Jiaying to come to his office to sign a document in a very aggressive manner. Tian Jiaying slammed the phone, refused to go and sign, and scolded Qi Benyu, among other things. These nonsensical stories, which resemble fiction, are entertaining, but they are completely untrue. In fact, the phone call was not from me to Tian Jiaying, but from Tian Jiaying to me about the handing over of documents, which was a job given to me by the Central Government, and there was no reason for me to be so aggressive. These signed files should still be there.

On the third day, around ten o'clock in the morning of 23 May 1966, Tian Jiaying's orderly, Xiao Chen, was the first to discover that Tian Jiaying had hanged himself in the west wing of Yongfu Hall. (Tian Jiaying kept all the books that the Chairman did not read much in the west wing of Yongfu Hall, while the books that the Chairman often had to read were kept in the Juxiang Study Hall.) Xiao Chen saw Tian Jiaying's head hanging from a rope bolted between two bookcases, with the door unlocked. Xiao Chen ran to the secretary's office in horror to report. It was a Monday. Wang Xiangqian and Lu Hui, who were on duty in the administrative section, and others darted to Yongfu Hall, where they jumped through the window into the library and hurriedly untied Tian Jiaying and loosened his coat. Lu Hui tried to resuscitate him with mouth-to-mouth artificial respiration, but in the end it took too long to be able to bring him back to life. They then called the Great Hall of the People to report to Wang Dongxing and I who were attending an expanded meeting of the Central Political Bureau

there. We immediately relayed the report to the presiding officer of the meeting and then rushed over. An Ziwen, Wang Li and others also arrived by car at the news to observe the scene and deal with the aftermath. An Ziwen also asked someone to inform Dong Bian at that time.

After seeing the scene, An Ziwen and Wang Dongxing decided on the spot that people from the Security Bureau would send Tian Jiaying's body to the funeral home, where it was later cremated with the consent of the family. An Ziwen, Wang Dongxing and I respectively reported the situation to the central leadership in Beijing, and to Chairman Mao and Jiang Qing in other locations.

## **2. The Bulletin of Pang Xianzhi on Tian Jiaying**

After Tian Jiaying's suicide, Pang Xianzhi moved out of Zhongnanhai and lived in the Zhongnanhai cadres' dormitory outside the west gate. One night he burned documents in his house and there was smoke all over the room. Then he put the burnt things into the flushing toilet and flushed them down. Because he had burned so much, some of the paper did not burn all the way through, and as a result, the drain was blocked. The sewers in the whole yard in that area were all connected, so that the toilets of other people's houses were also blocked. Immediately someone reported it to the General Office, and upon investigation, it turned out to be caused by the destruction of materials by Pang Xianzhi at home. Wang Dongxing and I immediately went over to look at it. Wang Dongxing told people to dig up the sewers and take out the stuff that had been flushed down. When he took it out, there was a fragment of a note from Chairman Mao asking for a book in the leftover shredded paper. When he was asked what happened, he looked at it and said that it was a note written by Chairman Mao when he asked for the book, and he had torn it up without reading it clearly. The problem of destroying the Chairman's handwriting was quite big. Wang Dongxing immediately asked the Ministry of Public Security to send someone to arrest him. I was a little bit upset because I had been a colleague for many years. I told Wang Dongxing that it would be inappropriate to ask the Ministry of Public Security to arrest him. Wang asked why. I said, "He has had access to a large number of central government secrets and knows too much about too many things. If you take him to the Ministry of Public Security for a trial, it would not be good for him to talk nonsense". Wang Dongxing thought I had a point and said, "Then isolate him and examine him internally".

After Pang Xianzhi was isolated, his attitude was quite good. Wang Dongxing told him to write whatever he liked, and he wrote no less than a hundred pieces of paper before and after. They were all about Tian Jiaying, especially when Tian Jiaying used very rude words in private, especially after drinking, to vent his discontent with Chairman Mao. He said that Tian Jiaying had said that when Chairman Mao died, he would, like Stalin, be placed in a crystal coffin and eventually his body would be burnt and reduced to ashes by posterity. There was also something about how Lord<sup>292</sup> Liu (referring to Liu Shaoqi) had not yet risen up to rebel, etc. He also uncovered many illegal aspects of Tian Jiaying's life. If Tian Jiaying was convicted according to his revelations, then Tian Jiaying's problems would be serious.

Soon after joining the Secretariat office in 1950, Pang Xianzhi became Tian Jiaying's secretary. At that time, he won Tian Jiaying's trust. But when something happened to Tian Jiaying, he exposed and accused Tian Jiaying of insulting him, with tears in his voice, which aroused sympathy. After the end of the Cultural Revolution, he elevated Tian Jiaying to the throne of a sage, saying how Tian Jiaying had trained him and how good his relationship with him was. He even turned around and said that I had falsely accused Tian Jiaying. What an untruthful person.

## **3. The Tian Jiaying I Knew**

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<sup>292</sup> The Chinese word "Gong" doesn't exactly translate as "Lord" (some dictionaries give "Duke" as an English equivalent). It is an honorific used to show a degree of reverence and awe for an elderly person.

Before I joined Zhongnanhai, I had listened to Tian Jiaying's reports on Party history at the Central Mission School, and for a long time after I joined Zhongnanhai, he had been my direct leader. From reading newspapers and handling letters for Chairman Mao, to managing books for him, up to taking part in the editing of the proofreading of Mao's Selected Works, it was Tian Jiaying who asked me to do it all. He taught me a lot. I have always been grateful to him. At that time, I felt that he was very affectionate towards Chairman Mao. In particular, when he was editing volumes I, II and III of Selected Works of Mao, he worked very diligently, was very conscientious and responsible, and refused to let go of even the smallest detail. It can be said that in the matter of editing Selected Works of Mao, his was a great contribution.

He was also a favourite of Chairman Mao, and when he drafted the closing speech for the "Eighth Congress" in 1956, based on Chairman Mao's dictation, he was appreciated by Chairman Mao, who praised him whenever he met him, and this was a time when he was very pleased with himself. Tian Jiaying had one great virtue: even when something went wrong at work, he never shifted the blame onto others, unlike Chen Boda, and never blamed his peers or subordinates. He was a gentleman in this respect. Even when he criticised people, he did so in a measured manner, unlike another leader in the secretary's office, He Zai, who was so official and so casual in lecturing others. It is just that he was an overly sensitive person and not very temperamental. Our colleagues in the secretary's office generally had a good relationship with him. He was also very easy-going with us. He was sympathetic to and supportive of those of us who were branded as anti-Party groups at the time of the "Eight Secretaries Incident". In this situation, he was still not at ease. When the enlarged meeting of the Political Bureau was held, he would not let the Li Gongchuo and I go up to speak, for fear that we would criticize Yang Shangkun too much, but arranged for Zhu Gu, who was more moderate, to speak.

Yang Shangkun had repeatedly proposed that the work of the Secretariat office should be reported to him first, and then he should report to the Chairman. Tian Jiaying knew that the Chairman attached great importance to the independence of the Secretariat office and had always asked Tian Jiaying to report directly to him. So, Tian Jiaying sat on the fence and did not dare to offend Yang Shangkun.

However, he knew that Yang Shangkun, the head of the Central Office, was harbouring He Zai, the head of the secretary's office, and that he supported He Zai in his fierce fight against the "Eight Secretaries", but after the Chairman had vindicated the Eight Secretaries, he did not allow us to offer any opinions on Yang Shangkun. It was only later that I learnt that this was because his brother's involvement in the Juntong<sup>293</sup> and his own life style had fallen into the hands of Yang Shangkun. Therefore, when the Chairman himself supported the "Eight Secretaries" and wanted to hold a meeting to criticise the leaders of the Central Office for supporting the right and opposing the left, Tian Jiaying came to us and said that your denunciation should stop at the Party Committee of the Central Committee and the representative I sent by the Central Office, Wang Gang, and should never involve "Old Lord Ling" (meaning Yang Shangkun).

In the autumn of 1950, he was severely criticised by the Chairman for not sending him the letter that the Shijingshan workers had sent to him to demand a solution to their livelihood difficulties. This incident irritated him greatly. When he came back, he drank and complained in front of me. Tian Jiaying was an alcoholic. His biggest problem with me was that I could not drink with him, and I really

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<sup>293</sup> The Juntong is short for the Bureau of Investigation and Statistics of the Military Council, one of the Guomindang's huge secret service agencies.

had no interest in drinking. I reckon that many of the things he said that were later uncovered by PANG Prophet were probably said after he had been drinking. There were also many wrongdoings that he did after he had been drinking.

Tian Jiaying was promoted by Yang Shangkun and Deng Xiaoping to be the deputy director of the General Office of the Central Government, so he always felt grateful to Yang Shangkun and Deng Xiaoping. He said to me, "Yang and Deng thought of me". In 1958, during the Great Leap Forward, Deng Xiaoping took Tian Jiaying with him when he went to the northeast to inspect his work. Tian Jiaying was bitten by a poisonous insect in the Daxinganling Mountains and his whole arm swelled up. Deng Xiaoping ordered the provincial hospital to do whatever it took to heal him. He kept this incident in mind as well.

However, during the Great Leap Forward, he did not follow Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping in their boasting and exaggeration. He even told me in private that although Deng Xiaoping was also born in the countryside, he had never done any farm work at all and did not know anything about agriculture. The family of Lord Liu (Liu Shaoqi) was in the countryside, but they also did not work and did not know anything about agriculture, which is why they engaged in pompous boasting and believed in the 10,000 catties of grain. Lord Mao grew up talking farming talk, so he didn't believe in ten thousand catties of grain.

Tian Jiaying was firmly opposed to the "boasting and exaggeration" in 1958. The Chairman sent him, Chen Boda and Hu Qiaomu to various rural areas to conduct surveys. They found out the real situation down there, put forward their opinions and reported to the Chairman. For this reason, they also received resentment and cold treatment from various local bigwigs. Tian Jiaying had strong opinions towards some central and local bigwigs such as Tan Zhenlin, Ke Qingshi, Li Jingquan, Tao Zhu and Wang Renzhong. In 1958 he led me and some colleagues from the Secretariat to plant experimental fields in Sichuan. At the Lushan meeting, he presented the report we had written on the truth about grain production in Xinfan County, Sichuan to the Chairman, causing Li Jingquan to be criticised by the Chairman. Li Jingquan was not convinced and sent his own people to make a review. If Luo Shifa, a model worker in Sichuan, had not resisted the pressure and insisted on telling the truth, Tian Jiaying and I would have been branded as "right-leaning opportunists" and even accused of "deceiving Chairman Mao".

Because of this, he, Chen Boda and Hu Qiaomu supported Peng Dehuai at the Lushan meeting for a reason. However, he was later exposed by Li Rui, who added vinegar to some of the things they said in private and gave an account to the Chairman. So, when the meeting turned to criticise Peng Dehuai, they were almost caught up in it. Thanks to the Chairman's protection of them, saying that "Xiucui is one of us", he got through. After coming down from Lushan, he, along with Chen Boda and Hu Qiaomu, all announced that they had since cut ties with Li Rui. Tian Jiaying even gnashed his teeth in front of us, berating Li Rui as a "despicable and shameless villain" and declaring that he had "severed all ties with him".

After the Lushan Conference, Tian Jiaying once told me that he did not know beforehand that Peng Dehuai had ulterior motives and that he had fallen for Peng Dehuai's trick. He was grateful that Chairman Mao had protected him. When he conveyed the spirit of the Lushan Conference instructions to the Secretariat and gave us a report, he was fierce in his criticism of Peng Dehuai, bluntly accusing him of being anti-Party, and I still have the record of that report.

In June 1962, when the "going-it-alone wind" was blowing, Tian Jiaying returned from a survey in Hunan Province and first went to Liu Shaoqi to make a report in support of the "household contract

responsibility system". Liu Shaoqi encouraged and supported his views and asked him to suggest to the Chairman that the reform of the "household contract responsibility system" be implemented throughout the country. After accepting Liu Shaoqi's instructions, Tian Jiaying went back to Chairman Mao, where he proposed to him to implement the reform in accordance with Liu Shaoqi's advice, and was criticised by the Chairman. Later on, the Chairman asked him whether he was the one who told you to say this or who told you to say it. In fact, the Chairman was so clear about all this that he only gave him a chance to extricate himself from this awkward situation. However, Tian Jiaying insisted that it was his own opinion and that he had not been asked to come. The Chairman stopped believing him from then on, and seldom sought him out. Since then, Tian Jiaying had been in a very low mood.

After Tian Jiaying's suicide, his wife, Dong Bian, told the leaders of the All-China Women's Federation, where she worked, that Tian Jiaying had been wronged and that Liu Shaoqi had asked him to speak to the Chairman about the "household contract responsibility system". Why are these people not speaking out now? She also said that Tian Jiaying took the blame for the incident on himself to protect the unity of the Central Committee.

The All-China Women's Federation leaders reported the situation to An Ziwen. An Ziwen immediately got Dong Bian to come and also called Wang Li and me to join him. An Ziwen said to Dong Bian, "When Tian Jiaying went wrong, we could have isolated you and interrogated you as well, as a matter of course. Now we have been very lenient with you. If you still want to talk nonsense and attack the central leadership, you will be responsible for the consequences. Dong Bian was terrified and did not dare to say anything else from then on. An Ziwen was so old-fashioned that he asked Wang Li and I to be there together, which was a way of showing Dong Bian that this was not his personal opinion, but that he was representing the central leadership. Wang Li and I did not say a word at that time.

However, Dong Bian said that Tian Jiaying had suffered on behalf of Liu Shaoqi for the sake of the unity of the Party Central Committee, a statement I found puzzling at the time. Tian Jiaying was Chairman Mao's secretary, and it was the Chairman who asked him to go to the Hunan countryside to do research. How could he go to Liu Shaoqi first to make a report and accept Liu Shaoqi's instructions to make any suggestions to the Chairman? Moreover, it was clearly Liu Shaoqi who told him to make suggestions to the Chairman, but when the Chairman asked him, he still did not tell the truth in front of Chairman Mao? How can this be said to uphold the unity among the leaders of the Central Committee? To uphold the unity of the Central Committee, shouldn't one go and persuade Liu Shaoqi to listen to Chairman Mao and consolidate the collective ownership of the people's communes? That was the policy decided by the Central Committee.

Liu Shaoqi's appointment as State President<sup>294</sup> caused a great deal of turmoil in the minds of some people. These were very intelligent people, perhaps including Tian Jiaying. He probably thought that Chairman Mao was old after all and Liu Shaoqi held him in high esteem. This was the same reasoning as Wang Dongxing's later defection to Lin Biao. The difference was that when Wang Dongxing was told by the Chairman to "change his discipline and get out now", (as I was told by colleagues in Zhongnanhai) he fell to his knees on the spot and asked for the Chairman's forgiveness. The Chairman, being a very soft-hearted person, let him stay. However, Tian Jiaying was unwilling to tell the Chairman the truth and admit his mistake, and instead sought his own death.

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<sup>294</sup> Liu was Chairman of the PRC, in effect, its President, from 27 April, 1959 to 31 October, 1968.

After Tian Jiaying's suicide, during a talk about him when the Chairman was also present, I said that Tian Jiaying's mistake was serious, but from what I usually knew about him, he still had feelings for the Chairman. The Chairman did not say anything as he listened. After the meeting, Jiang Qing criticised me, saying that this was petty-bourgeois warmongering on your part. For this reason, I even made a public self-criticism at a later mass meeting of the Secretariat of the Central Secretariat.

When I was arrested, many people, especially Wang Dongxing, said that I was already a diehard member of Tian Jiaying's party at the time of the "Eight Secretaries Incident". At the end of the Cultural Revolution, Tian Jiaying was elevated to hero status by Deng Xiaoping and his men. And I became the chief culprit of Tian Jiaying's persecution. In fact, both are a hundred thousand miles away from the historical truth.

## Chapter 6: The Beginning of the Cultural Revolution Movement

1. From the criticism of the "Three Family Village" to the reorganization of the Beijing Municipal Committee
2. The first big-character poster at Peking University
3. About the editorial of the People's Daily, "Sweeping away all the cow demons and snake spirits"
4. Xu Guangping was appointed to criticize the black line of literature and art in the 1930s

### 1. From the criticism of the "Three Family Village" to the reorganization of the Beijing Municipal Committee

On 11 May 1966, the People's Daily published an article by Yao Wenyuan entitled "Commenting on the reactionary nature of the Three Family Village - <Yanshan Night Talk> <Journal of the Three Family Village>". On the same day, Red Flag, No. 7, 1966, published an article written by me, "Commenting on the bourgeois orientation of Frontline, Beijing Daily and Beijing Evening News". Yao Wenyuan's article was something he had discussed with Jiang Qing and Zhang Chunqiao in Shanghai and was known to the Chairman. My article was discussed with Chen Boda, Kang Sheng, Yin Da, Wang Li and Guan Feng, who were members of the Central Cultural Revolution Group in Beijing. Because it was an important article that appeared in the Red Flag magazine, the discussion was very serious.

During the discussion, Kang Sheng suggested that in order to thoroughly criticize Deng Tuo<sup>295</sup>, I must do so in relation to his history. He said, "You don't know, do you, that Deng Tuo was a traitor". Kang Sheng said, and I heard this from Peng Zhen, that Deng Tuo had been arrested once in history and during his trial, he confessed the internal situation of the Communist Party. Therefore, Kang Sheng said that the phrase "Deng Tuo is a traitor" should be added to my article, and everyone present at the discussion agreed. Kang Sheng also said to me that you should check with Minister An (An Ziwen of the Central Organization Department) about Deng Tuo's defection. So I called An Ziwen on a red machine at Kang Sheng's place, and a secretary surnamed Lu answered the phone; she was a female comrade whom we all knew before. I said, "I would like to ask Minister An for instructions. The editorial board of Red Flag magazine is now discussing an article criticizing Deng Tuo, in which Deng Tuo is to be specified as a traitor. This matter needs to be checked and sealed with you". I also said that this was something that Boda and Kang Sheng had proposed to check. The next day, Secretary

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<sup>295</sup> Deng Tuo (1912-1966), was president and editor-in-chief of "People's Daily". On March 19, 1961, he wrote a column essay on "Yanshan Night Talks" under a pseudonym, in which he made a subtle but sharp criticism of the Great Leap Forward policy. In September, 1962, in collaboration with Wu Han and Liao Moshu, he opened a column "Notes on the Three Family Village" in the "Frontline" magazine. From March 28th to 30th, 1966, Mao Zedong had three conversations with Kang Sheng, Jiang Qing and others in Hangzhou, naming and criticizing "Three Family Village Notes" and "Yanshan Night Talk" as anti-Party and anti-socialist. A series of articles appeared criticising Deng Tuo. On May 11th, Yao Wenyuan published "Comments on the "Three Family Villages"- "The Reactionary Essence of "Yanshan Night Talks" and "Sanjia Village Notes"". A purposeful, planned, and organized offensive against the Party and socialism"; on the same day, Qi Benyu published "A Comment on the bourgeois orientation of Frontline, Beijing Daily and Beijing Evening News ", calling Deng Tuo a traitor. More and more articles criticizing the "Three Villages" appeared and people from all walks of life held rallies to denounce Deng Tuo. In the middle of the night on May 17, 1966, Deng Tuo wrote a suicide note; on May 18, he took sleeping pills and killed himself at the age of 54.

Lu called me and said that Minister An had read the archives and according to the archives, he had confessed to the enemy, so he could be described as a traitor. But it was up to the Central Committee to decide whether to mention this in the critical article. I said that it was up to the Central Committee to ask for advice, thank you for the reminder.

After this draft was finalised and a clear proof was produced, it was signed by Chen Boda. It was then sent directly to Liu Shaoqi, Deng Xiaoping and other leaders of the Central Committee. After it was sent to them, Liu Shaoqi, Deng Xiaoping and other leaders of the Central Committee also circled it. We deliberately added a line under the phrase "Deng Tuo is a traitor", and they did not raise any objection. When the samples were returned, I asked, "Do we still need to consult the Chairman?" Chen Boda and Kang Sheng both said, "No, there's need to". An Ziwen agreed, and Comrades Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping also read it and had no comments, so it was passed.

I had no doubts about Deng Tuo's defection at the time. Because that time when Guan Feng and I were at Peng Zhen's house, we talked about Deng Tuo's articles. We both said that Deng Tuo's articles were not well written. Peng Zhen then whispered to us that Deng Tuo had defected before, only that he had not caused any great harm to the Party. Originally he was to be elected as a member of the Central Committee at the 8th Congress, but it was he himself who wrote a letter to the Central Committee saying that he had problems in history and could not be a member of the Central Committee.

In fact, I had a good impression of Deng Tuo at first. When I took part in the proofreading of Mao's Selected Works, I knew that during the Anti-Japanese War, Deng Tuo had presided over the editing of one of the earliest editions of Mao's Selected Works in the Jinchaji border area. The later northeastern edition of Mao's Selected Works was mainly expanded on the basis of the Jinchaji edition of Mao's Selected Works.

I agreed and disagreed with some of Deng Tuo's and Wu Han's and Liao Mosha's satirical articles on reality published in Beijing Daily and Frontline magazine. And had long written articles criticising them (they were published in the then Guangming Daily). They weren't just whining, in some places they could be described as attacks on the Party and Chairman Mao, and they went very far. Deng Tuo was the chief editor of the People's Daily during the Great Leap Forward, and he was responsible for the large number of "satellite" and "fake high yield" news and reports published in the People's Daily. Of course, Deng Xiaoping, who was in charge of the People's Daily at the time, was also responsible. Chairman Mao had long criticised Deng Tuo for running the newspaper as a "dead man" and had him removed as editor-in-chief. This may also have caused him to resent Chairman Mao.

Deng Tuo committed suicide in the early hours of May 18, 1966. When I heard the news, I immediately thought, "Did he commit suicide because he was agitated by seeing my article on 11 May?" This may have been a factor. But I later learned that he had already written something very long before this article was published, indicating that he was going to commit suicide.

After the Cultural Revolution was negated, the trial court in charge of my special case, when preparing for my trial, also made my article naming Deng Tuo a traitor, a charge against me as the reason for Deng Tuo's suicide. I told them, "You can ask An Ziwen about this matter". When they asked, An Ziwen said: "There is such a thing, Qi Benyu came to ask us about it, and we told him that Deng Tuo had betrayed in history. At that time, he also consulted the Central Secretariat", but the trial court later pulled this article from the indictment.

But in my heart of hearts, I am still responsible for Deng Tuo's death. I wrote the article mainly to criticise his mistakes, but the issue of his personal history should have been left to the organisation. My article was not a criticism of his personal history. Moreover, when he confessed, the underground comrades had already been evacuated and no organisational damage had been done. To criticise him in relation to his history, we should have asked Chairman Mao for a final decision.

Once, Zhang Chunqiao talked to me about Deng Tuo. He said that he felt very sorry about Deng Tuo's suicide. When he was running a newspaper in Jinchaji, Deng Tuo was Zhang Chunqiao's leader and had always been very good to him. He said that if he had talked to him first, so that he could prepare his mind and change his thinking, he might not have committed suicide. And after the founding of the country, Jiang Qing and Deng Tuo worked together on several things. She had a good impression of Deng Tuo, and would have agreed to warn him.

As soon as Yao Wenyuan's and my two articles were published, the Central Propaganda Department and the Beijing Municipal Committee were almost paralysed. Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping proposed to the Chairman to reorganise the Beijing Municipal Committee in this regard, and the Chairman agreed. By the end of May, the Beijing Municipal Committee was reorganised, with Li Xuefeng<sup>296</sup> becoming the first secretary of the Municipal Committee and Wu De<sup>297</sup> the second secretary and acting mayor of Beijing. Peng Zhen and Liu Ren were both removed from their posts. Deng Xiaoping recommended to the Chairman that Tao Zhu come to the Central Committee to join the Secretariat and take over the Central Propaganda Department. At the same time, Liu Shaoqi and his men also decided, also with the consent of Chairman Mao, to send Chen Boda with his men to take over the People's Daily and reorganise the party group of the People's Daily.

Students from universities and secondary schools were the most responsive to the criticism of the Three Family Village in the press, posting large-character posters on their campuses, criticising the Three Family Village and uncovering the "gangsters". This was the first wave of the Cultural Revolution movement. On 2 June, after the broadcast of Nie Yuanzi's big-character posters, all universities and secondary schools in the country practically suspended classes, and students and teachers were thrown into the Cultural Revolution movement.

When a mass movement is first set in motion, it is bound to be somewhat blind. The students were full of revolutionary enthusiasm, but most of them did not have a clear idea of what the aims and

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<sup>296</sup> Li Xuefeng (1907- 2003) joined the Communist Party of China in October 1933. In September 1956, he was elected as a member of the Party's Eighth Central Committee and secretary of the Secretariat of the Central Committee. In June 1966, he concurrently served as the first secretary of the Beijing Municipal Party Committee. From January to April 1967, he went to work in Tianjin. From February 1968 to December 1970, he served as the director of the Revolutionary Committee of Hebei Province and the first political commissar of the Hebei Military Region. During the Cultural Revolution, he was criticised and kept under quarantine for 8 years. In June 1983, Li Xuefeng was elected as a member of the Standing Committee of the Sixth National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference. In September 1985, he was by-elected as a member of the Central Advisory Committee at the Party's National Congress.

<sup>297</sup> Wu De (1913-1995) pursued progressive ideas and devoted himself to revolutionary activities while still a student. On behalf of the Hebei Provincial Party Committee, Wu De participated in leading the strike of the Tangshan Kailuan Coal Mine and the strike of the General League of Tangshan City, which had a great influence in the labour movement under the Guomindang. From June 1966 to April 1967, he served as the second secretary of the Beijing Municipal Committee of the Communist Party of China and acting mayor of Beijing. From April 1967 to April 1972, he served as deputy director of the Beijing Municipal Revolutionary Committee. From May 1972 to October 1975, he concurrently served as the political commissar of the Beijing Military Region. From August 1973 to February 1980, he served as a member of the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee.

objectives of the struggle were. Some school leaders, by the way, threw out to the students material about some teachers in the school, who had problems in their history. As a result, the campus was filled with students posting large-character posters of their teachers, following the example of the "Three Family Village" and "Four Family Shop" of their own units, and treating some teachers as "gangsters". Some teachers were criticised, beaten in martial arts violence, and even paraded through the streets for corporal punishment. This was one of the first cases in the Cultural Revolution where the target of struggle was expanded. It was not the newly established Central Cultural Revolution Group that caused this expansion, but mainly the new Beijing Municipal Committee and the local provincial and municipal committees.

## **2. The first big-character poster at Peking University**

On May 25, 1966, a big-character poster was posted at Peking University, drafted by Yang Keming, a teacher in the university's philosophy department, and signed by seven people, including Nie Yuanzi, secretary of the general branch of the philosophy department, entitled "What did Song Shuo, Lu Ping and Peng Peiyun actually do during the Cultural Revolution?" Song Shuo was the head of the University Department of the Beijing Municipal Committee, Lu Ping was the Secretary of the Party Committee of Peking University, and Peng Peiyun was the Deputy Secretary of the Party Committee. The big-character poster exposed the long-standing revisionism of the Peking University Party Committee and its suppression of the mass movement, and called on the revolutionary people to rise up to break the control of revisionism and bring down the revisionists. What was unusual about this poster was that it directed the struggle at the Secretary of the Party Committee of the university and the former Beijing Municipal Committee headed by Peng Zhen, raising the question of "Defend the Party Central Committee! Defend Chairman Mao's Thought! Defend the dictatorship of the proletariat!" ". This direction and slogan were in line with the revolutionary spirit of the Central Committee's May 16th Circular and with Chairman Mao's goal of launching the Cultural Revolution, which was to rectify the capitalist elements within the Party.

When this large-character poster came out, Beijing University came to a boil, and the big-character posters surged like a tidal wave, with the latter wave pushing the former. The big-character posters that followed that day were mostly in support of Nie Yuanzi and the other seven, but later on those against gradually became the majority. Both sides of the argument were in high spirits and the school was effectively in a state of suspension. Seeing this situation, Liu Shaoqi said at a meeting of the Secretariat that there was no way to manage Beijing University, and that if things went on like this, food would be a problem, and that it was all because of Nie Yuanzi's big-character posters, and that the whole school was going to fall into anarchy. However, when I visited Beijing University at that time, I saw that teachers and students were discussing issues or writing big-character posters there, and the canteen was also fine.

In those days, Jiang Qing often talked to me on the phone, asking about the situation at Beijing University. I read to her word for word over the phone the big-character posters written by Nie Yuanzi and seven others. She asked what the attitude of the people in the group (meaning the Central Cultural Revolution Group) was. I said, "We all support it". Jiang Qing asked again, "How do you support it?" I said "No one from the group had spoken out publicly yet because they had not yet discussed it with you. But Cao Yiyao from the group's office team went down there with his people, and they contacted the students extensively and made a public statement of support for the students". But Jiang Qing said that it was not enough for Cao Yiyao to go and she did not know how much information was available. I said that she knew the situation and Kang Sheng had told her about the situation at Beijing University. Jiang Qing was then reassured. Soon afterwards, Cao Yiyao

called me and asked me what attitude should be taken towards Nie Yuanzi's big-character posters. I said, "Of course the Central Cultural Revolution should firmly support the masses' big-character posters, so should you consult Kang Sheng again?" "He was the one who asked me to ask you," Cao Yiyao said. This was because Kang Sheng knew that Jiang Qing and I were in constant telephone contact. At that time, I didn't need to call, Jiang Qing would call me on her own initiative to ask me about the situation, and she did so in great detail.

I never heard Cao Yiyao say that she was the one who went and participated in organizing and planning the writing of this big-character poster. Yang Keming wrote a letter to the Central Cultural Revolution in July 1966, reporting on "How the First Marxist-Leninist Large-character Poster in China at Peking University Was Produced," about how the big-character poster was written. At first, he and Zhang Enci, another teacher in the philosophy department, went to Cao Yiyao to write the big-character poster, and received Cao's support, so Yang Keming wrote the big-character poster. In his letter, Yang Keming also said that he still had the original copy of the large-character poster he had drafted. The journalist we sent to Peking University to work with the "Express Group" also told me that the big-character poster was written by Yang Keming and other young teachers in the philosophy department, and after it was finished, they asked Nie Yuanzi and others to sign it together. At that time, they asked Nie Yuanzi to take the lead in signing the poster because people at that time had a strong sense of organisation and could not break away from the leadership of the Party organisation even if they were to put up a big-character poster about the Party Committee. I am afraid this was also a lesson learnt from the 1957 rectification and anti-rightist struggle. In fact, according to her status, Nie Yuanzi should have belonged to the party in power at that time. Because she herself felt suppressed by Lu Ping and the others, she also rose up to voice her opinion. As a result, everyone took her as a leader. In fact, it was later learned that Nie Yuanzi was originally promoted to General Secretary by Lu Ping with his help. But during the Four Clean-ups Movement at Beijing University, Nie Yuanzi became an activist in the Four Clean-ups Movement, which criticised Lu and others. Peng Zhen protected Lu Ping and suppressed the activists of the Four Clean-ups Movement at Beijing University. On the eve of the Cultural Revolution, Nie Yuanzi, Yang Keming and others were in a situation where they were suppressed and attacked. So, after the end of the Cultural Revolution it turned over again, and Lu Ping hated Nie Yuanzi so much that he took revenge on her.

When this big-character poster was broadcast nationwide, the first person to become famous was Nie Yuanzi. But as it turned out, she was a confused but opportunistic thinker. Any of the other seven people who signed the poster would have been clearer than she was. I think the most ideal person was Zhang Enci, a former teacher in the philosophy department of Peking University, who supported Yang Keming in writing the poster. Before this big-character poster, on May 5, 1966, he had written a letter to Chairman Mao about the problems in the Four Clean-up Campaigns of the Central Propaganda Department, the Beijing Municipal Committee and Beijing University. This letter was shown to Guan Feng, with whom Zhang Enci had collaborated academically and to whom Guan Feng had expressed his strong support. Guan Feng handed the letter to me, and I read it and thought it was profoundly written, so I presented it to Chairman Mao, who learned a great deal about Beijing University from this letter. On 11 May, Chairman Mao gave instructions to issue the letter to the enlarged meeting of the Politburo, changing the title to "Comrade Zhang Enci's Opinions on the "Four Clean-ups" Campaign at Peking University". Chairman Mao instructed: "Comrade Shaoqi should read it and then issue it to the comrades concerned."

Liu Shaoqi was not very concerned at first about the rise of the Beijing University movement. He thought it was directed against Peng Zhen and the old Beijing Municipal Committee. But he still

chaired a meeting of the Central Secretariat on 29 May to discuss how to deal with the student movement. Deng Xiaoping spoke at the meeting, saying that he thought something was wrong with the student movement and that some people were attacking the Party, just like the rightists in 1957. Liu Shaoqi did not say at that time that the students were rightists, he just said that the remarks of some students were no different from those of the rightists. The opinions at the meeting were basically all from their side. Even Chen Boda did not speak much, so we could not say anything. Only the Premier said: "We were a bit radical in the student movement back then, so we should let the students speak and not put big hats on them". The Premier also said specifically that the headmaster he opposed in Tianjin was actually a good person, but our general direction was right, and the headmaster was wrong. To be realistic, the Premier was still taking sides with the students at that time, and it was not easy for him to say that at that time. I can still remember the seriousness of his posture when he said that. Of course, the Premier also said that Lu Ping was a good comrade too!

I reported this to Jiang Qing the same evening. Jiang Qing said that it was better to be the Premier.

Liu Shaoqi also decided to send Li Xuefeng to Beijing University to speak. The content of Li Xuefeng's speech was mainly to differentiate between inside and outside and not to mess around. The basic tone of his speech was to control the activities of the students. In fact, it was difficult to control them, because if you did, you would inevitably divide the students into three, six or nine classes, so that instead of resolving conflicts, they would become more intense. Li Xuefeng had come to Beijing to take over from Peng Zhen. In fact, Chairman Mao was not very happy with Li Xuefeng, who had always followed Liu Shaoqi closely. However, Li Xuefeng was very polite to us in the Cultural Revolution Group, and I had no bad impression of him.

On 27 May, we sent the thirteenth issue of Cultural Revolution Bulletin, which contained Nie Yuanzi's big-character poster, to Chairman Mao in Hangzhou by urgent dispatch. In fact, before this big-character poster by Nie Yuanzi, many big-character posters had been posted in many places, including Marxist-Leninist ones. For example, Wu Chuanqi, a researcher at the Institute of Philosophy, posted a big-character poster on 23 May criticising Yang Shu, Director of the Political Department of the Ministry of Philosophy and Social Sciences, even before Nie Yuanzi and her group wrote it, but it did not make it into the Cultural Revolution Bulletin because it was not very influential. Nie Yuanzi and her group criticized the Central Propaganda Department, the Beijing Municipal Committee and the Party Committee of Beijing University, and the big-character poster was posted in the large dining hall on the campus of Beijing University, so this had a big impact.

After reading this big-character poster, the Chairman gave Kang Sheng and Chen Boda a highly critical instruction at noon on 1 June on the Cultural Revolution Bulletin we submitted as "the first Marxist-Leninist big-character poster in the country": "This article can be broadcast in full by the Xinhua News Agency and published in newspapers all over the country," adding that this was "very necessary and that the reactionary fortress of Beijing University could begin to break down from now on". In the afternoon, the staff around the Chairman transmitted this instruction to Beijing by telephone.

When Nie Yuanzi's big-character poster was broadcast to the whole country that night, it was also to be accompanied by a commentary. I told Chen Boda to ask Wang Li and Guan Feng to draft the commentary together, as they were quick to do so. Chen Boda said, "Yes, yes! I immediately called Wang Li and Guan Feng to inform them to come over, and we quickly wrote the draft, entitled "Hailing a big-character poster of Beijing University". After writing it, we reported it to the Chairman by telephone". The Chairman asked Jiang Qing who had written the commentary in the People's Daily. Jiang Qing asked me, and I said that Guan Feng had written it, and that Chen Boda, Wang Li

and I had discussed it together. On 5 August 1966, when this article was issued at the 11th Plenary Session of the 8th Central Committee, Chairman Mao added a note to the article: "Erroneous leadership that endangers the revolution should not be accepted unconditionally, but resolutely resisted, and during this Cultural Revolution the majority of revolutionary teachers and students and revolutionary cadres have widely resisted erroneous leadership."

On the night of 1 June, the Central People's Radio broadcast the big-character poster by Nie Yuanzi and seven others and the commentary written by Guan Feng, and on 2 June the full text of the poster was published in Beijing and in newspapers across the country, along with the article "Hail a big-character poster from Beijing University" as a commentator in the People's Daily.

Experience had proved that to oppose those in power in the Party who were following the capitalist road, the old method of meeting through the Party's normal organisational system would not work, so Chairman Mao had to find a new way of mobilising the masses from the bottom up to carry out the Cultural Revolution, relying on the revolutionary masses to smash the bureaucratic system controlled by the capitalist-roaders, destroy the old order and establish a new order for the proletariat. As soon as the big-character posters of Nie Yuanzi and others were broadcast to the whole country, they ignited the fire of the Cultural Revolution movement, and this combination of bottom-up and top-down forms of mass struggle began to take shape.

The publication of this big-character poster caused a sensation in all the schools in Beijing, with thousands of big-character posters springing up. A few days later, not only in Beijing, but also in schools and factories all over China, all sorts of big-character posters against the revisionists swept across the country.

At a meeting convened by Chairman Mao in Hangzhou on 10 June 1966, attended by the secretaries of the major regions, he greeted them, saying, "Don't be afraid of disorder; it's not terrible for the rightists to cause trouble. Big-character posters are hitting a wide area and can be differentiated and removed later". He also said that it was imperative to "build up the leftist nucleus in the movement, not to talk about qualifications, rank and prestige, but to rely on the activists who emerged from the movement, to put these people in control of the leadership, and to rely on these people to carry the cultural revolution to the end." This was an important speech by Chairman Mao on the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution.

### **3. About the editorial of the People's Daily, "Sweeping away all the cow demons and snake spirits"**

In the People's Daily of 1 June 1966, an editorial was published on the front page with the title "Sweeping Away All Cow Demons and Snake Spirits"<sup>298</sup>. The editorial was published in accordance with the decision made by the Central Committee under the chairmanship of Liu Shaoqi (with the approval of the Chairman). From that day onwards, Chen Boda led Tang Pingzhu, the former editor-in-chief of the People's Liberation Army newspaper, and other people to form a working group to move into the People's Daily and take over the newspaper.

This editorial was drafted by Chen Boda and was not shown to the rest of the Central Cultural Revolution Group. Nor was it shown to the Chairman. According to the rules of the Central Committee at that time, any editorial of the People's Daily written in accordance with the spirit of

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<sup>298</sup> "Cow demons and snake spirits" is a four-character Chinese phrase originally written by Tang Dynasty poet Du Mu in his preface to a collection of poems by his contemporary, Li He. The phrase is a metaphor for all kinds of bad people and was used on various occasions by Mao from March 1955 on and during the lead up to the Cultural Revolution.

the Central Committee would only need to be approved by the editor-in-chief, but the editorial of the Red Flag magazine had to be approved by the Central Secretariat.

This editorial is not entirely in line with the Chairman's idea of mobilizing the masses for a cultural revolution and focusing the struggle on opposing the capitalist-roaders. By proposing "sweeping away all cow demons and snake spirits" at this time, he was objectively directing the spearhead of the struggle of the mass movement towards the "rich, the landed, the rebellious, the bad and the right", who had already been defeated, which catered to the ideas of those "capitalist-roaders" within the Party. This was exactly what the "capitalist-roaders" in the Party wanted. Therefore, as soon as this editorial was published, some people within the Central Cultural Revolution suggested that the general direction of the campaign was against the capitalist-roaders, and that if the campaign was to sweep away everything, it would mean sweeping away both the old and new reactionaries together, which would make the front too long and the target unclear, and in practice might expand the scope of the fight and thus protect the capitalist-roaders. During the "Four Clean-ups" campaign, although Chairman Mao broke through the resistance of Liu Shaoqi and others, he clearly stipulated in the "Certain Provisions on the Socialist Education Campaign (i.e. Article 23)" that "the focus of this campaign is to rectify those in power within the Party who have taken the capitalist road". However, under Liu Shaoqi's auspices, the "Four Clean-ups" campaign became like the "Anti-Rightist Campaign", in which the spearhead of the struggle was turned on the "landed, rich, rebellious and bad" people who had already been defeated and on the grassroots cadres.

In his memoirs, Chen Boda later reflected that he had committed a grave sin by writing "sweeping away all cow demons and snake spirits". His statement was also specious. Yes, Chairman Mao's letter to Jiang Qing, dated 8 July, also spoke of the need to sweep away "cow demons and snake spirits". It can be seen that the phrase "sweeping away all cow demons and snake spirits" is not wrong in itself. The key question is whether the main direction of the struggle of Chairman Mao's Cultural Revolution was directed at the capitalist-roaders within the Party, or at the class enemies who had been defeated, or even at the masses below. It was precisely this line of disagreement between Chairman Mao and Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping as to whom the Cultural Revolution should direct the main spearhead of the struggle.

#### **4. Xu Guangping was appointed to criticize the black line of literature and art in the 1930s**

In February 1966, at about the same time as Peng Zhen and his group were working on the "February Outline", Jiang Qing organised a symposium in Shanghai for the literary and artistic workers of the army. After the meeting, a "Summary of the Symposium on the Literary and Artistic Work of the Troops, commissioned by Comrade Lin Biao and convened by Comrade Jiang Qing" was issued. This summary was first conveyed to the upper echelons of the Party in March and then issued to the whole Party on 10 April. In early April, when Jiang Qing met with me in Shanghai, she talked about the symposium and how Zhou Yang and his group had persecuted Lu Xun in the 1930s. I had a good relationship with Xu Guangping, and I knew that after the liberation, Zhou Yang and his gang continued to suppress Xu Guangping, while Feng Xuefeng<sup>299</sup> was always protecting and looking

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<sup>299</sup> Feng Xuefeng (1903-1976) was a famous modern poet and literary theorist. He joined the Communist Party of China in 1927. He met Lu Xun in 1928, edited and published the monthly "Grass", and co-edited "Science Art Theory Series" with Lu Xun. In 1929, he participated in the preparation of the Chinese Left-wing Writers' League, and later served as the secretary of the "Left League" party group and the secretary of the Shanghai Cultural Work Committee of the Communist Party of China. After spending some time at Ruijin in the Liberated Area, he took part in the long March. He was arrested by the Guomindang in 1941 and rescued from prison in late November 1942. In 1950, he served as the vice chairman of the Shanghai Federation of Literary and Art

after her. Xu Guangping had a strong opinion against Zhou Yang, but always dared not speak out in anger. Xu Guangping once told me that when Feng Xuefeng was alive, he told her that Zhou Yang was the representative of the Party on the cultural front, and that the old matters should not be mentioned again. Therefore, I told Jiang Qing that Xu Guangping had the biggest problem with Zhou Yang, but did not dare to say anything. Jiang Qing listened and said, "Then let's cheer Xu Guangping up! Bring out Lu Xun's criticism of them for everyone to see". I said, "I can't say anything about this. In front of Xu Guangping, I am a junior and my words can't influence her". I suggested to Jiang Qing, "Why don't you go and talk to her?" "I don't know her very well," Jiang Qing said. I said, "That's okay. I'll go and tell her that Comrade Jiang Qing wants to meet you, and that she wants to ask you some questions and get some information". Jiang Qing said, "That's good, I've wanted to meet her for a long time too". Jiang Qing also talked about the funeral of Lu Xun. She said that many people were carrying Lu Xun's coffin to the funeral, and she was there, walking in front of the crowd of people carrying the coffin, but because she was a woman, she could not join them. "I met Xu Guangping at the memorial service. At that time, Xu Guangping was very thin, her hair was in disarray and her eyes were swollen with tears". I also said that Xu Guangping was getting old, so would it be possible for her son Haiying to accompany her? "You haven't met her son yet, have you? This young man is quite intelligent. Haiying is about the same age as me. He was in radio, and at that time he was working in the Broadcasting Bureau. He listened to his father's teachings and did not become a literary scholar. Lu Xun said that literature could not be inherited and could not rely on bloodlines. He was worried that his son would become an empty-headed literalist if he engaged in literature, and thought it would be better for him to go into technology".

When I said this, Jiang Qing was very happy and said, "Good. Let's meet, let's meet, let's ask them to come together, and you can arrange it".

In mid-May, while attending an enlarged meeting of the Central Political Bureau, I went to Xu Guangping's home and said that Jiang Qing wanted to meet her and asked for her advice, and she was very happy. I said, "Because you are old, Comrade Jiang Qing asked Haiying to accompany you so that you could be taken care of on the way". She said, "What if my son has to go to work?" I said, "It's OK, I'll ask for leave for him".

On the very day of their departure, I called the Broadcasting Authority to find the person in charge. The secretary answered the phone and, thinking at first that it was a call from the public, he blocked the call on the grounds that the leader was busy at work. I said, "My name is Qi Benyu". As soon as he heard that, he rushed to say, "Sorry, I didn't know it was you, I'll get him right away". A moment later, the person in charge came and said, "Are you Comrade Qi Benyu?" I said, "Yes, I need to ask you for leave". He was surprised and asked, "Leave of absence? What kind of leave?" I said, "I'm asking for leave for Comrade Zhou Haiying. Comrades from the Central Committee wanted to send Comrade Xu Guangping to Shanghai, and asked Haiying to accompany his mother to Shanghai". I said that the decision had been made in a hurry, and I was afraid of disturbing his rest last night, so I could not ask him for leave on Zhou's behalf. He said, "No problem, the Central Government has something to do and we should cooperate". I said, "Thank you." The he said, "You are welcome to

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Circles, and the president and editor-in-chief of Lu Xun's publications. In 1954, he was criticized for the research issues of "A Dream of Red Mansions" and for involvement in the "Hu Feng Incident". In 1956, he presided over the editing and annotation of the new edition of "The Complete Works of Lu Xun". In 1967, he was labelled a traitor and sent to a May 7 Cadre School. From 1971 until his death at the start of 1976, he continued to work on the editing of Lu Xun's manuscripts.

come and sit in the broadcasting bureau when you want", and I said I would definitely go when I had time.

To prevent accidents, I also arranged for Chairman Mao's guards to see them off, all the way to put them on the plane, mother and son.

Xu Guangping met Jiang Qing, and their conversation was recalled in writing by both Xu Guangping and Zhou Haiying.

When Xu Guangping returned to Beijing, she called me and said, "I felt it was very sudden. They used to tell me not to be anti-Zhou Yang. Now I am willing to criticise him. But how do I write the article? From what angle to write it? I'm not sure." I said to her, "You can talk about the issue of "defence literature", which is a big issue". She said, "Yes. Jiang Qing also told me that "defence literature" was a big issue". I said, "The "national defence literature" proposed by Zhou Yang and his group sounded like a common slogan, as did the "popular literature of the national revolutionary war" proposed by Lu Xun, but "national defence literature" is the ideology of state power with Chiang Kai-shek as the main subject, and listens to him; "popular literature for a national revolutionary war" was anti-Japanese, the thinking of the common people, and led by the Communist Party. This is a difference in principle.

In the 1930s, most people in our Party agreed with Zhou Yang's 'defence literature' and disagreed with Lu Xun's 'popular literature for a national revolutionary war'. The Communist International also agreed with Zhou Yang's "defence literature". The Guomindang, however, did not accept Lu Xun's "popular literature of the national revolutionary war", saying that if it was written for the masses, it would have a red tinge. The Communist International also considered this slogan inappropriate. Chairman Mao, on the other hand, supported Lu Xun, saying that his slogan was a good one and that the slogan 'literature for national defence' was not good.

I also told her some specific ideas. By that time I had already read Jiang Qing's document "Minutes" and I told her those ideas in the spirit of the "Minutes". Xu Guangping wrote all this down.

It did not take Xu Guangping long to write an article criticising Zhou Yang, entitled "Zhou Yang is not allowed to attack and slander Lu Xun". When she handed in the article, Xu Guangping wrote a letter to me, which I still have. It was lost and later found.

Comrade Qi Benyu.

Recently, I have been reading many newspapers and magazines, and I can't help but feel indignant. I am one of the vice-chairmen of the Federation of Literary and Art Circles, but I don't see any documents published in the cultural sector, so I am not willing to keep quiet. If so, I would be grateful if you could give me a chance to improve what I have written, and I am at your disposal as to where it should be published.

I salute you!

Xu Guangping

66.5.22

Xu Guangping's article was published in the Red Flag magazine. Jiang Qing told me that Chairman Mao had read it and said it was very well written. Chairman Mao also said that Lu Xun had trained a good successor. He taught Jiang Qing to learn well from Xu Guangping.

After I was isolated and censored in January 1968, Jiang Qing mistakenly thought that I had stolen Lu Xun's manuscripts because I had been ordered to go to the Ministry of Culture to take them away and store them in the Central Cultural Revolution's confidential room for protection. Later, everything was cleared up.

After 2000, I can't remember exactly when, Zhou Haiying and Zhou Lingfei came to Shanghai, they invited me to dinner, and there were many other people at the table. Haiying told me that his mother, Xu Guangping, had heard from someone that Lu Xun's manuscript was missing. She was so anxious that she had a heart attack. She wrote a letter to the Central Government. As a result, Jiang Qing almost had you shot. Later on, we found out that you had protected Lu Xun's manuscript according to the instructions of the Central Committee's Cultural Revolution. So, they all felt sorry for you. At the meeting, Zhou Lingfei even said to me solemnly that he would apologise on behalf of their family and vindicate me.

I said that Sister Xu Guangping's anxiety over the protection of Lu Xun's manuscripts was a sign of her loyalty to Mr. Lu Xun, and I still respect her very much. It was normal for you to suspect me because you were confused about the situation. What's more, Jiang Qing was misled by some people's misinformation and made a wrong judgment. It's all in the past, so let's not revisit it.

## Chapter 7: The formation of the Central Cultural Revolution Group and its offices

1. Establishment of the Central Cultural Revolution Group
2. Organisations under the Central Cultural Revolution Group
3. The "Express" and "Cultural Revolution Newsletter" and the "Central Cultural Revolution Reception Station"
4. The Central Cultural Revolution Group's sub-offices

### 1. Establishment of the Central Cultural Revolution Group

The Central Cultural Revolution Group only officially began its work in May 1966, after the enlarged meeting of the Central Political Bureau had adopted it. When I returned to Beijing from Shanghai in early May 1966, I was already based at Diaoyutai, but at this time it was still under the administration of the Protocol Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Because it was originally used to receive foreign guests, the various facilities inside were better, and the food in the restaurant was good, but it was more expensive than both Zhongnanhai and the Great Hall of the People.

The office of the Central Cultural Revolution Group was officially opened in Diaoyutai only after the enlarged meeting of the Central Political Bureau had formally approved the establishment of the Group and the list of its members. At that time, the Central Cultural Revolution occupied seven small buildings in Diaoyutai, and Building 16 was the main office of the Central Cultural Revolution Group.

My office was on the upper floor of Building 16, and Wang Li and Yao Wenyan's offices were also on the same floor as mine. Guan Feng was in Building 15 with Chen Boda as there was quite a lot going on at Red Flag magazine. Kang Sheng had previously lived in Building 8. Jiang Qing lived in Building 11. The Premier also had a small building to spare. Zhang Chunqiao lived in Building 7. Wang Renzhong lived in Building 2. Liu Zhijian and Xie Bengzhong are from the army and they do not live in Diaoyutai. There is another building in Diaoyutai that is the largest. That building was once occupied by Khrushchev during his visit to China, so no one wants to live there and it has been left empty. There is a large living room there and a small film projection room. The Premier and Jiang Qing often used it.

Once the Central Cultural Revolution Group was established, the first thing it needed was to set up an office. At first Chen Boda felt that Mu Xin was very obedient to him, so he proposed that he should be the head of the office, but later he felt that Mu Xin was ineffective, so he planned to make Cao Yi'ou<sup>300</sup> the head instead. But Kang Sheng said that it was not appropriate for her to be the

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<sup>300</sup> Cao Yi'ou (1903-1989) was Kang Sheng's second wife. She joined the CCP in 1926 and married Kang Sheng in 1927; in 1949, she served as the deputy director of the Organization Department of the Shandong Branch of the Communist Party of China. In January 1975, she served as a member of the Standing Committee of the Fourth National People's Congress. In March 1978, she was elected as a member of the Standing Committee of the Fifth National People's Congress. During the Cultural Revolution, she served as the director of Kang Sheng's

director. At this time, I nominated Wang Li to be the director and Cao Yi'ou to be the deputy director, but Cao Yi'ou insisted that I should also join the office. Chen Boda and Jiang Qing agreed, but since I had been working as a secretary in the Central Office, I was actually still in charge of many things there.

The first thing I did on my first day in office was to issue a notice to all provinces and municipalities, central ministries and commissions and all relevant departments, with the approval of the group's leader, Chen Boda, announcing to them the office location, telephone number and contact person of the Central Cultural Revolution. For the military, we only notified some of the main departments and leaders in Beijing, but not those below. In the notices sent out, they were asked to report daily on the situation of the movement in their own regions and departments. This alone kept me busy for a whole day. It was not like today, when you can just click on the computer, but it was tedious to call and send letters unit by unit. But this was a very important matter, and it immediately established a link between the Central Cultural Revolution Group and the various localities and departments.

Two or three days after the notice was sent, the situation was reported from all over the world. The calls and reports were basically all urgent. Most of them were one-sided, saying that the students had messed up the schools and that the cow demons and snake spirits were using the Cultural Revolution movement to oppose the Party leadership.

When we received these reports, we immediately sent someone down to understand the situation. As a result, what we found out was often very different from what was reported by the leaders of provinces, cities, schools and units, and in many cases, the opposite. In fact, in many places, the leaders were suppressing the masses, or even victimizing them. I often spoke directly on the phone with the people I sent down to verify the situation. After we had collected the information and sent reporters to make a preliminary verification, we reported it to Chairman Mao and other central leaders.

The workload was so heavy that I initially transferred staff from the Central General Office and the Marxist-Leninist Institute, and Wang Li also transferred a few people from the Central Federation Department. Later on, when there were still not enough people, the Chairman, Lin Biao and the Premier agreed to transfer some more people from the army and set up a corresponding organization.

## **2. Organisations under the Central Cultural Revolution Group**

An important task of the Central Cultural Revolution Group after its establishment was to provide Chairman Mao and other central leaders with a comprehensive, timely and accurate picture of the Cultural Revolution movement. To do this well, we needed to set up a strong body to work with, so that we could grasp the situation of the movement throughout the country. We first set up a "reporter's station", a "fast reporting team", a "correspondence team" and a "secrecy room". All these efforts were approved and supported by Chen Boda and Jiang Qing and others.

As the Cultural Revolution unfolded rapidly throughout the country, the Cultural Revolution Office was too small an organisation to cope with the growing workload. In order to understand and grasp the dynamics of the movement, more people had to be drawn from all over the country. At first we

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office. After Deng's coup and return to power, on March 6, 1981, she was expelled from the posts of the Beijing People's Congress, the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress, and the member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China.

brought in a group of excellent journalists from the People's Liberation Army newspaper, and later we brought in some excellent journalists from the People's Daily, the Guangming Daily and other major newspapers to join the work. But that was still not enough. Later, with the consent of the Chairman and the Central Committee, Yang Chengwu selected a group of people from the army to come over. Most of these people were active members of the various troops who had studied the writings of Chairman Mao. I then selected them one by one and finally settled on about 40 to 50 people to join the "press station" and "express team". I also selected a divisional cadre, Xu Xuezheng, to manage them. The people who were transferred from various units were all model soldiers and combat heroes, and some of them were regiment-level cadres, so it was necessary to find a person with authority to lead them. Although Xu Xuezheng was only a division-level cadre, he had fought in the war and had been the leader of a model regiment, so he was able to hold them down. Everyone listened to his commands and reported to him on important matters. I was reluctant to use people who were too high in rank, as they were generally not well educated and were very haughty, so they couldn't do much. I discussed with Guan Feng about using Xu Xuezheng. The person who to be in charge of so many people could not just be any person, the person had to be just right.

Wang Li was the head of the office, so he became the leader of the "Express" team.

Later on, the team played a big role in the work. We could quickly find out what was going on in various places, and we could quickly understand and grasp the truth of various emergencies. We can say that it was the eyes and ears of the Central Cultural Revolution Group and its nervous system. We gave all the reporters in the "Express Group" a clear division of labour, which one would go to Sichuan, which one to Shanghai, which one to Yunnan, which one to Guizhou, and which one would stay in Beijing. I also require all members of the Express team, whether in the field or on the inside, to be ready to work overtime at all times. They had to be available 24 hours a day to deal with emergencies. So, as soon as the "Express Report Team" went down, the situation came up from all over the country. And unlike in the past, it often took only two or three hours to get the information from the "Express Team" to the printed material. The efficiency and effectiveness of the work could be said to be similar to the situation during the war and the underground. Generally speaking, as long as the local leaders and later the mass organizations knew that these were people from the Central Cultural Revolution's "Express Group", they would treat the work of the "Express Group" with special seriousness and would give the "Express Group" a lot of assistance.

However, after I was isolated and interrogated in 1968, the work of the "Express Group" was also questioned, and Jiang Qing and her team did not have time to ask specific questions. So I don't know how effective it actually was.

### **3. The "Express" and "Cultural Revolution Newsletter" and the "Central Cultural Revolution Reception Station"**

The fastest speed, the most important issues and the right issues, and then sending the information to the most critical people, these can be said to be the three main characteristics of our work. How can the information reported by the "Express Report Team" be sent to the Chairman and other central leaders in a timely manner? I had originally started the publication "Reports from the Masses" and "Reports on the Situation" in Zhongnanhai, but these two publications had since disappeared. In order to keep the Chairman and the leaders of the Central Committee informed in a timely manner, we then set up the Cultural Revolution Express and the Cultural Revolution Bulletin.

I approached comrades Jin Yaonan and Cheng Lijia to take charge of this matter.

Jin Yaonan, who was nearly 50 years old at the time, was a veteran cadre of the Eighth Route Army during the War of Resistance when they opened up revolutionary bases in Shandong; after the founding of the country, he was a secretary of a local party committee and worked in industry, and was later transferred to the industrial group of the "Rear Building Research Office" in Zhongnanhai. When I was in the "Rear Building" Research Office of the Central Office, I worked with him on a temporary investigation into the starvation of people during the Three Years' Difficulties, so we were very familiar with each other. Jin Yaonan's political level was very high and he was kind, so I got along with him very well. At this time I asked him to help me with my work and to be my secretary. I deferred to him, and although he was much older than me in terms of qualifications, I had to suffer a little for the sake of revolutionary work. He readily accepted, didn't mind, and gave me lots of good ideas in my work. When I went out to speak and what things I should pay attention to, he would help me to keep an eye on them. When the society was engaged in the "smashing the four olds"<sup>301</sup>, a "book burning" fever had risen in some places. He immediately told me that in all political campaigns, Chairman Mao and the Central Committee had never advocated the "burning of books" and that this trend should not grow. So, I went and made a public speech to stop the "book burning" trend. After the Red Guard movement started, some of the situations were very chaotic, and some of the more radical "sons of high cadres" and "sons of revolutionary cadres" were mainly composed of old Red Guards who beat people up, arrested them, raided their homes, and even had some vicious incidents of beating people to death. At this time, he reminded me that I should make a public statement that the Central Government had a policy not to beat, arrest or raid people's homes indiscriminately. "Otherwise, all these things will be blamed on you, because everyone says that the Red Guards were under the command of your Central Cultural Revolution, and people call you 'Marshal Qi'". I said that none of the leaders of the Central Cultural Revolution had ever said that they could beat people up, or had even beaten them up, so how could these people do this? He told me that it was not that simple, and that there must be a complicated background behind these people who were raiding and beating up people indiscriminately. So, I immediately went out and made a clear statement that no one was allowed to raid homes indiscriminately, and no one was allowed to be beaten or arrested.

But once Jiang Qing saw Jin Yaonan when she came to my place, she approached me to ask who this man was. I said it was someone who helped me with my work. She then asked where he came from. I said that he was from the "Rear Building". When Jiang Qing heard this, she said, "There are many people in the "Rear Building" who belong to Liu Shaoqi and Yang Shangkun, can you use them?" I told her that he was a good person, and that he would point out to me many of my work problems in a straightforward manner. Jiang Qing said, "He is so much older than you, are you leading him or is he leading you?" Perhaps Jiang Qing thought I was young and didn't know much about people yet, and wanted me to transfer a younger person who I could manage. She was worried that these older cadres were experienced in political struggle and that a young man like me would not be able to cope with them. I said, "We are all comrades". She said, "If they don't share the same line, they are not comrades, and even if they are called comrades, they are not comrades". In this way, I had to transfer Jin Yaonan to a study class to learn.

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<sup>301</sup> The Four Olds were: Old Ideas, Old Culture, Old Habits, and Old Customs. The term "Four Olds" first appeared on June 1, 1966, in Chen Boda's People's Daily editorial, "Sweep Away All Cow Demon and Snake Spirits", where the Old Things were described as anti-proletarian, "fostered by the exploiting classes, [and to] have poisoned the minds of the people for thousands of years". Too many of the over-enthusiastic Red Guards took the easy path of destroying things rather than the more difficult path of changing people's world outlook.

In 1986, after I was released from Qincheng prison, Jin Yaonan asked someone to bring me a letter arranging to meet me. When we met, he said to me, "You are a good comrade. How I thought of you before is how I still think of you now". When he talked about his transfer back then, he said, "I can't blame you for that, I know it was Jiang Qing's idea". He also said, "You can't blame Jiang Qing either. At that time, Zhongnanhai was full of ears and eyes planted by Yang Shangkun. Who could she trust?"

After Jin Yaonan was transferred, I appointed a young man, Cheng Lijia, to be my assistant. Cheng Lijia was a senior reporter for the Guangming Daily, a very capable person who helped me with a lot of work. I had a premonition before the accident. I thought that all my important documents were entrusted to Cheng Lijia for safekeeping, and if Cheng Lijia was still with me at the time of my accident, then he would definitely be under scrutiny as well. So, I arranged for Cheng Lijia to go back to the newspaper office. I told him, "Your work here is over, you'd better go back to your old unit and join the movement". He was smart enough to see that Jiang Qing was always looking for mistakes in my work at that time. He said, "You are liberating me". I said, "The future is long, as long as I am here, we can still work together in the future". Later on, something did happen to me, and a dozen people from the Central Cultural Revolution Office were censored. Only Cheng Lijia, who had already left the Cultural Revolution Group, escaped disaster. After the end of the Cultural Revolution, he became editor-in-chief of the Economic Daily.

The Cultural Revolution Express and the Cultural Revolution Bulletin were distributed to the leaders of the Central Secretariat and above, and were generally numbered. In some cases, they were sent directly to the Chairman, so they were not numbered and were issued as "temporary supplements". Some of them were even handwritten. Later on, I also ran an "Important Report" in the duty room of the office team to report on important matters that had just happened in the shortest possible time. The scope of this publication was even smaller, some of it was sent to the Chairman alone, sometimes with the addition of Lin Biao, the Premier and Jiang Qing and Chen Boda.

The Chairman always read our Express and Cultural Revolution Bulletin, and had made many instructions on them. If the Chairman had any instructions, we would immediately publish them so that other leaders of the Central Government could also read them quickly. In this way, the Express and the Cultural Revolution Bulletin became an important publication for the leaders of the Central Committee in a very short time. Many leaders gradually became accustomed to our "quickness", and if we were a little late, they would complain that we were slow. Chen Yi loved to read our "Express" and "Bulletin of the Cultural Revolution" and had to get up every day to read them. I remember that once he got up early in the morning and did not see the Express or the Cultural Revolution Bulletin, so he called to ask what was going on. He was relieved to learn that they were on their way to him.

Through the Express Group and the Express and Cultural Revolution Bulletin, the Central Cultural Revolution Group was able to keep abreast not only of developments throughout the country, but also of what was happening at the Central Committee.

As the Cultural Revolution campaign unfolded, the number of letters written to the Central Cultural Revolution by the masses from all over the country also increased at once, and at a very rapid rate. There were more and more petitions and complaints from people all over the country. In order to deal with the masses' letters and visits in a timely manner, I added and expanded many people to the Zhongnanhai Secretarial Office, many of whom were also transferred from the PLA, and I asked Yang Songyou, a PLA cadre of regimental rank, to lead them. We also set up a "Central Cultural Revolution Reception Station" at the west gate of Zhongnanhai to receive petitioners from all over the country. Chairman Mao himself went to this station to meet the people.

#### 4. The Central Cultural Revolution Group's sub-offices

After 1967, the structure of the Central Cultural Revolution Group underwent a restructuring. The division of responsibilities was as follows.

- Office (Wang Li and Qi Benyu were in charge)
- Literary and Art Group (Jiang Qing and Qi Benyu were in charge)
- Propaganda Group (Guan Feng and Wang Li were in charge)
- Theory Group (Guan Feng, Wang Li, Qi Benyu are in charge)
- Reporter Station (Wang Li, Guan Feng, Qi Benyu are in charge)

In March 1967, the office of the Central Cultural Revolution was also transformed into an office team, headed by Wang Guangyu, who was transferred from the Marxist-Leninist Institute. The Office Group was one of the most crucial bodies of the Central Cultural Revolution and it had the Office Group Duty Room.

- Long distance telephone team
- City Telephone Team
- The editorial team of the "Report on Important Matters"
- The conference team and the typing room.

The office also liaises regularly with the press station and the letter and visit team (based in Garden Village).

- Under the letter and visit team there are:
  - The letter and visit team of the Chen Boda Office
  - Letter and visit team of the Jiang (Qing) Office
  - Letter and visit team of the Cultural Revolution Office
  - Editorial team of the Letter and Visit Bulletin

Under the "Reporter Station", there were sub-stations for reporters from various provinces, cities and central organs, a Beijing correspondent team and an editorial team for the Express.

Although the team was under the responsibility of Wang Li, Guan Feng and me, and we had to consult Chen Boda and Jiang Qing on all major issues, Jiang Qing was actually the leader. Jiang Qing stipulated that Guan Feng, me and Wang Li had to go to Jiang Qing once a day in general, and Wang Li attached particular importance to this system. Later on, with the increasing amount of business and Jiang Qing's erratic office hours, it was impossible to go to her every day to report on her work. But Jiang Qing still called us when she had time. In any case, she was the one who took the most responsibility for the work of the Cultural Revolution Office.

As I was also Chairman Mao's secretary, Jiang Qing taught me to go to the Chairman often. But I always thought that if the Chairman wanted to see me, I would go there immediately. If the Chairman did not come to me, then I did not want to be like Wang Dongxing, who ran to the Chairman whenever he had something to do. I am too busy with my own affairs to go to a group regularly. Besides, I had reported some important matters to Jiang Qing, and she would go and talk to the Chairman. If I had changed the way I worked and reported to the Chairman more often, many of the mistakes that happened later could have been avoided.

## Chapter 8: Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping pursue a bourgeois reactionary line

1. Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping presided over the meeting and decided to send a working group
2. The work group controls the students who actively participate in the movement
3. Liu Shaoqi approved the "Bulletin No. 9" and imposed white terror
4. Jiang Qing asked us to support the students

### 1. Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping presided over the meeting and decided to send a working group

From the night of June 1, 1966, after the Central Radio broadcast the big-character posters of Nie Yuanzi and others, the whole country was in an uproar. In the various universities, the big-character posters were all over the place, and even the secondary schools were in an uproar. Every day the Central Cultural Revolution Group was constantly on the phone, with calls coming in one after another telling what had happened somewhere, what problems had occurred.

In order to deal with various problems, the Central Government also held various meetings one after another to study countermeasures, and the Central Secretariat had to meet almost once a day. As I had the responsibility to assist Tong Xiaopeng in handling the work of the Secretary Bureau of the Central Office, I had to go to all the meetings of the Central Government. Although the Security Bureau was in charge of setting up the venue and arranging the guards, the Secretary Bureau also had to pay attention. Even the tea supply had to be looked into, because the people who came to the meetings were important leaders, and if someone gave you some kind of medicine in the tea, then something would happen. That is why the tea served at the conference was delivered by personnel from the hospitality section of the Central Office, and no one else was allowed to enter or leave the pantry. Don't look at this matter of tea as small, there are several big cases in the world where there are problems with tea. These matters should have been in the hands of Wang Dongxing, but he was often away from Beijing. The Premier always had work to do, so I had to go over it.

During that period, I was usually in Zhongnanhai during the day and in Diaoyutai at night. When the Central Committee held meetings, I went to Huairan Hall. The most important things at the meetings were the minutes and briefings of the meetings, for which Wang Li and I were appointed by the Central Committee. If there was an urgent matter, we had to report it to the Chairman immediately. So I had to keep running back and forth between the three places. There was a driver who followed us around all day.

Because of the various problems in the movement, an enlarged meeting of the Standing Committee of the Central Political Bureau was held on 3 June. The meeting was chaired by Liu Shaoqi and attended by the members of the Central Political Bureau and the Secretaries of the Secretariat in Beijing, as well as the relevant leaders, Chen Boda and Kang Sheng.

The meeting was mainly to discuss the issue raised by Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping on whether to send work groups to the universities. In his speech, Chen Boda raised the question of whether it

would be good to send a work group down under the current situation. But Liu and Deng ignored Chen's opinion, and most of those who attended the meeting did not express a different opinion about sending a work group. Thus it was decided at the meeting that a work group should be sent down. At the meeting, special mention was made of Beijing University in Beijing, Xi'an Jiaotong University in Shaanxi, Fudan University in Shanghai, Wuhan University in Hubei, Nanjing University in Jiangsu and Zhengzhou University in Henan, which were considered to have a lot of problems and were considered to be places where the "rightists" were concentrated.

What will the work group do when it goes down? How to do it? The meeting agreed to Li Xuefeng's eight requirements for the Cultural Revolution Campaign for the work groups to grasp.

These eight requirements were

- (1) Big-character posters should be posted in the school.
- (2) Meetings should not interfere with work or teaching.
- (3) Students should not be allowed to march or demonstrate in the streets.
- (4) Differential treatment between inside and outside, no foreigners allowed to visit, no foreign students to participate in the movement.
- (5) Do not go to the homes of those who have been seized.
- (6) To pay attention to confidentiality
- (7) No beating or slandering of people
- (8) Lead actively and hold fast to your post.

Towards the end of the meeting, Liu Shaoqi said, "Qi Benyu, come here. He then told me that I should report the decisions of the meeting to the Chairman, and he made it clear that the Cultural Revolution should be "distinguished between inside and outside", and that you should make it clear to the Chairman that "students are not allowed to march and demonstrate in the streets". He also told the Chairman that I would have a special report for him afterwards.

Neither the Chairman nor Jiang Qing was in Beijing at the time. At first one of them was in Hangzhou and the other in Shanghai, and they were not together. Later, they were sometimes together and sometimes not. But even when they were not together, they often exchanged telephone calls and letters. Jiang Qing once said to me that they were outside and did not know much about the Cultural Revolution in Beijing. "You are the Chairman's secretary, you have to report to him frequently". I said, "I dare not call the Chairman frequently for fear of disturbing him". Jiang Qing said, "Then talk to me first, and I will see which ones I should talk about and I will convey them to you". Jiang Qing was my direct leader and she was also one of the five secretaries to the Chairman, so I felt it was more convenient to speak to her about what I wanted to report to the Chairman, so I more often reported to Jiang Qing first. At one point I reported to her that I had gone to see some places like Beijing University. There were big posters, slogans and banners everywhere, red, yellow and green, and it was a spectacular scene of vigour and vitality. Later, in his poem "Something to Think About", the Chairman wrote, "A gust of wind and thunder startled the world, and the streets were full of red and green flags"<sup>302</sup>. I felt in my heart that the great leader and the masses were really in touch with

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<sup>302</sup> This was the last of Mao's poems to be published, but it is not widely available in English collections. This translation is from *Illustrated Poems of Mao Zedong* published by the China Intercontinental Press in 2007 and translated by Sun Dongsheng, vice secretary-general of the Research Association of Mao Zedong's Poems. He has translated the poem into rhyming lines, so they are a little different to Qi Benyu's lines:

*Yearning*

It's time in the capital for a dream to come true;

each other. At that time, I had to talk to Jiang Qing on the phone almost every day to report on what was happening in the Central Cultural Revolution and the Central Committee. Sometimes we had to talk on the phone several times a day, sometimes I called her and sometimes she called me.

The Chairman had not yet given any specific instructions on the movement at that time, nor had he given any clear opinions on Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping's decision to send work groups to the schools. He only told me over the phone through Jiang Qing that Chen Boda, Kang Sheng, Guan Feng, Wang Li and I should all visit the schools frequently to find out how the movement was progressing and tell him what we saw happening in the schools.

## **2. The work group controls the students who actively participate in the movement**

Zhang Chengxian, who was sent to Beijing University as the head of the work group, was formerly the provincial party secretary of Hebei Province. The work group he led was stationed at Beijing University on the same day that the Central Committee meeting ended on 3 June. In the following days, more work groups were sent to various universities and secondary schools.

After the work groups went down, they soon began to restrain and suppress students' spontaneous participation and organisation in various revolutionary activities. Some students disagreed with the work group's approach, which they considered to be inconsistent with Mao Zedong's Thought, and the work group cracked down on these students.

In accordance with the Chairman's instructions conveyed by Jiang Qing, several people, including Guan Feng and Wang Li, and I took time to go to various schools on a regular basis, and I also took time to go to factories and read the big-character posters there. I went to Beihang, the Earth Trade Institute, Qinghua, Beijing University, the Light Industry Institute, the Mining Institute and the Erqi Rolling Stock Factory and Shougang. At first, I took my secretary and guards with me and wore my military uniform. Later on, I took people from the "Express Group" with me, and sometimes I went alone with a driver. Because not many people knew me at that time, I was able to go around and read as much as I wanted. There were many big-character posters in various schools and many people reading them. I just read them and didn't talk to anyone, so no one bothered me. When I heard that Nie Yuanzi's big-character poster had been broadcast, the seven signatories split up at that time. I then made a special trip to Beijing University to see it, but it was too big and the big-character posters were everywhere, so I couldn't find them in time to look carefully, but I saw quite a few big-character posters giving advice to the working group.

Every time I came back from reading the big-character posters, I had to report to Jiang Qing. I reported to Jiang Qing that I had seen some cases where the work group had cracked down on students for giving advice to the work group, or even that the work group had organised meetings to fight against them. Jiang Qing said, "How can this work group not listen to Chairman Mao? The work

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Again I tread the southern land amid trees in bloom.  
Green pines stretch arms in wrath like bolts into the blue;  
Withered leaves flow away with running waves in gloom.

A gust of stormy wind would startle men in power;  
All streets are red and green with banners fluttering.  
Leaning on a balustrade, I listen to the shower;  
My countrymen are yearning for another Spring.

group was sent down to fight the students, but it did not serve any good purpose. Why didn't you put forward your views during the meeting?"

But to be honest, what opinions could we put forward at that time? Even Chen Boda's speech was not listened to. At the meetings of the Central Committee, they only took notes.

Jiang Qing told me that the May Fourth Movement was a movement started by the students themselves, so there was no work group. "There was no work group for the January 29th Movement either! We should let the masses liberate themselves, as Chairman Mao said". Jiang Qing said, "I don't agree with sending a work group to confront the students". I told Chen Boda about Jiang Qing's opinion. Chen Boda asked, "Is this what Chairman Mao said?" I said, "I only heard Jiang Qing say it, but I think Jiang Qing must have asked the Chairman about what he said". Chen Boda agreed that this was the case, and so Chen Boda said something like this at the next meeting of the Central Committee that was held.

"Should we stop sending work groups down and let the masses themselves elect a cultural revolution leadership group to lead themselves. We can guide them from the sidelines and let the masses liberate themselves, okay? After the work group went there, there were some confrontations with the masses, so it would be better to let the masses themselves lead themselves". But at that time Chen Boda was still only an alternate member of the Politburo, a newly appointed leader of the Central Cultural Revolution Group, and in front of those big names who attended the meeting, he was not a big deal at all. In addition, he spoke in a low voice and with a Hokkien accent, so many people did not understand him. Therefore, after Chen Boda finished his speech, no one responded to him or refuted him. Although Liu Shaoqi looked impatient, he did not interrupt him, while Deng Xiaoping did not even raise his head when he was speaking. So later on, Chen Boda said aggressively that I was just a small citizen and no one even paid attention to my speech. In any case, the meeting ignored Chen's comments and continued to send work groups to the schools.

Then the suppression of the masses by the work group intensified. Several of us from the Central Cultural Revolution then suggested to Liu Shaoqi that the suppression of students that was occurring in schools was abnormal. But Liu Shaoqi thought that was normal. Liu Shaoqi said to us that the masses want to give advice to the Party, and the Party welcomes it and encourages them. But something is not right, some people with ulterior motives are taking advantage of the opportunity to oppose the Party. We are using this Cultural Revolution to catch all the hidden counter-revolutionaries and those who are fishing in troubled waters. There was material which said that a person used big-character posters to attack the leaders, saying things that were very sharp and without signing his name, and it turned out that he was a historical counter-revolutionary. This was the usual logic of Liu Shaoqi and his group, to be biased and to seize on individual bad elements mixed up in the mass movement to use as an excuse to suppress the mass movement. This was the case in the 1957 Rectification and Anti-Rightist Movement, and also in the "Four Clean-ups" campaign. In the current Cultural Revolution, they were doing the same thing again. Their real aim was to use this method to suppress the masses so that they would not be attacked by the mass movement.

### **3. Liu Shaoqi approved the "Bulletin No. 9" and imposed white terror**

After the work group was sent down, instead of leading the students to criticise the "February Outline" and fight against the capitalists, it turned around and fought against the students and the masses, which soon aroused strong discontent among the students. In some schools there were clashes between the work group and the students. The Shaanxi Provincial Committee sent a telegram reflecting that some students in Xi'an Jiaotong University were secretly planning to attack the Party Committee and the work group in an organized and planned manner. On hearing this news, Liu Shaoqi became furious. He immediately convened a meeting of the Central Political Bureau and decided to carry out a nationwide "anti-interference campaign to catch fish".

Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping were fond of using their new terms "anti-interference" and "catching the swimming fish". I was impressed to hear Liu Shaoqi say "anti-interference" and "catching the swimming fish". He said that Chairman Mao had said in his speech against the rightists that "a swimming fish has three waves". A swimming fish is so capable that it can toss and turn in deep water, making the water muddy and undulating. Liu Shaoqi took it a step further and said, "A swimming fish can make three waves because the fisherman is lazy, and the fisherman's duty is to catch the fish, so if he catches all the swimming fish, the water will be clear and the waves will disappear. There are fish in all the major schools, just catch them. If you don't catch the fish, if you don't catch the troublemakers, they will turn you upside down". By swimming fish, Liu Shaoqi was referring to the rebellious teachers and students, whom he considered to be anti-party and anti-socialist rightists.

Liu Shaoqi's speech was soon sent out in a red-headed document. This document did not go through me, it was handled by Tong Xiaopeng. Chen Boda said he didn't know either. The working groups in different parts of the country immediately unified their tone, saying that there were three waves of one fish, that they should catch the fish and not let it escape, and that they should defeat the counter-revolutionaries and the bad elements that had infiltrated the revolutionary ranks. In this way, a revolutionary mass movement, which had just been launched with great enthusiasm, immediately turned into a nationwide campaign against interference, catching fish and the rightists. And all of a sudden it became very loud. Since they had already had the experience of fighting against the rightists in 1957, they were already very familiar with how to beat students into rightists.

The first high point in the country's "fish catching" movement probably occurred around 10 June 1966. One of the first to be hit and have a major impact was Li Shiyong, a student at Xi'an Jiaotong University. After being caught as a "swimming fish" and being paraded around in a high hat, Li Shiyong jumped to his death at noon on 9 June (and was rescued). Chairman Mao later said that Li Shiyong was a student leader in Xi'an and that his influence at the time was greater than that of Kuai Dafu<sup>303</sup>.

The second climax of the "Catching Fish" campaign came after 18 June, when, on the morning of 18 June, under the influence and inspiration of the news of Nanjing University's criticism of Kuang Yaming in the People's Daily of 16 June and the editorial "Let go of the masses and thoroughly defeat

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<sup>303</sup> Kuai Dafu (1945 -) a student of the Engineering Chemistry Department of Tsinghua University in 1967. During the Cultural Revolution, Kuai Dafu and Nie Yuanzi of Beijing University, Han Aijing of Beijing Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics, Tan Houlan of Beijing Normal University, and Wang Dabin of Beijing Geological Institute were collectively referred to as the five leaders of the Beijing rebels. They led and participated in a series of rebellious activities at the beginning of the Cultural Revolution. After the Cultural Revolution, he was sentenced to 17 years in prison. On October 31, 1987, Kuai Dafu was released and returned to work at the Qingtongxia Aluminum Plant. On April 24, 2011, Kuai Dafu returned to his alma mater to participate in the 100th Anniversary of Tsinghua University.

the counter-revolutionary gangsters", students and staff of Beijing University rose up spontaneously on the campus to Some of the leading cadres and reactionary academic authorities who were denounced as revisionists at the beginning of the Cultural Revolution were criticized. In some venues, high hats and black faces were put on those who had been criticised; in others, there were scuffles, but these were quickly stopped by the people in attendance. These phenomena would have been unavoidable at the beginning of the mass movement, and not difficult to correct. But the Beijing University Working Group came up with a "Briefing on the Cultural Revolution at Beijing University (No. 9)". In this brief, they distorted the story with a one-sided and exaggerated report, saying that the mass criticism meeting at Beijing University that morning was not only a serious and chaotic fight, but also "probably an organised and planned conspiracy", a "combination of counter-revolutionary gangsters and some nascent counter-revolutionary elements". Zhang Chengxian, the leader of the working group, called for the organisation of forces to track down and fight back. Zhang Chengxian and his group met at the school for three days to track down the counter-revolutionaries, but apart from a worker who had historically been a company commander in the Guomindang army, and a few workers and students who had a history of theft or hooliganism, they did not find any counter-revolutionary elements among the participants. However, Liu Shaoqi took such a bulletin as the basis for "anti-interference and catching fish" and was eager to add a remark to the "bulletin": "I am sending you the Cultural Revolution Bulletin (No. 9) of Beijing University. The Central Committee considers the approach of the Beijing University Working Group in dealing with the phenomenon of chaotic fighting to be correct and timely. All units can refer to Beijing University's approach if such a phenomenon occurs". This instruction from Liu Shaoqi, together with Briefing No. 9, was forwarded to the whole country in the form of a central document without the approval of the Chairman. This in effect meant that the whole country should learn from the Beijing University work group and crack down severely on the revolutionary actions of the revolutionary masses.

This central document was issued on 20 June 1966, only two days after the Beijing University incident on 18 June, and less than a day after the Beijing University Work Group's "Briefing No. 9" was sent to the central comrades.

After the Central Committee's document was issued on 20 June, the work groups of the various schools were given the imperial sword, and there was a surge of criticism of students and groups throughout the country. During this period of more than fifty days, a large number of students and masses were branded as "rightists", "reactionary students" and "counter-revolutionaries" by the work groups. In Beijing, Shaanxi, Jiangsu and Hubei, thousands of students and teaching staff were seized and imprisoned by the work groups, and even arrested. They were also given high hats during the criticism. There was a spate of jumping from buildings, wells, railroad tracks and hangings, and the Cultural Revolution movement was plunged into a state of white terror throughout the country.

Our Central Cultural Revolution Group kept reporting to the Central Committee in its briefings how many students were being fought in various places, how many people had been arrested in this province and how many in that province. News also kept coming in of student suicides, which occurred at Qinghua University, Beijing University, Xi'an Jiaotong University and Hubei University, as well as workers' suicides.

The comrades sent to the Beijing Geological Institute to find out what was going on came to report that the work group from the Institute had detained some students and people in a basement where radioactive material isotopes had once been stored. When I heard this, I rushed to go with my people to see it, but when our car arrived at the entrance of the school, the gatekeeper wouldn't let us in. He said that in order to prevent students from colluding, the work group would not let anyone

enter or leave the school at will. I took the Guangming Daily press card and showed it to them, and they said that if you were a reporter for a party newspaper, that would be OK. But the Guangming Daily was not a party newspaper, so I couldn't. So, I had to go back and change my press card for the People's Daily again, and only then was I allowed in. When I went in, the students inside were very badly beaten up. They didn't dare to see the journalists. As soon as they saw the journalists, the work group would come and track down what you had told them. But we finally got to the bottom of the fact that the work group had locked up some students in the basement where the radioactive material used to be, and it was true.

On 19 June 1966, Liu Shaoqi sent his wife Wang Guangmei to Qinghua University as an advisor to the work group, effectively taking control of the Cultural Revolution at the University. Kuai Dafu and his chemical class 902 were brought to the attention of the work group because Kuai Dafu had posted large posters criticising and suspicious of the work group. The work group said that Wang Guangmei was coming to listen to the views of the class and then the future, a minor incident, triggered a 25-day anti-Kuai campaign. Under the guidance of Wang Guangmei, over 700 students and teachers were criticised and suppressed, and many were forced to commit suicide. During the anti-Kuai campaign, the working group held Kuai Dafu in isolation and deprived him of his personal freedom. Kuai Dafu protested to no avail and was forced to go on a hunger strike to resist. Kuai Dafu wrote several letters to Chairman Mao and the Party Central Committee to complain about the Qinghua Cultural Revolution movement.

#### **4. Jiang Qing asked us to support the students**

Having read Kuai Dafu's letter, and having read the journalist's report on the Qinghua Cultural Revolution movement, I felt that the Qinghua Cultural Revolution movement seemed to be a kind of white terror. Students who responded to the call of Chairman Mao and the Party Central Committee and actively participated in the Cultural Revolution were imprisoned and criticised, branded as "rightists" and "counter-revolutionaries", and even forced to go on hunger strike and commit suicide because they suspected and criticised some practices of the working group. A young teacher at Qinghua was forced to commit suicide by taking pesticides. A fellow student lost both his feet when he committed suicide by lying on the tracks.

When I reported this to Jiang Qing, Jiang Qing criticised us, saying we had elected you to the Central Cultural the Revolution, so how come you are not effective?" I said, "They are all big people, and we are too small to speak". She said, "Even if you are small in number, you should still have a voice". I said, "What is use of our opposition? Chen Boda said all this at the meeting, but he was ignored". She said, "This is "slaveism". I accepted Jiang Qing's criticism, and thought, "Well, the slaves have arisen and rebelled! This big deal is another "Eight Secretaries Incident".

I went to talk to both Wang Li and Guan Feng and asked them to go to Qinghua to meet Kuai Dafu and find out about the Cultural Revolution movement in Qinghua. I said to them: "Wang Guangmei is better acquainted with me, and she will call me to get to the bottom of it once I go. If you guys go, she won't be able to call you". Wang Li was a bit apprehensive at first, but Guan Feng was very positive. On July 22, Wang Li and Guan Feng went to Qinghua to talk to Kuai Dafu. Wang Li, as a person, had great ability to respond on the spot. When he was energetic, he spoke impassionedly, which he could do better than us. When they went there, they met with Kuai Dafu and listened to his complaint. It was then that they expressed their sympathy and support for Kuai Dafu. That day Chen Boda also went to Beijing University to read the big-character posters and understand the situation. And at that time, Wang Guangmei was furious when she knew that someone from the

Central Cultural Revolution had met with Kuai Dafu, and she called and chased them back to the Central Office, asking who had gone to meet Kuai Dafu. She said, "Kuai Dafu is interfering with Chairman Mao's line and you are supporting Kuai Dafu, you are interfering with the Central Committee's 'anti-interference'".

After listening to Jiang Qing's words, I also went to various universities to find out more about the situation. When I went to the Light Industry College, as soon as I arrived there, I saw the big-character posters of "Catching the Swimming Fish" posted outside the college. I said to the people in the work group, "Why are you putting up such big-character posters against the students?" The people in the work group said that they were bad people. I said, "There are not that many bad guys. The majority of students support Chairman Mao, how can they be bad guys? Even if there were one or two bad guys, they could be dealt with at a later stage of the movement. How could so many students be described as bad people?"

Originally, when I went to various schools to read the big-character posters, the students did not recognise me. But when I was at the Light Industry College, I was recognized by Wang Yanqun, Wang Dongxing's daughter, who was studying at the Light Industry College at the time. She told the students that Qi Benyu was here! Some of the students came up and surrounded me. Some said that someone from the Central Cultural Revolution had come. Some even said that Chairman Mao had sent someone. They asked me what I thought about the "Catching Fish" poster. At this time, I told the students that I had come to see the big-character posters, and that I could not say that Chairman Mao had sent me. However, as a staff member of the Central Cultural Revolution Group, I could express my personal opinion. I said, "Chairman Mao said, 'Revolution is not a crime, rebellion is justified'. But now your school is catching 'swimming fish' everywhere. Who are the 'swimming fish'? The revolutionary teachers and students in the school are not 'swimming fish'". I simply said these few words, and the students knew my attitude, and the word spread around the school at once. Most of the students supported my speech and said that Qi Benyu was against the arrest of "swimming fish". They even copied my speech and put it up in big letters everywhere so that more people could know about it.

In this way, my stance clashed with Bo Yibo. Bo Yibo was in charge of the Central Committee's campaign in the industrial and commercial area, and the Light Industry College happened to be one of the points he had taken up in the campaign. Two days before I went to the Light Industry Institute, Bo Yibo had just been there to read the big-character posters, and after reading them, he expressed his support for the work group's efforts to "counter interference and catch the swimming fish". A little later, Bo Yibo said at a meeting of the Central Committee, without naming names, that some people had taken a position easily in front of the masses, which was inconsistent with the spirit of the Central Committee and had caused confusion in the students' minds.

I reported my visit to the Light Industry Institute to Chen Boda who told me, "You should speak less in the future". I thought to myself, "No, that's not right". When I had reported to Jiang Qing the day before, she criticised me for slaveism. I weighed the different instructions of the group leader and deputy leader and thought that Jiang Qing was the one who loved the young students. So, I thought I should do what Jiang Qing wanted.

With that, Wang Li, Guan Feng and I all continued to split up and go to various schools to support the students. Wang Li and Guan Feng went to Qinghua to receive Kuai Dafu, I went to the Geological Institute to support Zhu Chengzhao, and I also asked Lin Jie to go to Beijing Normal University to

support Tan Houlan. I also often went to Beijing University to read the big-character posters, sometimes together with Cao Yi'ou. Cao Yi'ou introduced me to the students of Beijing University. After hearing Cao Yi'ou's introduction, the repressed students all knew that the Central Cultural Revolution Group supported them. So they came to us for anything.

In fact, I sympathised with and supported the students at that time because I had experienced such things myself. It was Chairman Mao himself who rescued us. Deep in my mind, I have a deep-rooted revolutionary rebellion complex.

## Chapter 9: Withdrawal of the Work Groups

1. Chairman Mao returned to Beijing on 18 July 1966
2. Deng Xiaoping disagreed with the abolition of the work groups
3. Chairman Mao made up his mind to abolish the work groups
4. Accompanying Liu Shaoqi to the Construction and Engineering Institute
5. Two storms
6. 29 July 1966 Conference on the Abolition of the Work Groups

### 1. Chairman Mao returned to Beijing on 18 July 1966

On 16 July 1966, at the age of 73, Chairman Mao took a dip in the Yangtze River in Wuhan for more than an hour, and returned to Beijing from Wuhan on 18 July. As soon as he returned, he stayed in Building 12 of Diaoyutai. On the same day, Xu Yefu informed me that we from the Central Cultural Revolution Group should go to Building 12 for a meeting.

After Kang Sheng, Chen Boda, Zhang Chunqiao, Wang Li, Guan Feng and I had gone there, Chairman shook hands with us one by one and then asked us to report to him what we had seen and learned in the previous days, and he also asked us to repeat what we had already reported to him. During our debriefing, the Chairman was particularly concerned about the June 18 incident at Beijing University, and especially about the deaths that had occurred after Liu Shaoqi's instructions on the "No. 9 Briefing" were sent out. He listened very carefully and repeatedly asked if people had really died. We said, "Yes, someone really died. He then asked, "How did they die? We replied that a young teacher at Qinghua had been forced to commit suicide by taking pesticides, some had jumped off buildings, some had fallen on the tracks, and so on. As the Chairman listened, his expression looked grave. I could see that he was very sad about the death of his student. At this point, Zhang Chunqiao gave Chairman Mao the "No. 9 Briefing" of Beijing University and the documents of the Central Government that Liu Shaoqi had received wholesale. After reading this, the Chairman said that it is no wonder that the masses are suppressed everywhere, and now he understands that there is a headquarters.

During our debriefing, I saw Xu Yefu come in, he went to the Chairman and said something without us knowing what he said, and immediately went out again. Later I heard that it was Liu Shaoqi who wanted to see the Chairman, but as the Chairman was having a meeting with us, he asked him to go back first. This was an unusual incident, and I am afraid it was a great blow to Liu Shaoqi. Because in the past, Liu Shaoqi could meet the Chairman whenever he wanted to. Later, Xie Fuzhi also told me that the Chairman did not even see Liu Shaoqi, but met you first.

### 2. Deng Xiaoping disagreed with the abolition of the work groups

Jiang Qing returned to Beijing on the 20th of July, and as soon as she returned, she exchanged views with Chen Boda. Then a meeting of the Cultural Revolution Group was held at Building 16 of Diaoyutai, chaired by Chen Boda. At the meeting, Jiang Qing raised the question of whether we should suggest to the Central Committee that the work groups be abolished. Although Chen Boda was a bit hesitant, he agreed. We all agreed with Jiang Qing's opinion.

At the next enlarged meeting of the Standing Committee of the Central Political Bureau chaired by Liu Shaoqi on 21 July, Chen Boda suggested that many work groups presented themselves as representatives of the Party Central Committee, but in fact they were not much more intelligent than the students. Some of the work groups were strongly opposed by the masses because they were rectifying them. So, we might as well abolish the work groups for now and let the masses liberate themselves. Chen Boda spoke in a soft tone, downright pleading in places. Liu Shaoqi and the others still ignored him. Later, Jiang Qing criticised Chen Boda, saying that you were "kneeling in rebellion".

At the meeting, many people disagreed with Chen Boda's opinion, thinking that the university movement had just begun to stabilize, so how could the work groups be abolished, and that abolishing the work groups would be tantamount to negating the previous work. At this point, the Premier said, "Can we try out Chen Boda's idea of asking the masses to educate themselves and liberate themselves? The work groups did not understand the situation and rectified the students. Many students who had voiced their opinions were devastated and some committed suicide, and this situation was already very serious." The Premier also pointed out that the work groups were also sent too hastily. "If the work group does not understand the situation, it will do undesirable things. Let them pull out first and let the people work on their own for a while, see what happens, and then talk about it".

The Premier had put it relatively euphemistically. Chen Yi also said at the meeting that it would be better to let the students work on their own, allow them to work it out on their own, it's just a little bit of chaos, we can we go through it again and maybe it will be better. Tao Zhu supported Chen Yi's ideas. At that time, only the Premier, Chen Yi and Tao Zhu spoke these few words, no one else spoke such words. Li Xuefeng was adamantly opposed to the withdrawal of the work groups. He said that sending the work groups to the schools was not a big problem, and that the work groups had solved many problems and made the situation stable, so we could not just withdraw them because of a little problem!

No decision was made at that day's meeting, which continued the next day, 22 July. Chen Boda again raised the issue of abolishing the work groups at the meeting. At this point, Deng Xiaoping became vocal, and I didn't know Deng Xiaoping was so formidable. He said in a loud voice, "I don't think the work groups are a big problem! Without the work groups, there would still be chaos below and more anarchy". Then he criticised Chen Boda in a very agitated manner, who did not dare to say a word back. Liu Shaoqi did not say much at this meeting, but Deng Xiaoping was the one who spoke most aggressively and in the most strident tone. Finally, he lost his temper and suddenly stood up, pointing his finger at the table and loudly refuting Chen Boda. This was the first time I had seen Deng Xiaoping's temper flare up since I had been in Zhongnanhai for more than ten years. He crossed his arms and questioned Chen Boda, "Have you ever organized a mass movement? What kind of movement is there without a policy? Have you ever run a mass movement without a policy? You see the wind and it's rain? Can you just deny the decision of the Party Central Committee? No one has that much power!" He spoke in a heavy tone, so everyone stopped talking. The Premier did not speak again either. According to the general procedure, this counted as everyone agreeing with Deng Xiaoping's opinion, which meant that the meeting decided not to abolish the work groups. Why was Deng Xiaoping later called the No. 1 capitalist roader? For this scene alone, he was more than qualified.

### **3. Chairman Mao made up his mind to abolish the work groups**

When Chairman Mao returned to Beijing, he did not immediately take a position on what was happening in Beijing. For about a week, he read a lot of materials, especially those from Beijing University, Qinghua University and Beijing Normal University. According to Jiang Qing, the Chairman was in a very unhappy mood after reading those materials and said something along the lines of how sad he was to see the mass movement go from hot and steamy to cold and clear all of a sudden, and the doors of the schools were closed. "Some school work groups were blatantly suppressing the student movement. Who in history had suppressed student movements? Only the Beiyang warlords and the Guomindang. This was a big mistake, a mistake of direction. When the work group at Beijing University saw that the students had risen up to give their criticisms to the Party Committee, it came out to set rules and regulations, saying that it was on the right track. In fact, it is an evil track. Some work groups labelled students as anti-party rightists and counter-revolutionaries. Anyone who suppresses the student movement will not end up well. The work groups have now become an obstacle to the revolutionary mass movement. You have to go down and see the masses, for two hours or so, don't just sit in the room, go down and clear your heads. Get rid of the work groups and suspend them from their duties and reflect. Let the revolutionaries among these students and teachers, plus some of the centrists, join them and form a cultural revolutionary committee to carry out the cultural revolutionary struggle themselves. What will the struggle be about? The struggle is against those in power in the Party who followed the capitalist road, and the struggle is against reactionary academic authorities. Who knew more than people like Wu Han and Jian Bozan? It was the revolutionary masses. You can't make a name for yourself by doing what the work groups did. The suppression of the student movement will not end well, didn't the Beiyang warlords and the Guomindang all fail?" Jiang Qing relayed the words of the Chairman to us, and we felt a heavy heart. From the Chairman's words, I could hear that the Chairman had already given serious consideration to Jiang Qing, Chen Boda and Kang Sheng's proposal to abolish the work groups, and had already made a decision.

On the morning of 24 July 1966, in Building 12 of Diaoyutai, the Chairman received all the staff of the Central Cultural Revolution. Chen Boda, Kang Sheng, Tao Chuang, Jiang Qing, Zhang Chunqiao, Yin Da, Wang Li, Guan Feng, I and Mu Xin all attended. Chen Boda, Kang Sheng and Jiang Qing reported to the Chairman and the Chairman spoke. I had a record at the time, which was later taken away by Wang Dongxing and his group.

In his speech, Chairman Mao mainly talked about the need to abolish the work groups and let the masses do it themselves, etc. He also said many words of encouragement to us. He said that the Central Committee, with its many ministries, had not done much good, and the Secretariat was no longer working. "You, the Cultural Revolution Group, represent the masses and have done a lot of good work. The masses support you the most and their hopes are pinned on you. The masses now support Qi Benyu and Guan Feng, and do not listen to the work groups that claim to represent the Party Central Committee". The Chairman also quoted an old saying, "The people of the world do not look to Dan Zhu but to Shun", meaning that the masses now turned to the Central Cultural Revolution in relation to problems, not to Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping. The Chairman praised us because we had openly expressed our support for the students when they were being suppressed.

On 26 July, the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China held an enlarged meeting, which was attended by all the regional secretaries, including Liu Lantao from Northwest China, Li Jingquan from Southwest China, Li Xuefeng from North China, Song Renshu from

Northeast China, Wang Renzhong from Central and South China, and Chen Pixian from East China, in addition to the members of the Central Cultural Revolution Group. At this meeting, the Chairman spoke. In his speech, the Chairman continued to criticise the work groups for suppressing the Cultural Revolution Movement. In particular, he criticised the work group of Xi'an Jiaotong University for not allowing the masses to relay information to the Central Committee and for not allowing them to send telegrams to the Central Cultural Revolution. The Chairman said that the masses should be allowed to pass through the sky and anyone could write to the Central Committee. "Anyone who obstructs the movement will be expelled, you block and I drive. We propose to abolish the work groups, representing the views of the masses. No work groups, but revolutionary teachers and students themselves should rise up to make revolution".

The Chairman also said that he had been back in Beijing for a week and for the first four days was inclined to protect Zhang Chengxian (head of the Beijing University work group), but later disapproved of it. Zhang Chengxian's work group and the Qinghua work group were all playing a role in obstructing the revolution. The Chairman also said that it was forbidden to encircle newspaper offices, to encircle provincial committees, to encircle the State Council, or to come to the Central Committee, all of which were obstructing the revolutionary movement. "How can you guide a movement when you are so busy with daily affairs that you don't run down to the lower levels and have no sensible knowledge!" Chairman Mao said that over 90 per cent of the work groups in the country had made errors of direction and suggested that the Central Committee should order the abolition of the work groups.

This speech by the Chairman was very important, showing that the Chairman had made up his mind to fight the erroneous line of Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping to the end. Moreover, the Chairman's attitude was very clear. Before receiving us, although he opposed the suppression of the masses, he had not yet formally proposed the abolition of the work groups. When the Chairman decided on important matters, especially such a major issue as the struggle with Liu Shaoqi, he would talk to many people, read a lot of information and consider many issues before making up his mind. In this speech, he made a clear statement to us that he opposed the sending of the work groups and that he thought that Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping should be held responsible for turning the work groups into such a big problem. The Chairman also said that he was not there when the meeting to send the work groups was held. "They were the ones who chaired it and I did not know about it. How did it get into this state?" He also said to us that you should all go to the masses, trust the masses and rely on them.

After listening to the Chairman's speech, Guan Feng and I said that it was time for the two of us to write an article to express the latest spirit of the Chairman. So we wrote an article on "Trusting the masses and relying on them", which was published as an editorial in the Red Flag magazine. The article was so influential that the students made excerpts of the important words in the article, copied them and posted them as big-character posters, and later the People's Publishing House even published a single-volume version.

The Chairman's statement was a major turnaround. There were several other important speeches by the Chairman during this period, some of which I can't remember precisely. It seems that Liu Lantao or someone else had compiled material containing many speeches made by the Chairman during this period, including those made when receiving regional secretaries, which were more comprehensive, but unfortunately I cannot find them. I remember that during this period, we were either running to various universities or attending various meetings every night. Each of us had to work almost 18 hours a day and it was very intense.

#### 4. Accompanying Liu Shaoqi to the Construction and Engineering Institute

In accordance with Chairman Mao's instructions, Jiang Qing and Chen Boda both went to Beijing University and other schools to read the big-character posters. I heard that the Chairman himself quietly went to Beijing University in the early hours of one morning to read the big-character posters. The Chairman said to Liu Shaoqi and the others: Now that the Central Cultural Revolution has all gone down, shouldn't you also go down, do some research, be with the masses and listen to their views?

After July 25, 1966, the leaders of the Central Committee split up and went to major universities, colleges and secondary schools. The Premier went to Qinghua and the Second Foreign Language Institute, Deng Xiaoping to the National People's Congress, Jiang Qing to Beijing University, Guan Feng and I to the Geological Institute and the Northern Teachers' University, and Wang Li to the secondary schools.

Liu Shaoqi chose the Construction and Engineering Institute, and he asked the Central Cultural Revolution to send someone with him. He asked Chen Boda to go first. When Chen Boda had seen that Liu Shaoqi had been criticised by the Chairman, how could he dare to go with him? But Liu Shaoqi was still the State President and Vice Chairman of the Party at that time. He did not dare to offend him either. So he asked Wang Li and Guan Feng to go. But they both said they had something to do in the evening and could not go. Chen Boda said to me, "I have no choice but for you to go". I didn't want to go either. I said, "Jiang Qing asked me to go with her to Beijing University tonight, and I agreed to do so. I have promised to go to Beijing University". On Liu Shaoqi's side, he wanted the Central Cultural Revolution to send a person. He was the vice-chairman of the Central Committee, and he said he wanted someone to go, how could everyone of us refuse, how could I make an excuse? "You have to go, no discussion". I had no choice but to go.

The next day, when the Central Cultural Revolution held a group meeting, Jiang Qing found out that I had followed Liu Shaoqi to the Construction and Engineering Institute and became angry with me. She said, "Why did you follow Liu Shaoqi to Jiangyong College? Didn't you say that you would go to Beijing University with me?" I said, "I did say I would go to Beijing University with you, but Chen Boda insisted that I go to the Jiangyong College, and he said he was responsible for asking for leave from you for me". She said, "When did he ask for leave from me for you?" When I asked Chen Boda, he again played dumb as usual, saying he had forgotten about it. Fortunately, Guan Feng was on hand to testify for me, saying that it was indeed Chen Boda who asked Lao Qi to go to Jiangyong College, and that Lao Qi said he had promised Comrade Jiang Qing to go to Beijing University together with her.

When Jiang Qing found out what had happened, she criticised Chen Boda in turn. Chen Boda said, "In that case, don't go". Later, when the Chairman heard Jiang Qing talk about this, he said, "It was wrong for you to get Qi Benyu to promise to accompany you in the first place, and it was also wrong for him to promise to go and then not go". Jiang Qing returned from the Chairman's place and conveyed the Chairman's opinion to everyone. Everyone agreed that the Chairman was right and that I should continue to go with Liu Shaoqi to the Construction and Engineering Institute.

Sure enough, when I accompanied Liu Shaoqi and the others to the Jiangyong College once again, I was subjected to an organised siege by the Jiangyong College work group. During the meeting, the work group people said that I supported reactionary students and reactionary rhetoric and raised

the issue to one of class struggle and line struggle. They also brought out what they had heard me say at the Light Industry College and criticised it. Yu Qiuxiang, who accompanied Liu Shaoqi, also accused me, saying that sending work groups was an important method of work for our Party and that it had been done during the War of Resistance, so what was wrong with that?

In such a situation, I had to debate with them. I said that sending a work group was a matter of formality and it is not right or wrong in itself. The key is what you send the work group to do. The students' actions were all in response to the spirit of the May 16 Circular of the Central Committee. They wanted to turn students who had responded to the Central Committee's call for revolution into "rightists" and "reactionaries". These big slogans were still there now, but were they right?

At this point Liu Shaoqi came out to speak, and he began by criticising the work group, saying that their work had many shortcomings and mistakes. While Liu Shaoqi was speaking, the subordinates were silent, each one taking notes. Then Liu Shaoqi spoke for me again, saying, "You all have no opinion when I criticise you, but why should you do this to Qi Benyu when he criticises you? Although he is a young man, he is a member of the Central Cultural Revolution Group. What kind of attitude is this? You can speak up if you have an opinion".

Afterwards, Liu Shaoqi said to me in private, "There are some situations that you should have told us at that time, but you didn't say anything. I said, "Didn't Comrade Boda say everything at the meeting? I also said specifically when Chen Boda was and what he said. Liu Shaoqi stopped listening. But I knew that he was actually blaming me for not informing him of the Chairman's reaction in advance. But how could I tell him what the Chairman had not told me to tell him? If I had taken the initiative to tell him, wouldn't I have made the same mistake as Tian Jiaying. Of course, if he had come to ask my opinion, I could have told him, but he didn't come to ask me. At that time, he was so preoccupied with "anti-interference" and "catching fish" that he was in high spirits and listened to Wang Guangmei and the bigwigs. Even if I told him the truth from the bottom of my heart, he wouldn't have listened to me, and he might have beaten me up as an "Eight Secretary".

My speech at this meeting somehow got out, and the next day the students put up big-character posters, saying that they supported Qi Benyu and opposed the work group. There were also some very radical big-character posters saying that the work group had the audacity to attack the Central Cultural Revolution and so on. There were no students at the meeting we had at Jiangyong College, and I did not have contact with the students, so I went back to Diaoyutai after the meeting. Liu Shaoqi would not have passed it on, and Gu Mu and Yu Qiuli would not have passed it on, so how did the students know about it? I guess someone in the work group told the students, and the work group was not ironclad. The next day, Liu Shaoqi's face didn't look very good. I think he must have thought that I had reported the letter to the students. But he didn't come to ask me, so I didn't have to explain myself.

I reported all the things I encountered at the Jiangyong Institute to Jiang Qing, who told the Chairman. Jiang Qing told me that the Chairman then said something like, "The Dragon King of the East China Sea wants to retreat, but the shrimp soldiers and crab men refuse to listen."

## **5. Two storms**

Jiang Qing went to Beijing University where she gave a speech in which she firmly supported the revolutionary masses. Jiang Qing's speech was well received by the students and teachers of Beijing University.

During Jiang Qing's speech, someone from a lower level handed Jiang Qing a note, which read: "There is a person in our department who claims to be a member of Chairman Mao's family. But she always supports the work group to fight against us, and she says that the work group represents the Party Central Committee and Chairman Mao. May I ask Comrade Jiang Qing if she is a member of the Chairman's family? Why does she support the work group?"

Jiang Qing was very angry when she read the note and gave the person mentioned in the note a lecture on the spot. This incident caused a lot of unrest among the masses at that time.

When Jiang Qing was speaking, I was sitting next to her, surrounded by people from the Central Cultural Revolution Office.

After a day, Li Na<sup>304</sup> came to see me. She said to me, "Dad asked me to bring you a message, asking you not to interfere in our family affairs". As soon as I heard this, I knew that it was Jiang Qing's speech at Beijing University last night that had caused the Chairman's misunderstanding. I then told Li Na that this had nothing to do with me at all. "How could I interfere in your family affairs?" But Li Na said, "I believe that. But father asked me to bring you a message, so I always have to bring it". Hearing this, I had nothing more to say. I thought it was likely that the Chairman suspected that I had told Jiang Qing about the incident. In fact, there were many people who knew about this, and Jiang Qing was not talking nonsense, she was telling the truth. It is just that it was not very appropriate to talk about this in such a public setting.

The Chairman was aware that I often reported the situation to Jiang Qing, and when Jiang Qing reported to the Chairman, he would often say, "What did Benyu say and how did he say it?" The Chairman had the impression that Jiang Qing had listened to my reports on many matters. But this incident was not really reported by me. In fact, before this, I didn't even know that the person was studying at Beijing University. But the chairman told Li Na to give me a message, so I couldn't go back to him for an explanation, and I couldn't even say anything to Jiang Qing. I had to take the Chairman's words to heart. When the Chairman saw me later, he did not mention the matter again.

Another thing. Many of the work groups sent to Beijing high schools had been transferred from the Central League schools. Once, when Wang Li arrived at a middle school, he criticised the work group very fiercely. He pointed at the head of the school's work group and said on the spot, "Stand up, I am

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<sup>304</sup> Li Na (1940 -), is the daughter of Mao Zedong and his fourth wife Jiang Qing, and their only child together. Her surname is Li rather than Mao, because her father used the pseudonym "Li Desheng" for a period of time during the Chinese Civil War. She majored in History at Beijing University, graduating in 1966. Post-graduation, she was assigned to People's Liberation Army Daily as a writer, under the nom de plume Xiao Li, during the Cultural Revolution. On January 13, 1967, Li Na organized the "Revolutionary Rebel Commando" and posted a big-character poster of "Where is the People's Liberation Army News Going" to expose Hu Chi (the acting president of Xinhua News Agency and a member of the Cultural Revolution Group within the PLA), Song Qiong, Yang Zicai and the other leaders about the direction of the newspaper. After the end of Cultural Revolution, Li Na's political appointments were abolished. She was laid off and was assigned to the Security Bureau dormitory by the Central Office. Since 2003, she has been a member of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference and has participated in a number of commemorative events about Mao Zedong.

now announcing on behalf of the Central Cultural Revolution that your position as head of the work group has been withdrawn". That group leader was beaten up by students in the school, and badly injured, right after Wang Li announced his dismissal. People from the Central League School carried the battered work group leader to the Central Cultural Revolution to sue for damages. They went together to the reception room of the Central Cultural Revolution and flatly asserted that Wang Li had told the students to beat him up. The person who received them immediately relayed the situation to me, and I didn't believe Wang Li would have called for him to be beaten up. It was only after Wang Li's speech that the work group leader was beaten by the students, and the two were somewhat related, but it could not be said that Wang Li had called for the beating. The people from the Central League School also said that Qi Benyu had graduated from our Central League School and that we were looking for him. I had been away from the school for sixteen years and they came to me, so what could I say? I sent Jin Yaonan to listen to them and, in the meantime, sent a doctor from Zhongnanhai to accompany the battered working group leader to the hospital for treatment. I also promised them that I would report to the leaders of the Central Cultural Revolution Group as soon as they returned. Only then was the matter put to rest.

## **6. 29 July 1966 Conference on the Abolition of the Work Groups**

On the morning of 25 July 1966, in Building 12 of Diaoyutai, Chairman Mao summoned the members of the Central Cultural Revolution Group and the heads of the Central Bureaus to a meeting, mainly to discuss the revision of "The Situation of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution and Some Issues of the Party's Guidelines". The revised document was the "Sixteen Articles" adopted at the 11th Plenary Session of the 8th Central Committee. On 26 July, the Central Committee convened an enlarged meeting of the Politburo and made a decision to abolish the work groups, and on 28 July, the CPC Beijing Municipal Committee issued a decision on the abolition of the work groups of the universities.

On 29 July, the Beijing Municipal Committee held a meeting of students and teachers of Beijing's colleges and secondary schools to promote the Cultural Revolution at the Great Hall of the People. There were student representatives from all the schools attending the meeting. I don't know how Wang Dongxing and Tong Xiaopeng organized the meeting, but I heard that most of those who came to the meeting were students who supported the work groups, and many of them were the sons of high cadres, while very few students actually rebelled against the work groups. So, I asked someone to go up and inform the representatives of teachers and students from the Geological Institute, the Beijing Normal University and Beihang University who had criticised the work groups, and ask them to organise the rebellious students and the oppressed masses to come to the meeting as well. I wrote a note and asked the guards at the Assembly Hall to let them in. The guard asked me what I would do about security. I said that I would be responsible for ensuring security. These people were all stricken, and it was Chairman Mao who liberated them. Could they still bring in any weapons? Besides, there were already security check instruments at that time, so if there were guns, they could be checked immediately. But the guards were still uneasy, so they arranged for them all to go to the third floor. In this way, the third floor became the area where the students of the Rebel Criticism Work Group were concentrated.

Before the meeting started, I had to go around the venue to check it out as usual. As I walked past the Beijing Hall (i.e. No. 118), which was the closest to the venue, I saw Wu Xujun and Xu Yefu at a glance and they greeted me. I knew that Chairman Mao had come too.

But the Chairman did not show up at the meeting. The meeting was chaired by Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping. Although Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping made some self-criticism about the problems of the work groups at the meeting, they then defended themselves by saying that "the old revolution has encountered new problems". The Premier also made a speech at the meeting. But instead of defending himself as Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping did, the Premier took it upon himself to say that he was also responsible for sending the work groups down there and then screwing up the students.

At this point I found it a bit strange that the meeting was supposed to criticise Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping and their mistake of sending work groups to control the students. But now it was Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping themselves who were in charge of the meeting, so that the conference became a meeting in which they defended themselves. Moreover, Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping both spoke at the conference, giving the impression that the Cultural Revolution movement was still to be carried out under their leadership.

Just at that time, the clerk of the Central Cultural Revolution Group came to me and he told me that many students had opinions and they said that Liu Shaoqi was suppressing them, and now they had all come, but Chairman Mao had not come. Even Wang Guangmei had come, but why hadn't Jiang Qing come. So I said to the clerk, "Go and tell them to shout, 'We want to see Chairman Mao'!" Keep shouting, and don't stop until Chairman Mao comes out. The clerk immediately went to talk to the student representatives of the rebellion, and the students shouted, "We want to see Chairman Mao! We want to see Chairman Mao"! First from the third floor, then the students on the second and ground floors followed suit. Who wouldn't want to see Chairman Mao? The shouting continued, getting louder and louder, deafening. At first they were sitting down, but later they all stood up, even the leaders of the Central Government who were sitting in the row below the podium in front of them. The sound of so many people shouting together was deafening. My biggest worry at that time was that it would not cause the floor to shake. The students shouted for more than ten minutes, and then Chairman Mao came out from behind the podium. At this, the atmosphere in the room reached a crescendo. "Long live Chairman Mao!" The slogans resounded throughout the Assembly Hall. Many people did not expect that when they shouted to see Chairman Mao, he would actually come out. Without saying a word, Chairman Mao walked slowly from one end of the podium to the other, waving to the students as he went, and then turned around and went back to the middle of the podium.

## Chapter 10: The Eleventh Plenary Session of the Eighth Central Committee

1. Major significance of the 11th Plenary Session of the 8th Central Committee
2. Chairman Mao's "Bombard the Headquarters" large-character poster
3. Drafting and adoption of the "Sixteen Articles"
4. Re-electing the central leadership
5. The Politburo meeting devoted to criticizing Deng Xiaoping
6. Burning of Chairman Mao's letter to Jiang Qing
7. My speech at the group meeting was criticised by Chairman Mao

### 1. Major significance of the 11th Plenary Session of the 8th Central Committee

The 11th Plenary Session of the 8th Central Committee, held in Beijing on 1 August 1966, was a meeting of great historical significance. Although at the enlarged meeting of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee in May, the May 16th Circular was adopted, deciding to launch a Cultural Revolution campaign throughout the country, there were two completely different ideas within the Party as to how this campaign should be carried out. According to Liu Shaoqi's and Deng Xiaoping's approach, the Cultural Revolution would be an even larger "anti-rightist campaign" after the defeat of Peng, Luo, Lu and Yang. In the end, the campaign was directed against the intellectuals and the masses, but not against the privileged class of Party bureaucrats that emerged after the proletariat took power.

The meeting was chaired by Chairman Mao himself. Apart from all members of the Central Committee, all members of the Central Cultural Revolution Group also attended the meeting. In addition, according to Chairman Mao's instructions, some student representatives also attended the meeting. I remember that Nie Yuanzi, Yang Keming, Tan Houlan and Kong Dan were among those present. The list of students attending the meeting was probably drawn up by the Premier, and Zhou Rongxin attached particular importance to Kong Dan. Our Central Cultural Revolution Group did not participate in the discussion of the list. In fact, before the 11th Plenary Session of the 8th Central Committee, the Central Cultural Revolution Group did not have much say in the Cultural Revolution movement.

The entire agenda of the meeting was also arranged by the Premier. At the opening meeting Liu Shaoqi spoke, saying that when resolutions were passed at the meeting, those present could raise their hands, or not, to indicate their approval or disapproval, but they would not be counted as official votes and would be used for reference only. Deng Xiaoping also spoke.

At the opening meeting, it was generally a relatively calm affair, with no major controversies, unlike the enlarged meeting of the Central Political Bureau in May, where Lin Biao and Lu Dingyi argued so heatedly.

In accordance with the Chairman's advice, the delegates to the conference went down to the universities for investigation and research. So after the opening ceremony, members of the Central Committee went to the universities to read the big-character posters. The Premier took some people

to Qinghua, Li Xiannian and Yao Yilin to the Central Institute of Finance and Economics, Yu Qiu Li and Gu Mu to the Petroleum Institute, and so on. After reading the big-character posters, they also called representatives of the two factions in the university for a discussion, in which they mainly debated how to view the work groups. We know that before the meeting Chairman Mao had commissioned Premier Zhou to investigate the issue of the Cultural Revolution movement in Qinghua. On July 30, he spoke to two groups of students from the Protect the Work Group and the Anti-Work Group, and on July 31, he met twice with Kuai Dafu and talked for six hours. On August 1, 2 and 3, he asked Wang Guangmei and the head of the Qinghua Work Group, Ye Lin, to talk to him several times. After reporting to Chairman Mao, Premier Zhou also brought more than 100 members of the Central Committee and alternate members of the Central Committee to Qinghua University on the evening of 4 August to hold a live conference on the Cultural Revolution. At the conference, Premier Zhou personally announced the vindication of Kuai Dafu.

After returning from a trip to the school to read the big-character posters, the Central Committee members and the delegates began to hold discussions. The discussion took place mainly in small group sessions, without a general meeting. In the discussion, there were those who said that the working group was bad, and those who said that there were also bad among the students, both opinions, but mostly those who said that the working group was bad. But no one has yet suggested that Liu Shaoqi or Deng Xiaoping had any problems with the working group issue. The members of the Central Cultural Revolution Group who were present at the meeting, including Jiang Qing, also listened more than they spoke.

By August 4, 1966, Chairman Mao chaired an enlarged meeting of the Standing Committee. Before the meeting, I saw at the front of the podium, Chairman Mao and Liu Shaoqi and a few of them were talking, what they said was inaudible, but it looked like they were all talking in a rather agitated manner, as if they were arguing about something. Later it was at the opening by the Premier that they were seated separately on the podium. After the meeting had started, Chairman Mao made a very stern speech. He said, "In the days of the former Qing Dynasty, later the Beiyang warlords and later the Guomindang, they all suppressed the student movement, and now the Communist Party is also suppressing the student movement, and the Central Committee itself is going against its own orders. The Central Committee ordered a six-month suspension of classes specifically for the Cultural Revolution, and when the students rose up, they were suppressed again. To put it mildly, it was a question of direction, but in reality it was a question of direction, a question of line, a mistake of line, and a violation of Marxism-Leninism. This meeting has to solve the problem, otherwise it is dangerous. If this problem is not solved, then all the talk about taking the mass line, the so-called belief in the masses, the so-called Marxism-Leninism, etc., is all false. This has already been the case for many years. Whenever this type of situation is encountered, it explodes out, clearly siding with the bourgeoisie against the proletariat. To say that if one opposes the new municipal committee then one is opposing the party is wrong. The new municipal committee was suppressing the student movement, so why shouldn't they oppose it? I did not go down there to stay, but the more people stayed, the more they stood on the side of the bourgeoisie against the proletariat, making it impossible to communicate with each other from class to class, department to department and school to school. This was repression and terror. This terror came from the central government. People have a problem with the so-called Central Committee's 20 June endorsement, and rightly so. The big-character posters by Nie Yuanzi and seven others at Beijing University are the Paris Commune - Beijing Commune manifesto of the 1960s. Putting up big-character posters is a very good thing, it should be made known to the people of the world! But the Xuefeng report says that the Party has its own discipline and the State has its own laws, that there is a difference between inside and outside, and that large-character posters should not be posted outside the gates for

foreigners to see. In fact, apart from confidential places, such as the Ministry of National Defence and the Ministry of Public Security, where outsiders are not allowed to see them, what is so important about other places. Under the dictatorship of the proletariat, mass petitions, demonstrations and lawsuits were also allowed. Moreover, freedom of speech, assembly, association and publication were written into the constitution. Judging from this suppression of the Cultural Revolution of the student masses, I do not believe that they have real democracy, real Marxism-Leninism. Rather, they are standing on the side of the bourgeoisie against the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution. The Central Committee, instead of supporting the student movement, is suppressing it. It has to be dealt with strictly."

While the Chairman was speaking, Liu Shaoqi interjected and said, "I am in Beijing, I have responsibilities". Chairman Mao immediately said, "You are in Beijing exercising dictatorship, dictating very well". Liu Shaoqi also immediately topped it off by saying, "If it's just a matter of stepping down, then stepping down it is. I am not afraid of stepping down". At this point, Ye Jianying suddenly took a stand and said, "We have millions of troops, we are not afraid of any cow demons and snake spirits". Chairman Mao then said, "There are cow demons and snake spirits, and there are those who are sitting here!" When Chairman Mao said these words, the whole meeting hall was silent, even the sound of turning paper could be heard, the meeting atmosphere was highly tense. This was a rare occurrence at a Party meeting. The circumstances surrounding this Standing Committee of the Central Committee are mentioned in many publications nowadays, but they have been downplayed. And the scenes of disagreement between Mao and Liu at the time were serious and are still fresh in my mind.

## **2. Chairman Mao's "Bombard the Headquarters" large-character poster**

The next day, on August 5, 1966, the Chairman wrote "Bombard the Headquarters - A Big Character Poster of Mine". This big-character poster was written by the Chairman at his residence in the "swimming pool" in Zhongnanhai, on top of a blank space in the Beijing Daily. After he had written it, he asked Xu Yefu to transcribe it. The Chairman added headings to the transcribed manuscript and made a few corrections, and then sent it to the machine printer for a clean copy. When I was proofreading it, I saw an amendment made by the Chairman in his own handwriting on the transcript, which read: "Certain big leaders from the central to local levels". The phrase "big leaders" was changed to "leading comrades". The full text, now publicly available, is as follows.

Bombard The Headquarters – My Big-Character Poster

August 5, 1966

'China's first Marxist-Leninist big character poster and Commentator's article on it in Renmin Ribao (People's Daily) are indeed superbly written! Comrades, please read them again. But in the last fifty days or so some leading comrades from the central down to the local levels have acted in a diametrically opposite way. Adopting the reactionary stand of the bourgeoisie, they have enforced a bourgeois dictatorship and struck down the surging movement of the great cultural revolution of the proletariat. They have stood facts on their head and juggled black and white, encircled and suppressed revolutionaries, stifled opinions differing from their own, imposed a white terror, and felt very pleased with themselves. They have puffed up the arrogance of the bourgeoisie and deflated the morale of the proletariat. How poisonous! Viewed in connection with the Right deviation in 1962 and the wrong tendency of 1964 which was 'Left' in form but Right in essence, shouldn't this make one wide awake?

Mao Zedong

August 5, 1966

This big-character poster was then issued to the plenary delegates as an official document of the meeting. I heard Jiang Qing say that the Chairman had told her that they were good at conspiracies, that the document was forwarded to the whole country without my consent, and that they were also quietly working on the 'Three Harmonies and One Less'<sup>305</sup> and the 'Three Selves and One Guarantee'<sup>306</sup>; the Beijing University's 'Briefing No. 9' was also forwarded to the whole country without my consent. My big-character poster was a yang plot, a yang plot against the work group they sent, a yang plot against the 'Three Harmonies, One Less' and the 'Three Selves, One Guarantee'.

In this way, although the big-character poster had not yet been officially communicated to the lower levels, it soon became known to the students, and in a very short time, it was spread throughout the country.

On 7 August, when Chairman Mao's big-character poster was issued to all the delegates, the meeting was immediately abuzz. As the big-character poster did not openly name them, there was a lot of discussion below, with some saying that the Chairman's big-character poster referred to "Comrade Shaoqi and Comrade Xiaoping", the "going-it-alone wind" of 1962, and the "four-cleanups campaign" of 1964, which involved the downward-pointing of the spearhead. The "leftist but rightist" mistake of "hitting a large area" in 1964 was all related to Liu Shaoqi.

Some people also said that although the Chairman had written words like "what a poison", it was a strict ideological approach to make us realise the seriousness of the problem, not to do anything to Liu Shaoqi or Deng Xiaoping. Why else would they be called "comrades"? Although there were many different views, on the whole, the vast majority of people supported Chairman Mao's big-character posters, and the atmosphere of the meeting became serious. It was already obvious to many that there was a major struggle of principle between Chairman Mao and Liu Shaoqi. This large-character poster by Chairman Mao had in effect lifted the lid on the struggle between the two lines within the Party.

On July 24, 1966, Guan Feng wrote to Jiang Qing, "I think that at present, there is actually a struggle between two lines of attack on the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution" and that "a counter-current has emerged". He also said that Liu Shaoqi, Deng Xiaoping and others had "extinguished the flames of the revolution" and that "the Central Cultural Revolutionary Group has become the target of attack." The Chairman sent this letter wholesale to the Congress, thus causing yet another shock to the meeting. During the panel discussion at the Congress, Guan Feng spoke for the first time and referred to this line of Liu and Deng as a "bourgeois reactionary line".

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<sup>305</sup> On February 9, 1964, Mao Zedong said in a conversation with a foreign party leader: There are a few people in our party who advocate "three harmonies and one less." "Three harmonies" means peace with imperialism, revisionism and reactionaries of various countries. "One less" means less aid to countries and parties that oppose imperialism. This is essentially revisionist thinking. There are a few such people in our liaison department (referring to Wang Jiaxiang, head of the central liaison department). The other department is the United Front Work Department, which deals with the domestic bourgeoisie, but there are some people who do not talk about class struggle and want to turn the socialist party into a bourgeois party. Every ministry can find such a person.

<sup>306</sup> "Three-selves" refers to private land (allowing members to cultivate private land), free markets (allowing peasants to run family sideline businesses), self-financing (allowing more than self-sufficient products to enter the rural market trade); "one guarantee" refers to the household contract responsibility system.

There has always been an unwritten rule in our Party that whenever a line struggle is mentioned, it is an issue of the highest level. In all the years since the founding of the Party, there have been only a few struggles within the Party between Chen Duxiu, Li Lisan and Wang Ming that have been described as line struggles. And every time there was a line struggle, it meant a change of leadership.

To be honest, my understanding of Liu Shaoqi's line of guiding the Cultural Revolution Movement and what he later called the "bourgeois reactionary line" was still very inadequate at that time. From my own experience, I just felt that in the past, when movements came, there were always people in the Party who pointed the finger at the masses and used the movements to rectify the masses, especially those who opposed or had opinions about themselves. This was the scenario from the Rectification and Anti-Rightist Movement in 1957 until this Cultural Revolution before the Chairman returned to Beijing. But I did not really think about what to call this line, or whether to call it a "bourgeois reactionary line". It was many years after the end of the Cultural Revolution when I really understood its broad historical meaning.

### **3. Drafting and adoption of the "Sixteen Articles"**

On 8 August 1966, the day after Chairman Mao's big-character poster was issued to the delegates, the 11th Plenary Session of the 8th Central Committee formally adopted the Decision of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China on the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution (also known as the "Sixteen Articles"). This document was a comprehensive exposition of Chairman Mao's policy on the Cultural Revolution, and was in fact a criticism of Liu Shaoqi's reactionary bourgeois line of suppressing the masses, except that the concept of reactionary bourgeois line was not yet used in this document.

The drafting process of the "Sixteen Articles" was relatively short, unlike the drafting of the "May 16 Circular", in which a special drafting team was set up. The drafting was chaired by Chen Boda, and all the members of the Central Cultural Revolution Group took part in it, and it was revised many times. I remember that Lin Biao and Ye Qun also took part in the discussions and revisions later. Finally, Chairman Mao himself chaired the discussions and finalised it.

The main content of the "Sixteen Articles" is a series of speeches by Chairman Mao on the Cultural Revolution, summarized in a single document. In his memoirs, Wang Li says that he and Chen Boda drafted this document, but this is not true. The people who played the biggest role were Zhang Chunqiao and Guan Feng. Wang Li only did some work on the transcription and collation. Chen Boda, Zhang Chunqiao and Guan Feng played a much greater role than he did.

The main spirit of the "Sixteen Articles" is to let go of the need to mobilise the masses to participate in the Cultural Revolution Movement, proposing that the masses should educate themselves and liberate themselves in the movement. Chairman Mao attached importance to the experience and principles of the Paris Commune, saying that "the big-character posters of Nie Yuanzi and seven others at Peking University are the manifesto of the Paris Commune - the Beijing Commune - of the 1960s." Chairman Mao wanted to put the principles of the Paris Commune into practice in the Cultural Revolution movement, to mobilise the masses to supervise the people's servants and to prevent the people's servants from becoming the people's masters. To this end, the "Sixteen Articles" state that "to be like the Paris Commune, a full electoral system must be implemented." Chairman Mao's idea was very clear, and this is what he later said about finding a way, a way of "bottom-up" mass movement, a way for the people to supervise the public servants, to overcome the "dark side" that exists in our Party.

On 10 August, Chairman Mao himself came to the Central Cultural Revolution reception station at the west gate of Zhongnanhai to meet the masses. Chairman Mao did not greet any of us in advance for this action. At that time I was still in my office at Diaoyutai dealing with documents. The comrade from the reception station called me. When the Chairman arrived at the reception station, I thought it would be too late for me to go there immediately. I then explained to them that they must pay attention to the safety of the Chairman and asked them to record everything the Chairman said.

Later, there were more and more people at the entrance of the reception station, and pedestrians passing by flocked to see that it was Chairman Mao. Even the bus passing in front of the gate stopped and did not leave. People on the bus poked their heads out to see Chairman Mao, and the guard soldiers, fearing that something might happen, rushed to flank the Chairman and left. Before he left, the Chairman told the crowd: "You must care about national affairs and carry the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution to the end". The news was published in the newspapers and on the radio the next day. This time, the Chairman's visit to the Central Cultural Revolution's reception station to meet the masses gave a very significant impetus to mobilising the masses to join the Cultural Revolution movement. As far as I can remember, this was the first time since the founding of the country that the top leaders of the Party and the State met the masses in person at the Central People's Visitor Station (during the Red Army and Yan'an period, it was common for Party and State leaders to meet the masses). On the contrary, it is now common for people to be taken away from the people's reception centres. Chairman Mao's statement that people's letters and visits are an important channel for the Party and State to reach out to the masses has been forgotten by many leaders.

#### **4. Re-electing the central leadership**

On 12 August 1966, the 11th Plenary Session of the 8th Central Committee adopted, by way of election, the relevant decision to reorganise the leading bodies of the Central Committee and re-elected the new members of the Central Political Bureau and the Standing Committee of the Political Bureau. After the election, the new Standing Committee of the Central Committee was ranked in the following order: Mao Zedong, Lin Biao, Zhou Enlai, Tao Zhu, Chen Boda, Deng Xiaoping, Kang Sheng, Liu Shaoqi, Zhu De, Li Fuchun and Chen Yun. The election of the new Politburo Standing Committee meant that Chairman Mao returned to the front line of Party leadership, while Lin Biao became the first Standing Committee member after Chairman Mao. The meeting also removed "Peng, Luo, Lu and Yang" from the positions of Secretary and Alternate Secretary of the Secretariat, and elected Tao Zhu as the Standing Secretary of the Secretariat, Ye Jianying as the Secretary of the Secretariat, and Xie Fuzhi and Liu Ningyi as Alternate Secretaries of the Secretariat.

At the closing meeting on 12 August Chairman Mao made another speech, emphasising the need to treat correctly comrades who had made mistakes since the Cultural Revolution, to give people the opportunity to correct their mistakes, to unite - criticise - unite, and to cure the sickness to save the patient. Chairman Mao's very famous words: "There is a party outside the Party, and a faction within the Party. If there is no party outside the Party, there is imperial thinking; if there is no faction within the party, there are a thousand strange things." They were also spoken at this closing session. At the closing session Lin Biao also made a speech saying that since the start of the Cultural Revolution, some people had almost killed this revolution, but at a crisis, Chairman Mao came out and turned the situation around and the revolution regrouped and continued its attack.

After the re-ranking of the Central Standing Committee, Liu Shaoqi was relegated to the eighth position from the original second position, while Tao Zhu was instantly brought up to the fourth position, responsible for chairing the daily work of the Central Secretariat. Many people were surprised by this. Chen Boda and Kang Sheng both had opinions about Tao Zhu. Chen Boda had a conflict with Tao Zhu when he was conducting a rural survey in Guangdong. There was also a lot of discussion about this within our Cultural Revolution Group. At this point, Jiang Qing came out and said, "You should stop talking about it, it was decided by the chairman".

Tao Zhu was very active during the time of co-optation and the Great Leap Forward. However, when it came to the "going-it-alone wind", he started to follow Liu Shaoqi a bit. Later, Zhang Pinghua criticized him, and Zhang Pinghua got the real instructions from the Chairman. He said to Tao Zhu, "You can't engage in the "household contract responsibility system". Once you do, many people will go down the slope and socialism will soon collapse, and it will be very difficult to go up again. So Tao changed his attitude and made it clear that he was opposed to the idea of "parcelling out production to the household". When Chairman Mao saw that he opposed the idea of the "household contract responsibility system", he approved of him. I think one of the important things that Chairman Mao looked at when he was looking at cadres at that time was his attitude towards upholding public ownership, collective ownership, and the "household contract responsibility system". Later, the chairman said that it was Deng Xiaoping who suggested to him that Tao Zhu should come to the central government to head propaganda work. However, after Tao Zhu became a member of the Standing Committee, he did not follow the Chairman's instructions, but still tried to protect Liu Shaoqi and others, deviating from Chairman Mao's line and policy day by day.

Although Deng Xiaoping was with Liu Shaoqi and was a firm advocate of sending work groups to suppress the masses, there were still some things he advised Liu Shaoqi on. But the Chairman kept trying to distinguish him from Liu Shaoqi. In the ranking of the Standing Committee of the Central Committee, he rose from the original seventh place to the sixth place. This time many people had opinions. How come he made the same mistakes as Liu Shaoqi, but ended up being promoted instead of being lowered? Some members of the Central Cultural Revolution and Central Committee members such as Xie Fuzhi had comments about Deng Xiaoping.

## **5. The Politburo meeting devoted to criticizing Deng Xiaoping**

I remember that it was Tao Zhu who went to relay everyone's views to the Chairman. The Chairman asked Lin Biao to chair a meeting attended by Politburo members and members of the Central Cultural Revolution Group, specifically to criticize Deng Xiaoping. At the same time, it was to help save him and to ease the conflicts between some central leaders and him. I also attended this meeting and acted as a recorder.

Unexpectedly, many people at this meeting were very critical of Deng Xiaoping. In particular, Zhang Yunyi and Xie Fuzhi, who had both worked with Deng Xiaoping, and knew Deng Xiaoping well. Zhang Yunyi said, "You are a man who has been dissolute since you joined the revolution, and when the revolution encountered difficulties, you ran away". And Zhang Yunyi made it very clear how he escaped. He said that when the Left and Right River Uprisings<sup>307</sup> were thwarted, you ran away to

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<sup>307</sup> From 1929 to 1930, Deng Xiaoping and Zhang Yunyi launched the Baise Uprising and the Longzhou Uprising, founded the Seventh Red Army and the Eighth Red Army, and opened up the Zuojiang Revolutionary Base. The

Vietnam and then from there to Shanghai". This matter has always been a sore point with Deng Xiaoping. Deng Xiaoping said he was there to report to the central government. Zhang Yunyi said, "To report, you can just send a telegram or send someone. The troops were about to collapse, and if you, the party representative, ran away again, the army would be in turmoil". The Chen (Gung) and Xie (Fuzhi) armies, of which Xie Fuzhi was the political commissar, were the main force in the Second Field. So Xie Fuzhi knew more about Deng Xiaoping, and what he uncovered were simply the skeletons in Deng Xiaoping's closet. He said, "Whichever battle it was, you did not listen to Marshal Liu, you arbitrarily took charge and ended up losing soldiers, and the result was a defeat; whichever battle, you would take the initiative, and the result was the loss of troops, you should have been your own political commissar, why did you always have to interfere with Marshal Liu's military command. Every time you interfered, you made us very passive".

That's why Deng Xiaoping hated both Zhang Yunyi and Xie Fuzhi so much that he later made sure to throw Xie Fuzhi's ashes out of Eight Treasures Mountain<sup>308</sup>. Talk about taking revenge for one angry word!

## **6. Burning of Chairman Mao's letter to Jiang Qing**

Lin Biao returned from Dalian to attend the 11th Plenary Session of the 8th Central Committee halfway through the meeting. When Lin Biao arrived, he was very active and spoke with great enthusiasm and a loud voice. It should be said that Lin Biao had a high level of prestige within the Party and the military at that time. His presence at the meeting played a great role at that time. At that time, Ye Qun and Jiang Qing were on very good terms. When the two of them spoke together, Jiang Qing always said, "Your one, our one"<sup>309</sup>. Ye Qun only said, "Our one", never "your one", and when she spoke of the Chairman, she only referred to him as Chairman.

The Chairman wrote a letter to Jiang Qing on 8 July 1966. After writing that letter, the Chairman had shown it to the Premier and Wang Renzhong. Both the Premier and Wang Renzhong copied it down. I later saw the copy from Tao Zhu. Zhou Jiading, the Premier's military secretary, told me that the Premier had made a neat copy in regular script with his own hands. The Premier took the letter written by the Chairman himself to Dalian and showed it to Lin Biao, who said he accepted the Chairman's opinion. Later the letter went back to Jiang Qing, who took the original copy of the letter and read it to us at a meeting of the Central Cultural Revolution Group.

It was during the 11th Plenary Session of the 8th Central Committee that Ye Qun came to Jiang Qing and said, "Our one" (referring to Lin Biao) was always uneasy about the letter that the Chairman had sent you and was afraid that it would be used to attack him in the future. Jiang Qing then asked the Chairman for advice. The Chairman said, "Then we should give the original letter to Ye Qun and leave it with them". But Ye Qun was still uneasy. She said that if it was left with them, they would not be able to handle it casually. Jiang Qing asked the Chairman again, and he said, "Then let's burn it". So Jiang Qing called Ye Qun and told me, in front of her, to take the original copy of the letter written by the Chairman with my guard Da Sun and burn it in the small garden outside the house. I took the

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base encompassed territory along the Left ("zuo") and Right ("you") Rivers and is sometimes called the Left and Right Rivers Uprising.

<sup>308</sup> Eight Treasures Mountain refers to the Babaoshan Revolutionary Cemetery in western Beijing. It is China's main resting place for the highest-ranking revolutionary heroes, high government officials and, in recent years, individuals deemed of major importance due to their contributions to society.

<sup>309</sup> These are affectionate terms amongst close friends for each other's spouse.

letter and ran with Da Sun to the small garden outside the house, found an empty flower pot, put the letter in it, and Da Sun lit the fire and burned it. As I was burning it, I felt sorry for it, for it was such a precious relic. Jiang Qing and Ye Qun were standing in front of the window watching us burn it. As far as I remember, the contents of the letter, which was later published on the basis of the Premier's handwritten copy, were consistent with the contents of the original letter. Some people say that the handwritten copy was modified when it was published, but this is not true.

### **7. My speech at the group meeting was criticised by Chairman Mao**

I made a speech at a panel meeting of the 11th Plenary Session of the 8th Central Committee, in which I said that we must carry the Cultural Revolution to the end. Otherwise, if we did not get it right, our Cultural Revolution would have the same result as the "Thermidorean Coup"<sup>310</sup> of the French Revolution. This speech of mine was published in the conference newsletter. I thought I had made a very profound statement. But Jiang Qing said to me, "What are you so proud of? If I told you what the Chairman had criticised you for, you would cry". I asked how the Chairman criticised me. She said, "The Chairman said, 'Don't talk nonsense about the army, you don't know anything about the army'". The Chairman also said, "Look at other people, Chunqiao, they never talk nonsense". When I heard that, I said to Jiang Qing, I understand, you tell the Chairman that I understand. In fact, Zhang Chunqiao talked with Jiang Qing and us in private about it, and he was also very uneasy about the army. It's just that he never said so in public. I didn't say much about the army in public after that. However, I always reported to the Chairman on the situation of the army that was reported from below, and the Chairman read it every time and gave several instructions.

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<sup>310</sup> The Coup d'etat of 9 Thermidor was a coup against the Jacobin Club leaders who led the Public Security Council during the French Revolution. Subsequently, the National Assembly voted to execute Maximilian Robespierre, Anton Van Louis de Saint-Joust and several other leading members of the Revolutionary Government.

## Chapter 11: The Red Guard Movement

1. Chairman Mao's strategic idea of training and creating millions of successors to the revolutionary cause of the proletariat
2. Chairman Mao's Meeting with the Red Guards
3. The Central Cultural Revolution Group and the Red Guards
4. The Red Guards and "Smashing the Four Olds"
5. The Great Historical Role of the Red Guards Movement

### **1. Chairman Mao's strategic idea of training and creating millions of successors to the revolutionary cause of the proletariat**

In view of the serious lessons learned from the restoration of capitalism in the Soviet Union by the Khrushchev revisionist clique, Chairman Mao spoke at length on the issue of "successors" and wrote down the following words himself.

"The successors to the revolutionary cause of the proletariat emerge from the struggles of the masses and grow up in the great wind and waves of revolutionary struggle. 'Cadres should be examined and identified in the course of a long struggle.' 'Cultivate and create millions of successors to the revolutionary cause of the proletariat.'"

Around 1964, Chairman Mao made another series of speeches on the "education revolution". The central message was that the old education system and educational ideology could not produce successors to the revolutionary cause of the proletariat, but only the seedlings of revisionism.

Chairman Mao's main objective in launching such an unprecedented mass movement as the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution was not only to prevent some of the "people in power" in the Party from moving towards capitalism for their own interests, but also to enable the masses of people, especially the youth, to be trained and tested in this movement. They were to be put to the test and to be nurtured into new people with communist ideas and ideals. It was in this sense that Chairman Mao saw the Cultural Revolution as a major battle against revisionism and a major school for training new communists.

On 24 July, after the Central Committee had adopted the "May 16th Circular" on the Cultural Revolution, the State Council of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China issued the "Circular on the Reform of Higher Education Enrolment" with the approval of Chairman Mao, reforming the college entrance examination system and postponing the enrolment of all colleges and universities nationwide for six months. Later on, it was decided to suspend classes in universities and secondary schools for half a year, so that university and secondary school students could join the Cultural Revolution and grow up. So the Cultural Revolution began on the "education front".

But when the student movement rose up, it was suppressed and combated by the reactionary bourgeois line pursued by Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping. Liu and Deng relied on the Party committees at all levels to implement their capitalist-reactionary line.

One of the most important provisions of the "Sixteen Articles" adopted at the 11th Plenary Session of the 8th Party Central Committee was to change the mass movement, which had traditionally been led by the Party committees at all levels and carried out from the top down, into a mass movement in which the masses would "liberate themselves and educate themselves" from the bottom up. And the Party committees at all levels must be tested and examined by the masses in this mass movement.

After the publication of the "Sixteen Articles", it was the teachers and students of universities and secondary schools who first responded. They held up the banner of "justifiable rebellion" and were brave enough to criticise the mistakes of the school party leaders, thus breaking the ideological confinement that had developed since the anti-rightist movement in 1957.

## **2. Chairman Mao's Meeting with the Red Guards**

As early as 29 May 1966, students of the High School affiliated to Qinghua University spontaneously formed a student organisation called the Red Guards. At the beginning, it was not very influential and was only one of many groups of students who formed themselves. They were later suppressed by the school's work group and were considered an "illegal organisation". So, on 24 June and 4 July they put up large posters in the school with the words "Long live the spirit of revolutionary rebellion" and "Again on Long live the spirit of revolutionary rebellion". Towards the end of July, they handed the manuscript of these two big-character posters to Jiang Qing, who immediately forwarded them to Chairman Mao. After reading it, Chairman Mao wrote a reply letter to the Red Guards of Qinghua High School expressing support on 31 July. This letter was not sent out at the time, but was issued as a meeting document of the 11th Plenary Session of the 8th Central Committee. But soon the letter reached the students. In this way, Red Guard groups were soon set up in various schools in Beijing and Shanghai and elsewhere. They all raised the demand to see Chairman Mao.

On 18 August, Chairman Mao reviewed and received for the first time millions of revolutionary teachers and students at the Tiananmen Tower. Chairman Mao specially asked the Central Security Bureau to prepare a military uniform for him. When the Premier found out about this, he said, "Then we, the leaders who accompanied Chairman Mao to the reception, should also wear military uniforms, as we are Chairman Mao's "old Red Guards". Lin Biao immediately gave an order to the General Logistics Department of the PLA to issue a set of uniforms to all the leaders of the Central Committee who were on Tiananmen Square.

On the Tiananmen Tower, Chairman Mao accepted the Red Guard armband given to him by Song Binbin, a Red Guard junior. This was a great encouragement to the Red Guards, who referred to Chairman Mao as their "Red Commander". From then on, the Red Guard movement was launched throughout the country.

The reception that day went on from early in the morning until late in the evening. Chairman Mao stood on the city tower for a long time and had to wave and shout to the crowd below from time to time, which was very tiring. Not to mention the fact that the Chairman was already 73 years old at that time, even a young man like me, who was only in his thirties at that time, felt very tired. When the Chairman felt the pain in his feet after standing for a long time, we advised him to go inside the citadel and sit down for a short rest. But before he could rest for long, Fu Chongbi came over and said that the Red Guards who had seen Chairman Mao in front of him had passed, but those who

had not seen him behind him refused to go, leaving a large section in the middle of the line. Whenever this happened, the Premier always shouted to the people below, telling them to hurry up and move forward. But no matter how much he shouted, the Red Guards below just wouldn't go, they kept shouting, "We want to see Chairman Mao!" Only when the Chairman came out and waved to them did the procession move forward. These scenes can be seen in the film documentaries of those years.

Chairman Mao's meeting with the Red Guards caused a huge reaction throughout the country. Red Guards and young students from all over the country rushed to Beijing from all over the world, all wanting to meet Chairman Mao. As a result, there was a climax of a great cascade of unprecedented proportions throughout the country. The number of Red Guards coming from all over the country continued to grow, and the scale of the receptions became larger and larger. With so many Red Guards coming to Beijing, where would they stay? The Chairman said, "They are all my guests, and there is really no place for them to stay, so they can squeeze in the dormitories of various institutions, schools and enterprises. Zhongnanhai could also give up some space for them to stay". But even if Zhongnanhai gave up its space, it would not be able to accommodate so many people. So we mobilised various institutions and schools to make room for them. If that didn't work, they had to be scattered to live in the homes of citizens. The climate in Beijing became colder after October, and many of the Red Guards from the south did not have cotton clothes or blankets. So we mobilised the units and citizens to help them with their own clothes and blankets. All these things alone made those responsible for receiving and accommodating the Red Guards in their lives feel exhausted.

In fact, the Chairman was also very tired and even though arrangements were later made for him to go to the reception in an open car, it was still very hard to sit down for a day. But the Chairman had no complaints and still insisted on receiving them over and over again. Many people expressed their incomprehension at the fact that Chairman Mao had received the Red Guards on such a large scale so many times. At first, I was the same way. Once, when the Chairman sat down to rest on the Tiananmen City Tower, he saw me and joked with me, saying that Qi Benyu had also come. "Ah, you are from Shandong, your ancestors and Mrs. Qi were the ones on whom they later used such cruel methods to kill and maim." This hatred has been passed on to the descendants of the Qi family. He said, "Madam Qi was very versatile and talented, but later died a tragic death". I said, "I heard from the old people in the clan that we are descendants of Qi Jiguang. But Mrs. Qi was, on the contrary, from our Shandong province".<sup>311</sup> Later on, they used such cruel methods to kill Lady Qi, and this hatred has been passed on to Qi's descendants. In our old home in Shandong, the surnames Qi and Lu did not intermarry. The Chairman said, "Oh, there is still this? I said, "Yes, but it is possible to make friends. I have a good friend surnamed Lu, and I was his introduction to the Party". The

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<sup>311</sup> Mrs. Qi (?-194 BC) was born near Heze City, Shandong Province during the Qin and Han Dynasties, and was favored by Liu Bang, the emperor of the Han Dynasty. They married and she gave birth to Liu Ruyi. Mrs. Qi hoped to make her son a prince of the Han Dynasty, but he was only made king of a smaller area near present-day Xi'an. After the death of Liu Bang, Emperor Hui Liu Ying came to the throne. His mother, Empress Lu, became the empress dowager. She ordered Mrs. Qi to be confined in Yongxiang, shaved her hair, tied her neck with iron rings, put her in a prisoner's red dress, and made her grind rice for hard labor. Mrs. Qi sang "Pumping Songs" while pounding the rice. Queen Mother Lu was furious when she heard that and she said, "Do you still want to rely on your son?" She had her hands and feet bound, gouged out her eyes, silenced her ears, made her drink a concoction to take away the ability to speak, and threw her in a cave room where she eventually died. Qi Jiguang (1528-1588), was not born in Shandong although his ancestral home was there. He was a famous anti-Japanese general, national hero, outstanding military strategist, calligrapher, and poet of the Ming Dynasty.

Chairman said, "Of course, you are modern people and you are the Communist Party". That made everyone laugh. At this point, I said to the Chairman, "You have received the Red Guards so many times. Now that the weather has also turned cold, is it time to pause?" Upon hearing this, the Chairman said that when he was young, he had met Dr Sun Yat-sen in Guangzhou and the scene had stayed with him for the rest of his life. He felt that Sun Yat-sen was a very modest person. Later, Sun Yat-sen took him seriously and trusted him, arranging for him to be the alternate Central Executive Committee member and acting propaganda minister of the Guomindang. He also had great respect for Sun Yat-sen, saying that he had to do things in his life to be worthy of him. He added that Lenin had died too early and not many young people in the Soviet Union had met Lenin. So he hoped that more young people could meet him so that they could carry on the cause of the older generation and the revolution to the end in the future. He said, "I couldn't rest from meeting so many Red Guards, and I was really tired after the day. But I still had to meet with them. Our future hopes lie in the hands of these young people. They are the ones who will produce the talent among them, and our cause depends on them". I said, "They are still children". He said, "That's right. Isn't it because of those young children that we are doing what we are doing today? I am now meeting millions of young people, and in the future there will be talents among them, who will inherit our cause". He also said that he had met Dr Sun Yat-sen and remembered him for the rest of his life, and he had never forgotten him. "When they meet me, they will not forget me either and will go and study me". The Chairman spoke very sincerely and we were all moved by what he said. The Chairman also asked how come no one had bothered to compile Sun Yat-sen's quotations so far.

### **3. The Central Cultural Revolution Group and the Red Guards**

From 18 August to 26 November 1966, the Chairman received more than 10 million Red Guards and revolutionary teachers and students on eight separate occasions. This was unprecedented in history.

Chairman Mao's feat of meeting the Red Guards on eight occasions turned the Cultural Revolution into an overwhelming and irresistible torrent. Tens of millions of young students came to Beijing from all over the country, and after they had met Chairman Mao, they went to many places to join up with others and visit the sacred places of the revolution. They then took the revolutionary spirit they had seen and learned with them back to each place. Students from Beijing also went to different parts of the country to bring the experience of the Cultural Revolution from Beijing to other parts of the country. By supporting the Red Guards movement, he mobilised and encouraged the masses to join the Cultural Revolution and ignite the fire of the Cultural Revolution throughout the country.

In the beginning, the Red Guards were mainly led by the "children of high cadres", but due to the support and acceptance of Chairman Mao, many student organisations joined the Red Guards. The students of the capital's colleges and universities set up the "Capital Colleges and Universities Red Guard Command" (First Division) and the "Capital Colleges and Universities Red Guard Headquarters" (Second Division).

The "First Division" was founded by Wang Dongxing with the support of his daughter Wang Yanqun (a university student at the Light Industry College), in liaison with some Red Guards from universities and colleges. Wang Dongxing begged Jiang Qing and me to go to their founding meeting, but I knew that Wang Dongxing was actually quite supportive of Liu and Deng's bourgeois reactionary line at the beginning, but he later changed his mind when he learned of the Chairman's attitude. So I was reluctant to go to their inaugural meeting, but Jiang Qing did go. Wang Dongxing's daughter, Wang

Yanqun, became the commander of the "First Division". Jiang Qing objected to this and said to me that this was not good. She said to me, "This is not good. He, Wang Dongxing, is working beside the Chairman. If he did so, people would think that his daughter was doing what the Chairman wanted her to do. When Wang Dongxing found out about Jiang Qing's opinion, he asked his daughter to resign from her post as commander. The "First Division" was put in charge of someone else instead.

The "Second Division" was in fact mainly formed by the conservative Red Guards of the Universities Protection Group. However, the Red Flag Combat Team, a rebel group from Beijing Aviation College, also joined the Second Division. Jiang Qing had a high regard for Han Aijing of the Red Flag of Beijing Aviation College and always regarded him as a promising young man. And at that time the Central Cultural Revolution Group was not very clear about the situation of the various Red Guard groups in Beijing universities. So Jiang Qing also attended the inaugural meeting of the First Division. But I didn't go.

Following Chairman Mao's decision to abolish the work groups sent to schools by Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping, the teachers and students of Beijing's universities and colleges split into the conservative mass organisations, which defended the work groups, and the rebel mass organisations, which opposed them. On the issue of how to evaluate the work groups and criticise their line, the conservatives and the rebels argued and clashed fiercely. The conservative groups received support from past leaders of the work groups and some of the upper echelons, while the rebel groups actively reported their continued oppression to Chairman Mao, the Party Central Committee and the Central Cultural Revolution, seeking the support of the Central Cultural Revolution.

During the meeting of the Central Cultural Revolution Group, Jiang Qing told us that we should support those students who had dared to rise up in rebellion during the work group period, criticized the work groups' line and were attacked, and support them in setting up a joint organization of Red Guards to rebel. So Wang Li, Guan Feng and I went to each school to contact them and support them in setting up the "General Command of the Red Guards Revolutionary Rebellion in the Capital's Colleges and Universities" (the "Capital's Three Departments").

I told Zhu Chengzhao of the Geological Institute that the First Division was government-run and the Second Division was conservative. I asked him to join forces with Kuai Dafu to form a "three divisions" with the rebel factions in the schools. I went to the inaugural meeting of the "Three Divisions", but Jiang Qing did not attend because she happened to be busy. In fact, as mentioned above, I was asked by Jiang Qing to support the establishment of the "Three Departments". The "Three Departments of the Capital" played an important pioneering role in the public criticism of the bourgeois reactionary line throughout the country.

In February 1967, with the support of the Central Cultural Revolution Group, the "Congress of Red Guards of the Capital Universities and Colleges" (the Red Congress) was established. Nie Yuanzi of Beijing University, Kuai Dafu of Qinghua University, Han Aijing of Beijing Aeronautical University, Tan Houlan of Beijing Normal<sup>312</sup> University and Wang Dabin of the Geological Institute all participated in the Red Congress, and were known as the "five leaders" of the Red Guard rebels in Beijing. These were the mainstream and the main force of the Red Guard movement in Beijing. They were different

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<sup>312</sup> "Normal" universities were originally teacher training universities, but today are generally comprehensive universities and not specifically training institutes for school teachers.

from the "old Red Guards" who, relying on their "high cadre" and "revolutionary cadre" origins, were beating people and raiding their homes, and the "Western Collective" and the "Western Red Guards" formed on 25 August. The "Old Red Guards", the "West", "East" and "Sea" groups that were formed on 25 August, and the "Linkage" that evolved from these groups in December 1966 are not the same thing at all. "Western Collective" and "Linkage", etc., are just a tributary and countercurrent in the Red Guard movement. They could only represent a small group of people who thought they were of "noble" origin, but later tried to defend the vested interests of the privileged bureaucratic class, while attacking and undermining the Cultural Revolution Movement.

However, the relationship between these "five leaders" and our Central Cultural Revolution was also different. Nie Yuanzi was already 45 years old, more than ten years older than me and almost as old as Jiang Qing, and it was a bit funny that she still called herself a Red Guard. Nie Yuanzi and Wang Renzhong were closer and she often went to Wang Renzhong's place. Although Wang Renzhong was only the deputy head of the Central Cultural Revolution at that time, he did not take Chen Boda into account at all in the Cultural Revolution group, and he was only superficially perfunctory towards Jiang Qing, and everything was done according to his own ideas. Wang Renzhong had Tao Zhu behind him. I think Nie Yuanzi relied on Wang Renzhong's support for her and always found ways to try to have her and the New Northern Commune control the Red Guard movement in Beijing and exclude other rebel groups. Behind her back, she assigned the Central Cultural Revolution to the needs of her own interests as the standard of right and wrong. She used both hit and pull methods on me. She once spoke well of me to Jiang Qing in front of me and encouraged my relationship with Wang Li and Guan Feng. I just laughed it off and did not believe her.

At the Geological Institute, at first we supported Zhu Chengzhao, but by the end of 1966 Zhu Chengzhao had followed Ye Jianying's daughter Ye Xiangzhen in not listening to the Central Cultural Revolution. So, after a meeting of the Cultural Revolution Group, on March 5, 1967, I called a meeting of representatives of different opinions within the College of Geology's East Is Red in the auditorium of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference. After listening to their views, it was announced that Wang Dabin was to replace Zhu Chengzhao as the main person in charge of the East Is Red of the Geological Institute. After Zhu Chengzhao made friends with Ye Xiangzhen, he became estranged from us. After I was released from prison, Zhu Chengzhao came to see me. He told me that at that time he followed Ye Xianzhen and often went to Ye Jianying, who often gave them ideas. Zhu Chengzhao said that at that time, in his heart, the weight of that side was much heavier than that of our Central Cultural Revolution. So he listened to them.

The one that did better at that time was the Beijing Normal University. Tan Houlan looked small, but she was very capable. She was good at uniting people, and she treated the professors and teachers of the university with respect, so there was very little opposition in Beijing Normal University. Nie Yuanzi, Kuai Dafu and others despised Tan Houlan, but it was Tan Houlan who did well. Wang Dabin was the only one who supported Tan Houlan. Jiang Qing also had a good opinion of Tan Houlan. When something was set up, she was able to implement it immediately and there was little opposition. This was not the case with Nie Yuanzi and Kuai Dafu, where the rival factions were very strong. Later, when it came time to send representatives of the Red Guards to Albania, all five leaders wanted to go, but the Chairman finally appointed Tan Houlan to go. Wang Dabin of the School of Geology also did a good job, and although there were differences of opinion, the whole school remained united and there was no organisational split. The Red Flag at Beijing Aeronautical University was also good, remaining united and not splitting up. The worst things were done by

Qinghua and Beijing Universities The main head of Qinghua's April 14<sup>313</sup> was also an anti-work group rebel and had different opinions from Kuai Dafu. Kuai Dafu could not treat and deal with it properly and could not unite those who disagreed with him, resulting in the split and confrontation in Qinghua Jिंगgangshan until it developed into armed struggle. On 28 July 1968, when the Chairman summoned the "Five Leaders" to a meeting, he said that he also did not agree with the claims made by the so-called "Thought of April 14 Must Win". The fact that the Chairman sent a labour propaganda team to Qinghua was in fact beneficial to Jिंगgangshan. However, Kuai Dafu fought with the workers and killed them. This was also factional expansion, which in the final analysis was an expansion of the mind, an expansion of selfishness and forgetfulness. These leaders of the rebellion should also seriously reflect on themselves when the Cultural Revolution movement failed.

At that time, I did not usually personally intervene at the universities. When something happened, I would bring in the "leaders" and ask them to deal with it themselves, which was more effective. This is also the experience I gained when I was working with the underground. I often gave them ideas on how to control the loudspeakers (now called "mastering the power of speech"), how to exercise administrative power, how to control transport (cars), how to organise meetings and maintain order, and so on. The biggest problem we faced at that time was the lack of money. The financial system was very strict at that time. And the school party committee gave all the financial power to the conservatives. I told the rebel Red Guards that you had to find a way to win over the accountants, and if you couldn't, you would should audit the accounts and transfer them to other jobs. At that time, all the money of the central organ was in the hands of the Premier and Li Xiannian, and we in the Central Cultural Revolution did not have any money in our hands. At this point, I told them to go to the Premier and Li Xiannian to request money. I am afraid the Premier knew in his heart that I had given them the idea behind the scenes, so he told me that the country was in financial difficulties and that the Red Guards should be told to be frugal in making revolution. Of course, when I was giving ideas to the rebel Red Guards, there were people behind the conservative group who were also giving ideas.

Among the Red Guards in secondary schools, I directly contacted Li Dongmin and Liu Gang, the leaders of the Red Guards in secondary schools. Through them, I was able to get a basic grasp of what was going on in the secondary schools.

As I had the most contact with the rebel Red Guards in the universities and secondary schools, I was called the "Red Guard" at some point. At some point, I became known as "Marshal Qi". The commander of the Beijing garrison, Fu Chongbi, approached Jiang Qing several times to transfer me to be the political commissar of the Beijing garrison. Jiang Qing did not agree.

After Wang Li and Guan Feng were investigated, I was rarely as active as before. By then, I was already being attacked by some people who said that I was behind all the wrongdoings and bad deeds done by the rebels and that I was their "black backstage". By the time I was also investigated, I knew in my heart that the doom of the Red Guards and their "five leaders" was about to come.

#### **4. The Red Guards and "Smashing the Four Olds"**

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<sup>313</sup> The Jिंगgangshan rebel organisation was established at Qinghua University on April 14, 1967. Eventually there were four distinct factions, one of which named itself "The Thought of April 14 Must Win". The latter was a more moderate group. The two groups fought a one hundred day battle against each other.

People who deny the Cultural Revolution always associate the Red Guards with the "smashing the four olds" in August 1966, the so-called "red terror" of the so-called "Red August", and the random ransacking of homes, beatings, and killings among them. It is associated with uncivilized and inhumane behavior such as destroying cultural relics. In fact, the situation here is very complicated.

After the Red Guards movement started in August 1966, the "old Red Guards" in some middle schools in Beijing took the lead, and soon a massive "smashing the four olds" campaign was launched in society.

Originally, the "smashing the four olds" was a call made in the "Sixteen Articles". We in the Central Cultural Revolution Group of course supported it, so when the Red Guards took to the streets to carry out the activities of "smashing the four olds", we spoke out and gave our support. The People's Daily even issued an editorial praising the revolutionary actions of the Red Guards. However, later, at the instigation of certain powerful people, the "Smashing the four olds" campaign turned into a campaign of raiding homes, beating and killing people, confiscating private property, and expelling at will the so-called "Black Six"<sup>314</sup> families of the "landlords, rich farmers, counter-revolutionaries, bad elements, rightists and capitalists". The "Black Six" families and people of bad origins were expelled from Beijing in an illegal manner.

These actions were in no way called for by the Central Cultural Revolution Group. In all the meetings held by the Central Cultural Revolution Group, not a single person made such a suggestion at the meetings. If you don't believe me, you can check the minutes of all the Cultural Revolution meetings. According to the investigation conducted by the Cultural Revolution Group at that time, it was Ye Jianying's "Capital Working Group" that was behind this "indiscriminate beating", "indiscriminate raiding" and expulsion of the "Black Six". The "Capital Working Group" was under the control of Ye Jianying. Wang Renzhong also played a small role in it, but they did not raise it at the meetings of the Central Cultural Revolution Group, let alone get its approval. Chairman Mao was even less aware of it.

In August 1966, when the Red Guards took to the streets to break the "Four Olds", the "Capital Working Group", in the name of strengthening the security of the capital, implemented a plan to drive out of Beijing some of the "rich, the landed, the rebellious and the bad" living in the city, as well as those with major historical problems. The main people they used to carry out this plan were a number of high school students who were the leaders of "high cadre children". They soon organised the so-called "Xicheng Branch of the Capital Red Guard Pickets" (or "Western Picket") and other organisations. I remember that at a meeting of the Central Committee attended by Chairman Mao, Ye Jianying even reported to him about the expulsion of a group of people from Beijing. At that time, the Chairman had doubts about this approach. The Chairman thought that as long as these people did not engage in ongoing sabotage activities, then the masses should be mobilized on the spot to monitor them, instead of simply driving them away. The Chairman said, "If you drive them all to the countryside, what are you going to ask the countryside to do?" As a result of the Chairman's statement, the Premier suspended the implementation of the plan.

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<sup>314</sup> Sometimes also the "black five" or "black seven" families, or categories of children. Early in the Cultural Revolution, under the influence of the theory of descent, and of class origin, people in these categories were discriminated against in the aspects of joining the party, graduating from the army, enlisting in the army, and promoting love and marriage.

Later, Ye Jianying once told a mass meeting about this incident, saying that for so many years after the liberation, some people had been hiding in the "deep courtyard" all day long, cursing the Communist Party and Chairman Mao. No one dared to touch them. Now the "Red Guards" have come and swept away all this social rubbish. He described this as a "monumental achievement".

At a meeting of the Central Committee held in the fourth quarter of 1966, someone had printed a pamphlet entitled, I think, "The results of the Red Guards' battle against the 'Four Olds'", which was distributed at the meeting as reference material. The booklet was about how to fight against the "landlords, rich peasants, counter-revolutionaries, bad elements and rightists" in society, and how to raid their homes and find a lot of gold and jewellery. The booklet also contained many photos of the materials used in the raids. After reading the pamphlet, I asked the Premier what would happen if all these items were to go out into society. The Premier said, "Don't worry, someone will take care of it". Later, I found out that the materials had been collected by the "Capital Work Group".

But in fact, some of the "confiscated materials" still found their way into society. I remember that once, after the Chairman had received the Red Guards, when the soldiers of the garrison were cleaning Tiananmen Square, they collected a lot of things that had been dumped, including shoes and bags that had been dumped and thrown away, as well as a large amount of gold and jewellery, which filled a large basket. All this gold and jewellery had been privately hidden in the pockets of those who had gone to raid homes. When Jiang Qing looked at the baskets, she said, "It seems that the junior generals also have a private agenda". Of course, most of this gold and jewellery were handed over to banks and other authorities. I said, "It's best to get a proper registration". The Premier said, "That's for sure". Later Fu Chongbi brought the receipts from the banks and other departments for us to see.

There is another thing I remember very clearly about the Capital Work Group. Chairman Mao once wrote an inscription on a painting called "Pipa Xing" by Bai Juyi and gave it to Lin Tie, who was the secretary of the Hebei Provincial Party Committee, and it can be regarded as one of the finest pieces of calligraphy by the Chairman. At the beginning of the Cultural Revolution, Lin Tie was overthrown. The "Capital Work Group" sent people to raid Lin Tie's house, and they found this calligraphy written by Chairman Mao. For some reason, they gave the calligraphy to Lin Biao. Later, Lin Biao asked Ye Qun to come and tell Jiang Qing and the Chairman that Lin Biao had seen the Chairman's calligraphy and loved it so much that he held it in his hands day and night. Ye Qun asked the Chairman if he could pass it on to Lin Biao. At that time, the Chairman did not say anything, but just waved his hand as a sign of agreement. Later, Lin Biao asked an expert in cultural relics to remove the word "Tie" from the word "Lin Tie" written on it and add the word "Biao" from "Lin Biao". The word "Biao" was added. After the Lin Biao Incident, the character was supposedly taken away by the Central General Office.

Unlike the Capital Work Group, the main focus of our Central Cultural Revolution Group at that time was on how to support the students who were persecuted by the capitalist-roaders to rise up against them. Of course, we also supported the masses' demand to "smash the four olds". However, the general direction of the struggle in the Cultural Revolution should be directed at the capitalist-roaders within the Party, not at the "landlords, rich peasants, counter-revolutionaries, bad elements and the rightists" in society. This point was always very clear to us.

Those who engaged in "indiscriminate beatings", "indiscriminate raids" and even killed people during the "smashing of the four olds" were mainly those who had been instructed and supported

behind the scenes, mainly by the so-called "Old Red Guards", the "sons and daughters of high cadres", "sons and daughters of revolutionary cadres" and "sons and daughters of military cadres". Of course, there were also some students who ran with them, who were not sons of high cadres, or even those who did not come from very good backgrounds, and who joined the fight in order to be active. But they were, after all, a minority.

## **5. The Great Historical Role of the Red Guards Movement**

The reason why the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution movement broke through the previous political movements, which were carried out from top to bottom, and turned into a mass movement from the bottom up, was inseparable from the role of the Red Guards movement. Without such a force, the lofty prestige of Chairman Mao alone would not have been possible. In previous movements, Chairman Mao had given many instructions, but they were defeated at the lower levels by selectively doing what was needed. Later, Chairman Mao spoke about this issue at the First Plenary Session of the Ninth Central Committee. From this point of view, it was Chairman Mao's prestige and the Red Guard movement that brought into play a spirit of initiative rarely seen in history and made it possible for the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution to be carried out rapidly and intensively throughout the country.

The Red Guard movement swept across the country, causing the leadership of party committees everywhere to be shaken and tested. This was exactly what Chairman Mao wanted to see. For in Chairman Mao's view, the Communist Party was in control of the country only because of the trust and support of the people. At that time, Chairman Mao often said to us: "Who gave us power? It was given to us by the people! We represented the people and defeated their enemies so that the people would support us. Therefore, one of the most fundamental aspects of the Communist Party is to rely directly on the masses of the people. The Communist Party entered the city and took charge of the country. Some people gradually became detached from the masses and reverted to being lords who rode on the backs of the people". In the past, Chairman Mao launched many campaigns to call on the masses to rise up and help the Communist Party rectify the situation and overcome bureaucracy. But these campaigns were all conducted under the leadership of party committees at all levels. In order to safeguard their own interests, they all became campaigns to rectify the masses. This was the case with the Rectification and Anti-Rightist campaigns in 1957 and the Four Clean-up Campaigns in 1964. Had Chairman Mao not returned to Beijing in time for the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, and had Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping been allowed to follow the same approach they did at the beginning of the Cultural Revolution, it would have been a repeat of these historical train wrecks.

After the Red Guard movement was launched, not only did the Red Guards forcefully attack the leadership of the Party committees at all levels that were implementing the erroneous line of Liu and Deng, but the Red Guards in Beijing first went to industrial and mining enterprises and made contact with workers there, mobilizing the masses of workers to participate in the Cultural Revolution.

The Red Guards in Beijing organised several "South China League" trips to Wuhan, Nanjing, Shanghai, Hangzhou, Fuzhou, Guangzhou, Chengdu and Kunming, bringing the experience of the Cultural Revolution movement in Beijing to these big cities and greatly promoting the development of the Cultural Revolution movement in those cities. In particular, he went to Shanghai, which had two million industrial workers and was the city with the largest concentration of workers in China.

The first Beijing Red Guards to go to Shanghai were not organized by our Central Cultural Revolution. It was Wang Renzhong and a few others, all Red Guards from the First and Second Divisions. They did not go to Shanghai to criticise the capitalist and anti-corruption line implemented by the Shanghai Municipal Committee, but to fight against the "landlords, rich peasants, counter-revolutionaries, bad elements and the rightists"; they beat people, raided their homes and cut their trousers. Later on, the Premier also organized a southward march of the Red Guards in Beijing, that time to protect the Shanghai Municipal Committee. Because Shanghai was the largest industrial city in the country, the industrial production in Shanghai was to affect the whole country.

At this time, our Central Cultural Revolution Group also received a large number of letters and visits from the people of Shanghai, reporting that the Shanghai Municipal Party Committee was carrying out the reactionary line of the capitalist class, suppressing the people from giving their opinions to the Party Committee, and imprisoning and persecuting those who did so. As a result, we mobilised some rebel Red Guards, including the "Three Departments of the Capital", to go to Shanghai. Jiang Qing personally spoke to Nie Yuanzi and asked her to go to Shanghai to lift the lid on the Cultural Revolution movement. Jiang Qing also did this in order to win Nie Yuanzi over from Wang Renzhong.

Later on, we learnt that it was the "Three Departments of the Capital" and other rebel Red Guards who had gone to Shanghai this time and, together with the rebel Red Guards in Shanghai schools, had contacted some rebellious workers in Shanghai and, with their planning and help, the workers in Shanghai had set up the "Shanghai Workers' Revolutionary Rebellion Headquarters" (the "General Workers HQ"). Since then, the Cultural Revolution in Shanghai had entered a new phase.

On reflection, Chairman Mao had been thinking about and exploring how to put into practice the principles of the Paris Commune, how to realise that the people are the masters of their own house, how workers can participate in the management of the state, and what form of democracy the people can use to monitor the people's public servants and prevent them from becoming the people's masters. I think that the "Four Big Principles" of the Cultural Revolution: the freedom of expression embodied in the "Big speaking out freely, Big airing of views, Big holding of debates, and Big-character posters"<sup>315</sup>, and the freedom of association embodied in the establishment of the Red Guards and mass organisations, should not be simply denied, but should be carefully summarised and perfected and regulated by law. It was inappropriate for Deng Xiaoping to repeal the provisions of the previous Constitution on the legitimacy of the "Four Big Principles" in the amendment to the Constitution after he came to power. Without a concrete form of supervision of public power by the people and an organised force, all supervision will be a mere formality.

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<sup>315</sup> On October 13, 1957, Mao Zedong said in his speech at Thirteenth Session of the Supreme State Conference, "A form has now been found for the rectification movement, namely, speaking out freely, airing views fully, holding great debates and writing big-character posters." See: Selected Works Vo 5 "Have Firm Faith in the Majority of the People".

## **Chapter 12: The "Old Red Guards", the "West City Pickets" and the "United Action Committee" in the Cultural Revolution**

- 1.The "Sons of High Cadres" Active in the Early Cultural Revolution
- 2.The "Old Red Guards" at the beginning of the Cultural Revolution
- 3.The Xicheng Branch of the Capital Red Guards' Picketing Team
- 4.Criticism of the reactionary "pedigree theory"
- 5.Criticism of the "theory of birth"
- 6.The Demise of the "United Action Committee"
7. Jiang Qing's speech on "Making New Contributions for the People"

### **1.The "Sons of High Cadres" Active in the Early Cultural Revolution**

The group of "sons and daughters of high cadres", now known as the "second generation of Reds", is still an active force in China's political and economic arena today. At the beginning of the Cultural Revolution, most of the "sons and daughters of senior cadres", who came from the fires of the Liberation War and the early years of the founding of the country, were studying at university and high school, with the passion, energy and impetus of youth, and were the first to actively perform on the stage when Chairman Mao launched the Cultural Revolution. The interests, differences, grievances and conflicts of their fathers behind them were also triggered and made public by the Cultural Revolution, and profoundly influenced the positions, orientations and actions of their children; especially in the early years of the Cultural Revolution, they had a great impact on the development of the movement.

Many of these "sons and daughters of high cadres" had a strong sense of superiority due to their fathers' revolutionary credentials and achievements. Those who were low-profile tried to be on par with the sons of the common people; but more liked to show that they were of noble origin and liked to compare themselves to their fathers' official positions, what houses they lived in, what cars they rode in and so on. They were well-informed, experienced and knowledgeable and most of their circle of friends were children of families with the same status as their fathers or comrades or colleagues. Some of them also looked down on the children of commoners who had achieved the highest grades and surpassed them, especially those who were from bad backgrounds but had good grades.

At the beginning of the Cultural Revolution, they naturally promoted their slogan in a high profile manner according to their self-understood class concept, which was actually a feudal "pedigree theory": "If I am a hero, my son is a good man; if you are a reactionary, your son is a bastard." They presented themselves as the natural successors of the revolution and divided themselves from the enemy on the basis of their family origins, completely deviating from the general direction of the struggle launched by Chairman Mao in the Cultural Revolution and focusing on the capitalist-roaders, and instead pointing the spearhead of the struggle at the "six black categories" of "landlords, rich peasants, counter-revolutionaries, bad elements, rightists and capitalists" and their children. This led to the "Red Terror" of August 1966 and its many horrific atrocities.

The activities of the "sons and daughters of high cadres" during the Cultural Revolution, especially the teenage youths among Beijing's secondary school students, during the early years of the Cultural Revolution, ranged from the "Old Red Guards" who were the first to initiate the formation of the

Red Guards; to those who considered themselves to be the best of the Red Guards and the backbone of the Red Guards, forming the "West City Branch of the Capital Red Guards" (referred to as the "West City Pickets"); followed by the "East Guards" and "Sea Guards". Then in December 1966, the "Capital Secondary School Red Guards Joint Action Committee" ("Joint Action") was established. Here we focus on how the Central Government dealt with the response to the Cultural Revolution.

## 2.The "Old Red Guards" at the beginning of the Cultural Revolution

As mentioned above, the Cultural Revolution first started from the "education front." In 1964 and 1965, Chairman Mao talked to Mao Yuanxin<sup>316</sup> and Wang Hairong<sup>317</sup>, criticising the problems on the education front and advocating a revolution in education. The content of these two talks spread first among the "sons and daughters of senior cadres" and then among the larger group of "sons and daughters of revolutionary cadres", who were inspired by them. It was no coincidence that the first Red Guard group was formed in Qinghua High School on 29 May 1966, on the basis that class struggle should be a major subject and that the school leadership was bourgeois. The Red Guards of Qinghua High School were subsequently supported by groups of "high cadres" and "revolutionary cadres" in some schools in Beijing with a high concentration of "high cadres", such as No.4 Middle School and No.6 Middle School, who also put up big-character posters under the name of "Red Guards". However, these spontaneous Red Guards were soon suppressed by a working group sent by the Central Committee to Beijing High School. On 24 June and 4 July, the Red Guards of Qinghua High School wrote two big posters, "Long live the spirit of revolutionary rebellion" and "Long live the spirit of revolutionary rebellion again". The large-character posters reproduced a 1939 quote from Chairman Mao: "Marxism consists of thousands of truths, but they all boil down to just one sentence: 'It is right to rebel'... And from this truth there follows resistance, struggle, the fight for socialism". The idea of "justifying rebellion" had since become the theoretical weapon of the Red

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<sup>316</sup> Mao Yuanxin (1941-), born in Urumqi, Xinjiang, from Xiangtan City, Hunan Province, was the son of Mao Zedong's younger brother Mao Zemin and the CCP's underground member Zhu Danhua. He is Mao Zedong's nephew. Soon after the Cultural Revolution began, Mao Yuanxin initiated and organized the "Kazakh Military Industrial Red Rebel Group." His special status made him the leader of the local Red Guards. On May 14, 1968, the Revolutionary Committee of Liaoning Province was established. Mao Yuanxin served as the deputy director of the Revolutionary Committee and was regarded as a "reliable successor." Soon, he served as the political commissar and deputy director of the Political Department of the Shenyang Military Region. In September 1975, Mao Zedong became seriously ill, and Mao Yuanxin went to the central government to serve as a "liaison officer" responsible for communication with the Politburo. After Mao Zedong's death in 1976, following the arrest of the "Gang of Four", Mao Yuanxin was also arrested because he was too close to Jiang Qing. He was held under the name of "isolation protection." This "protection" lasted for a full ten years, and it was not until 1986 that a court tried him and sentenced him to 17 years in prison. In 1996, Mao Yuanxin and his family moved to a new home allocated by the Shanghai Municipal Government. Mao Yuanxin's salary gradually increased. In February 2001, he retired as a senior engineer and received a pension of more than 1,000 yuan a month. He now spends most of his time studying. In September 2003, people from all walks of life in Xinjiang commemorated the 60th anniversary of the sacrifice of Mao Zemin and other martyrs. Mao Yuanxin and his wife were invited to participate in the commemoration.

<sup>317</sup> Wang Hairong (1938-2017), graduated from the Russian Department of Beijing Normal University in 1964, and then studied English at Beijing Foreign Studies University. She joined the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in November 1965. From July 1971 to May 1972, she served as the Deputy Director of the Protocol Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and participated in the reception of Kissinger's secret visit to China and Nixon's visit to China. From May 1972 to July 1974, she served as Assistant Minister of Foreign Affairs, in charge of protocol affairs. From July 1974 to February 1979, she served as Vice Minister of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China. After April 1984, she served as deputy director of the Counselor's Office of the State Council.

Guards and an important guiding principle of Chairman Mao in launching the Cultural Revolution, mobilising and arming hundreds of millions of revolutionary rebels to actively and courageously participate in the Cultural Revolution. It was then that I understood why Chairman Mao affirmed what I had written. "Study History for the Sake of the Revolution." At the end of July 1966, after seeing the two large-character posters written by the Red Guards of Qinghua Affiliated High School, Chairman Mao wrote a letter to the Red Guards of Qinghua University Affiliated High School on 31 July and issued it at the 11th Plenary Session of the 8th Central Committee on 1 August. On 3 August, Wang Renzhong made an appointment to meet the Red Guards of the Qinghua University Affiliated High School and showed them the letter written to them by Chairman Mao. The message of Chairman Mao's support for the Red Guards spread rapidly and the Red Guards became a glorious name. On 18 August, Chairman Mao met for the first time with millions of revolutionary teachers and students and Red Guards in Tiananmen Square, where he wore a green uniform and the Red Guard armband presented by Song Binbin. Many "sons of high cadres", who were the first to take advantage of this trend, naturally took the lead and, with the "sons of revolutionary cadres" as the main body and with their Red Five origins<sup>318</sup> as a condition, took the lead in organising and setting up Red Guard groups in various schools under various names. The backbone of this group of Red Guards, mainly the "sons of revolutionary cadres", was later called the "Old Red Guards" by them.

At the beginning of the Cultural Revolution, the "Old Red Guards" played a pioneering role in propagating Chairman Mao's idea that "rebellion is justified", breaking through the ideological confines placed on the revolutionary masses, mobilising the masses into the Cultural Revolution movement and setting up rebel mass organisations one after another. In the history of the Cultural Revolution movement, they undoubtedly played a pioneering role as the first thrust.

With the Cultural Revolution launched by Chairman Mao and supported by hundreds of millions of revolutionary people, the trend was unstoppable. Most of the opponents of the Cultural Revolution in the Party were not openly resisting the trend, but rather fighting for the leadership of the movement, and by seeking to control and influence the leaders who emerged from the movement, they were led to divert the goal of the struggle of the Cultural Revolution away from the general direction that Chairman Mao's Cultural Revolution movement was a struggle against capitalist-roaders. After Chairman Mao's decision to abolish the work groups at the end of July 1966, the groups mostly relied on the support of the "sons and daughters of senior cadres" or "sons and daughters of the revolutionary cadres" in universities and secondary schools as its leaders. With "revolutionary cadres" as the backbone, the Red Guards were formed under various names in order to continue to control the leadership of the Cultural Revolution movement and continue the work groups' line. After Chairman Mao met with the Red Guards on 18 August 1966, a large number of "old Red Guards", who fervently advocated the feudal lineage theory that "If the father is a hero, the son is a good man, while if the father is reactionary, the son is a bastard", were led into society to raid homes and indiscriminately kill the so-called "Black Six", such as "landlords, rich peasants, counter-revolutionaries, bad elements, rightists and capitalists". They ignored Chairman Mao's letter to the Red Guards of Qinghua High School, which called on them to pay attention to the need to unite all those who could be united; they also ignored the policy of the "Sixteen Articles", which stated that they should fight with persuasion and not with arms, and instead used violence to create their "Red Terror" in Beijing.

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<sup>318</sup> At the beginning of the Cultural Revolution, it referred to the children of five red classifications: workers, poor peasants, lower middle peasants, revolutionary soldiers, and revolutionary cadres.

The atrocities committed by these "old Red Guards" were soon reported to the Cultural Revolution Group by journalists sent by the Central Cultural Revolution. At the same time, we also received a large number of letters from the public accusing some Red Guards of atrocities. I took these letters and the journalists' reports and reported them to Jiang Qing. Jiang Qing told me that she had also learned of the seriousness of the situation from other sources.

In this regard, the Central Cultural Revolution Group held a special meeting to discuss the matter, in which Premier Zhou also participated. All of us were firmly opposed to the violence of these "old Red Guards", mainly the sons of high cadres, who beat people and raided their homes indiscriminately, and to all their atrocities. The Premier was also firmly opposed to these indiscriminate beatings. At the meeting, the Premier and Jiang Qing asked me to go immediately to understand the situation and to stop the "old Red Guards" from beating and killing people indiscriminately. The Premier also sent PLA soldiers from the garrison to go with me.

I took the PLA soldiers first to the Dongfeng Market in Wangfujing (the former Dong'an Market was renamed Dongfeng Market)<sup>319</sup>. The whole market was occupied by the "old Red Guards" from some high schools in the east of the city and was used as a stronghold for illegal detention, interrogation and torture. As soon as I arrived, the leaders there already knew I was coming and they were well-informed and were waiting for us at the entrance. At first a few people tried to come up and stop me from going in, but they were immediately stopped by the PLA soldiers who went with me. The soldiers said, "This is the head of the central government, and if any of you disobeys orders, we are under orders that we can take measures against you". At this, they were silent; they were going around arresting people, but they were afraid of being arrested by others themselves. I told them to open all the small rooms with closed doors, and when I went in, I saw how inhumane it was. Most of the people being held illegally inside had been beaten up and covered in blood, and there were slogans written on the walls in the blood of living people, such as "Long live the Red Terror". In one room I saw a female "Red Guard" holding a steel whip in her hand and whipping it at a woman in her twenties, I hurriedly asked the soldiers to go over and take it from her. I went up to her and asked her, "Why are you beating her?" She said, she is a bad element and has screwed many men. I said, "Nonsense, even if she is a prostitute, you have no right to beat her like that". I told the PLA soldiers to immediately take this battered woman and the others who had been injured to the hospital, to release all the other detainees and to confiscate all the torture instruments, which turned out to be several baskets full.

At that time, I also saw several public security police officers with these "old Red Guards", and I guessed that the local police station had provided them the list of those arrested. So, I went to the police station there again. When the leader of the police station saw me, he was very nervous. I asked him if his police station had provided them with the list. He said, yes. They had done so in accordance with the city's instructions. I asked him, "Who from the city gave you the instructions?" He said that he had heard that the city's deputy mayor, Wan Li<sup>320</sup>, had called specifically to take care

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<sup>319</sup> During the early stages of the Cultural Revolution, Red Guards renamed many street and place names with revolutionary connotations. "Dong'an" ("peaceful East") became "Dongfeng" ("East Wind") with the association of "The East wind prevails over the West wind", or socialism prevails over capitalism.

<sup>320</sup> Wan Li (1916-2015), joined the Communist Party of China in May 1936. He was a member of the 12th and 13th Central Political Bureau, secretary of the Secretariat of the Beijing Municipal Committee of the Communist Party of China, and deputy mayor of Beijing. He was a former Vice Premier of the State Council, Chairman of the Standing Committee of the Seventh National People's Congress. During the Cultural Revolution, he was struggled against and criticised, but in March 1971, he was appointed as a member of the

of it. A comrade from the police station also whispered to me that they were also uncomfortable with the atrocities committed by the "old Red Guards" to whom they had transferred the list. They killed many people every day, and then they called the crematorium to send a car to take the bodies away and burn them the same day. It was impossible to investigate.

After I came back, I told Xie Fuzhi about this. Xie Fuzhi said that this was by no means an instruction from the Ministry of Public Security, it was arranged by Beijing Municipality itself. Wan Li was the deputy mayor in charge of public security in Beijing and a member of the Capital Work Group. They never reported the incident to the Ministry of Public Security. Xie Fuzhi was also one of the leading members of the "Capital Work Group". I told him, "In my opinion, if it was an order from the Capital Work Group, then you should also know about it". Xie Fuzhi said that it was all up to the army there, and he could not play any role there at all. Xie Fuzhi disagreed with their indiscriminate arrests, raids, beatings and killings, believing that they were doing something different from what they had always done and were messing around. But none of those people listened to him at all. Therefore, he was not willing to bother much about their affairs and seldom even went to meetings.

I brought the confiscated torture instruments straight back to the conference room of the Central Cultural Revolution at Diaoyutai and reported them on the spot to the Premier, Jiang Qing and the Central Cultural Revolution Group. All those who saw them were very shocked and angry. At first Jiang Qing saw the bloodstained torture instruments I had brought with me and shouted, "What are you doing bringing these things, take them away". She was a person who could not see blood. But she quickly said, "Aren't they trying to discredit the Cultural Revolution by doing this?" Her political sensitivity was indeed very strong. Ye Qun also made it clear that Lin Biao had always been against beating people up. But Chen Boda was saying at this point, "A revolution, as such, always comes with the smell of blood". He also quoted that this was what Gorky had said. He also echoed Jiang Qing's previous criticism of me, saying that I was a bit of a petty-bourgeois warmonger, had not gone through the revolutionary storm and was a bookworm. So, after September, when we continued to suppress the "West" and "East" pickets, which by then consisted mainly of these "old Red Guards", and which had imprisoned and beaten people, we sometimes asked Chen Boda to go with us. When he went to the site, he could not stand the brutal scenes on display, so in the future he was even more motivated than I was when he opposed the atrocities committed by the "old Red Guards" of the "West City Pickets".

In the second half of August 1966, the "old Red Guards" supported the massacre of a family in Daxing County, a suburb of Beijing. In several communes in Daxing County, they arrested, tortured and interrogated some of the landlords, rich peasants, bad elements and rightists. On the pretext of preventing "class reprisals", they also took their wives and children, some of whom were infants, and rounded them up. Many of them were beaten to death on the spot, and those who did not die were driven to a large pit where they buried their families alive. The brutality was appalling, a fascist atrocity unheard of since the founding of the country.

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Standing Committee of the Beijing Municipal Committee and deputy leader of the Urban Construction Group of the Municipal Revolutionary Committee. In January 1975, Wan Li was appointed Minister of the Ministry of Railways. After Deng Xiaoping's return to power, Wan Li threw his support behind Deng Xiaoping's proposal to implement comprehensive rectification and followed him along the capitalist road.

After receiving reports of a massacre in Daxing County, Wang Li and I drove to Daxing in the night. But by the time we got there, those who had presided over the massacre had already got wind of it and run away. We asked the local cadres what was going on. They said that some Red Guard-like people were directing the local militia to carry out the massacre. Some of the "Red Guards" were too old and did not look like students. And they said that before they came, there were people in the city who called by phone, telling us to take care of them, so people from the Public Security Department of Daxing County provided household registration materials, and some local police led the way.

At that time, Kang Sheng's granddaughter, Zhang Li, was working as a cadre in the Youth League Committee in Daxing County, where she had been assigned after graduating from Beijing University. Wang Li knew her, so we called her to come over. Zhang Li told us that she had indeed received instructions from above beforehand. But she wasn't quite sure exactly which superior it was, as others had put a block on her, not speaking to her and not allowing her to attend meetings. She said that she could not come out and say anything at that time, otherwise people would accuse her of having a problem with her class position. She also told us that it was not just one commune that did this, but several communes did it.

Wang Li and I rushed back to Diaoyutai that night and it was already after four in the morning. When I got back, I immediately called Ma Li, the secretary of the new Beijing Municipal Committee, whom I knew well, and asked him to take care of the matter. The next day, Ma Li personally took his people to Daxing County. On behalf of the new Beijing Municipal Committee, Ma Li announced on the spot that if any more indiscriminate beatings or killings occurred, they would be punished as active counter-revolutionaries.

We also reported it to Chen Boda. Chen Boda didn't take it seriously at first, only saying that you had handled it right. We said to Chen Boda, "You are the head of the Central Cultural Revolution and we are just group members. When something like this happens, if the Chairman pursues it, you will have a big responsibility". I said, "This is something you have to come out and speak about, otherwise you will be responsible for history in the future". He was horrified at hearing this, and the next day he came out and spoke, strongly denouncing such fascist atrocities.

After personally going to the scene to investigate and synthesize the situation reflected by various parties, I told Chen Boda that we had to write a report to Chairman Mao and the Central Committee in a hurry to stop this kind of thing. Otherwise, something big would happen. Chen Boda asked me to write it. So I went to Guan Feng and Wang Li to discuss it together. He said, "I'm afraid someone is behind this and is deliberately trying to create chaos by beating and killing people". I said, "But now we can't find any direct evidence of who is behind the sabotage". He said, "We can't just write about the beatings, we have to first write about the achievements of the Cultural Revolution, how the Red Guards were so energetic, how they smashed the four olds and created the four news, and how they did a lot of work. One of the problems is that some so-called "old Red Guards" beat and even killed people at will. Also in our report, we mentioned the problem of family raids. Anyone who wore a Red Guard armband could raid a home.

In this report, we also mentioned Wan Li in particular. The reason is that from what we learned when we went down there and from what the Cultural Revolution's "Express Group" reported, all these beatings and set-ups were backed up by instructions from Wan Li and others from the city to the local police stations. Wan Li was originally a member of the old Beijing Municipal Committee under Peng Zhen, but he did not fall with him because he was a regular at Deng Xiaoping's poker

table. He was also a key member of the "Capital Work Group". We have described how Wan Li instructed the public security police stations in Beijing to provide the "Old Red Guards" with lists of people to arrest and raid their homes. In the Daxing County massacre, it was also the local public security department that provided the list on the instructions of Wan Li and others, which was included in the report.

At the end of this report, Guan Feng also suggested that some people were deliberately sabotaging the Cultural Revolution movement, that they were pursuing a work group line without a work group, and that they were interfering with the general direction of the Cultural Revolution movement by beating, smashing, looting, arresting, killing and raiding.

Our report was written on 26 August 1966 and sent first to Chen Boda and Jiang Qing, and the next day Jiang Qing and Chen Boda signed it and reported it to the Chairman. On the morning of the third day, 28 August, the Chairman approved it as soon as he got up. The Chairman approved it to Lin Biao, the Premier, Kang Sheng and all the members of the Central Cultural Revolution Group. Why did the Chairman give it to Bo Yibo? I asked Chen Boda this question. He said that the Chairman had many channels to learn about the movement and that not only was Wan Li involved in these matters, but Bo Yibo was also involved. I also asked why Wan Li was still working when he was a person trusted by Peng Zhen and should have stepped aside. Chen Boda said that Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping trusted Wan Li, and he was afraid that the new municipal committee was still using him.

Then, in the afternoon of 29 August, Chairman Mao chaired an enlarged meeting of the Standing Committee of the Central Political Bureau, and the Chairman personally invited the Premier, Ye Jianying and the Central Cultural Revolution to a meeting with him. At the meeting, we gave a specific report on the "Old Red Guard" organization's indiscriminate arrests, beatings, raids and killings. In particular, we talked about the tragic case of the extermination of a family in Daxing County. The Chairman asked, "Whose invention is this?" The Premier said that the Central Government had certainly not set it up in this way. Xie Fuzhi also said that the Ministry of Public Security did not know about it beforehand. Ye Jianying did not say a word. Chairman Mao solemnly said that the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution could only be fought by persuasion, not by armed combat. These words were included in the "Sixteen Articles" issued by the Central Committee not long ago (they were also added by the Chairman, but it is not stated in the document that they were said by Chairman Mao). At the meeting, it was decided that Chen Boda would draft an editorial for the People's Daily, the title of which quoted the Chairman's words: "Fight by Persuasion, Not by Arms". It was later published in the People's Daily on 5 September 1966. After this, "Fight by persuasion, not by arms" became a quotation from Chairman Mao.

Guan Feng summarized the activities of the "Old Red Guards" and other organizations as a continuation of Liu and Deng's line in the new situation, which was essentially a "variant" of Liu and Deng's line in society. Guan Feng was indeed highly theoretical. Wang Li was also very impassioned when he slapped the table and said that they were "selling dog meat with the head of a sheep" (meaning that they were selling the dog meat of Liu and Deng's line with the head of a sheep of the cultural revolution). I, on the other hand, said that they were actually a dissident force undermining the Cultural Revolution movement.

On the way to Daxing County, Wang Li and I saw red paint on the walls of the houses, many banners with red cloth, and red flags everywhere. We asked the local cadres what this was all about. They said that this was a "red ocean". Someone from above had set this up. I said to Wang Li, "If this is done, and if it is spread all over the country, how much paint and fabric will be wasted, and the people will have to pay for it themselves. This approach is completely formalistic and not at all meaningful. Later on, we saw more reports that the "Red Ocean" was growing in the country, so we wrote another report to the Chairman on this matter, mentioning that some people down there were engaged in the "Red Ocean". The Chairman attached great importance to this kind of thing and gave special instructions on it, and also had the Central Government issue a document to stop the "Red Ocean".

### **3.The Xicheng Branch of the Capital Red Guards' Picketing Team**

During the Cultural Revolution, Premier Zhou was kept informed of the activities and movements of the Central Cultural Revolution Group. The decision for me to investigate and deal with the atrocities committed by the Old Red Guards was made at a meeting of the Central Cultural Revolution Group, which Premier Zhou also attended. The Central Cultural Revolution and Chairman Mao were firmly opposed to the Red Guard movement's policy of beating people up, killing them and raiding their homes in violation of the "Sixteen Articles", which called for the use of civil rather than military combat, and demanded that it be stopped immediately.

Beijing No.4 Middle School is a high school with a high concentration of "high cadre children". Kong Dan, a high school student at No. 4, had parents who had worked with Premier Zhou for a long time. Zhou Rongxin, who was the Secretary General of the State Council at the time, also knew Kong Dan well. At the 11th Plenary Session of the 8th Central Committee, Kong Dan, as the only representative of a high school student, was arranged to attend the session. Chen Yi's son, Chen Xiaolu, was a student at the 8th Middle School in Beijing. On 25 August, Kong Dan, Chen Xiaolu and others took the lead in setting up the Xicheng Branch of the Capital Red Guards Picket ("West Pickets")<sup>321</sup>. This was followed by the establishment of the "East Picket" and the "Sea Picket". Kong Dan, who considered himself to be the best of the Red Guards, the backbone of the Red Guards, had to stand up to enforce policies, stop the Women and maintain order, and to picket other Red Guard groups. The timing and activities of the "West City Pickets" were in line with the fact that the Central Government was investigating and dealing with the atrocities of the "Old Red Guards" and Chairman Mao had issued a directive that "we should fight by persuasion, not by arms".

The "general order" issued by the "West City Pickets" and their actual actions showed that their position was based on protecting the safety and order of the "old cadres of their fathers' generation", and thus soon developed into a confrontation with the Red Guards of the rebel faction who opposed the line of Liu and Deng. The rebellion against Liu and Deng's line soon developed into a fight against the rebellious Red Guards. Kong Dan organised and led the "West City Pickets" team, obstructing and driving away thousands of students and teachers from the Beijing Geological Institute's Dongfanghong and forcing them to petition the Ministry of Geology, and students and teachers from the Beijing Aeronautical University Red Flag Rebels<sup>322</sup>, and forcing them to petition the National Defence Commission, and physically clashing with them to do so.

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<sup>321</sup> "Xicheng" means the west of the city, hence the abbreviation "West Picket".

<sup>322</sup> The "Dongfanghong" ("East is Red") and Red Flag Rebels were Red Guard organisations.

The spearhead of the rebellion was directed at the "six black categories" of "landlords, rich peasants, counter-revolutionaries, bad elements, rightists and capitalists". They often used violent means to carry out their tasks and maintain order", with military belts and steel whips being their usual tools. They committed countless atrocities against those they identified as targets of their struggle, and drove more than 80,000 so-called "Black Six" families out of Beijing. The children of such families and all the cadres, masses and Red Guards who opposed their actions were affected by this. Their slogans were: "Only the leftists are allowed to rebel, not the rightists" and "Long live the Red Terror!" The so-called "Old Red Guards", represented by the "West Pickets" and dominated by the "sons of high cadres" and "sons of revolutionary cadres" had already aroused public indignation among the Beijing public, to the extent that they were afraid to "hear about Su and Guo".

After the publication of the editorial "Fight by persuasion, not by arms", we continued to monitor and enforce the prevention of violence. By this time, most of the "old Red Guards" were members of the "West", "East" and "Sea" pickets. In the name of the "West Pickets", they were even more fanatical in setting up "prisons" and "labour camps" to imprison and torture "enemies" and "bad guys" as they saw fit. Chen Boda, Wang Li, Guan Feng and I went one by one to Beijing's fourth, sixth, eighth and First of August middle schools, where the "West Pickets" and "East Pickets" groups were rampant, shutting down their private "prisons" and "labour camps" and collecting the weapons. When we went there, we were driven by military vehicles from the garrison and took the PLA from the garrison with us. The members of the "West" and "East" groups did not dare to resist in the face of our massive troops. As a result of our resolute action, the unhealthy trend of beating people up, killing them and raiding their homes in Beijing was basically stopped.

To this day, many members of the "West pickets" sing the praises of their actions back then, arguing that they are credited with protecting the "old cadres", and that while the "West pickets" and the "old red guards" are responsible for the violence they committed, they argued that "it was difficult to hold the headquarters of the West Pickets responsible, and that only those individuals who committed the violence could be held responsible." But at the same time, they blamed all the violence and destruction that occurred during the Cultural Revolution on Chairman Mao's launching of the Cultural Revolution and on the Central Cultural Revolution Group.

#### **4.Criticism of the reactionary "pedigree theory"**

At the beginning of August 1966, a couplet was circulating in Beijing's high schools: "If the father is a hero, the son is a good man; if the father is a reactionary, the son is a bastard", with the inscription "Ghosts see sorrow". This was a piece full of feudal ruling class "pedigree". As soon as it came out, it sparked a wide-ranging debate among students.

Both Jiang Qing and Chen Boda went to speak and rejected the couplet. At that time, they still wanted to start with ideological work, and proposed to change the couplet to read: "Children of revolutionary parents will be their successors, while children of reactionary parents should rebel against them", with the horizontal inscription: "As it should be". The succession referred to here was an ideological succession, an ambiguous proposition, but even this was not accepted by those people. In fact, the real aim of these people was to take power, and they wanted to take the power to lead the Cultural Revolution movement in the first place. When the work group was in place, most of them supported it, and it took most of them as its most reliable force; when the work group was removed, they had to take power themselves. Yet this was completely contrary to the purpose of the Cultural Revolution, which was to oppose bureaucratic privileges, and now they wanted even

greater privileges instead. If they were to lead the Cultural Revolution, then they would still turn out to suppress the rebellious masses. Because in the eyes of these people, students from bad backgrounds are so-called "sons of bitches". Even students from ordinary peasant and worker families were nothing in their eyes.

Most of these people were still children of 15 or 6 years old at that time. There were certain words that their parents dared not speak and they came out to speak. On this point, Chairman Mao saw it very clearly.

In the debate around this couplet, a character called Tan Lifu<sup>323</sup> emerged. He was a student of the Beijing Institute of Technology and was very eloquent. He put up large-character posters and gave speeches everywhere, advocating the "lineage theory". Tan Lifu's speech received strong support from some people and was quickly distributed throughout the country, and in the countryside to the production teams of the commune, spreading faster than even the "Central Document". Some uninformed people even thought that Tan Lifu was a member of the Central Committee. This shows that there was a great force behind him at the time.

Tan Lifu's father used to be the head of the Supreme Procuratorate and was originally under Kang Sheng's command. So Kang Sheng came to talk to me and Guan Feng to see if we could win Tan Lifu over. We knew it was impossible, but because Kang Sheng had come to say hello, we weren't going to make things difficult for him. In November 1966, we decided to bring Tan Lifu in for a talk, trying to talk some sense into him.

Guan Feng and I called him in and talked to him in the reception room at the west gate of Zhongnanhai. At first he thought we took him seriously, so he came up and told us a lot about the "truthfulness" of the "pedigree theory". I interrupted him and said, "You are interfering with Chairman Mao's strategic deployment, do you know that?" When he saw that the situation was not right, he argued that I was putting a big label on him, saying that Chairman Mao had not said he was wrong either. I said what Comrade Jiang Qing conveyed was Chairman Mao's thinking. Parents who

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<sup>323</sup> Tan Lifu(1942-) is the son of Tan Zhengwen, deputy procurator of the Supreme People's Procuratorate. He joined the Communist Party of China in June 1966. He initiated the establishment of the Red Guards organization of Beijing University of Technology. His couplet about class origins spread across the country at an extremely fast speed. In addition to Chen Boda's criticism of it three days after it was posted and Jiang Qing's alternative couplet which came another four days later, on August 6, 1966, there was also Zhou Enlai's criticism (on October 9) that "Tan Lifu's couplet is a typical example of 'left in appearance but right in reality'". Tan Lifu counter-attacked on August 12 with a big-character poster proposing that the content of the couplet should be promoted as the party's class line, and it should be "elevated to a policy and uplifted." On October 16, Chen Boda attacked Tan Lifu at the Central Working Conference. Mao repudiated the speeches by Tan on October 24, when he said "Some students are not born well. Can we all be born well?" Later, Kang Sheng, Jiang Qing, Zhang Chunqiao, Yao Wenyuan and others criticized Tan Lifu on various occasions without naming names. Not long after the incident, on December 18, 1966, Tan Lifu was still arrested and sent to prison. In order to curb the vicious development of "bloodline theory" across the country, the Central Cultural Revolution planned to convene a ten-thousand-person criticism conference in Beijing to thoroughly criticize "bloodline theory" and criticize Tan Lifu, but this was cancelled by Zhou Enlai. After Zhou Enlai and the Central Cultural Revolution team repeatedly negotiated, Tan Lifu was released from prison on May 29, 1967. Since then, throughout the Cultural Revolution, Tan Lifu never joined any Red Guard organization. He later held positions at the National Library and the Palace Museum.

are heroes have children who will be their successors, parents who are reactionary have children who will rebel against them. This is the thought of Chairman Mao. When he heard that, he said, "Jiang Qing changed it right; the couplet is also right, and the two couplets can co-exist." We then told him to go home and "think behind closed doors". We did not take any measures against him. As to how he was arrested later, I really don't know.

## 5. Criticism of the "theory of birth"

In the course of criticising Tan Lifu's reactionary 'theory of descent', a young worker in Beijing called Yu Luoke<sup>324</sup> put forward a 'theory of origin' to counter the 'theory of descent'. This had a great impact at the time. During the meetings of the Central Cultural Revolution, they discussed and analysed the views of Yu Luoke and concluded that he had completely denied the objectivity of class existence and the necessity of class analysis, which was going to the other extreme of error. Chairman Mao had said, "In class society, everyone lives as a member of a particular class, and every kind of thinking, without exception, is stamped with the brand of a class." So it was decided at that time that I would make a public speech based on this thought of Chairman Mao's, criticising the views of Yu Luoke. In April 1967, my speech caused a great deal of reaction and Yu Luoke was widely criticised and probably came under considerable pressure as a result. However, I only criticised his ideology at the time and did not take any physical restraint against him. He was later arrested by the public security authorities and then sentenced to death, all of which I was unaware of. For I myself had been imprisoned in Qincheng prison long before his arrest. When Yu Luoke's sister and some people studying the Cultural Revolution at home and abroad asked me to give an account of how Yu Luoke was persecuted to death, I was unable to do so.

It was a time of great democracy, so there were many people like Yu Ruoke who expressed a wide range of ideas and views. In the large number of letters we received from the masses, all sorts of views were reflected, but I generally adopted the policy of saving and not reporting some unrepresentative ideological views, even though they were very wrong or even reactionary, and did not deal with them. At that time, there was a man called Chen Lining<sup>325</sup> who had indeed opposed

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<sup>324</sup> Yu Luoke (1942-1970), worked as an apprentice at the Beijing People's Machinery Factory, and later as a substitute teacher and other temporary work. His father, an engineer in the Ministry of Water Resources and Electricity, was wrongly classified as a rightist in 1957. In 1960, having scored above 90 in all his exams, he was not accepted to any university, the problem being the shadow of his family origins. On 13 February 1966, he published an article in *Wenhui Bao*, "Time to fight against mechanical materialism", opposing Yao Wenyan's criticism of the new historical drama *Hai Rui Dismissed from Office*. After the outbreak of the Cultural Revolution, in the second half of 1966, Yu Luoke wrote his famous essay "The Theory of Origin", criticising the theory of pedigree, that is, the theory of lineage advocated by Tan Lifu. Yu Luoke was arrested on January 5, 1968. On March 5, 1970, he was sentenced to death and executed with another 19 political death row prisoners at the 100,000 people meeting in Beijing Workers' Stadium.

<sup>325</sup> Chen Lining (1933- ) served as an information clerk in the Hunan Provincial Party Committee office in Xiangtan in the 1960s, and was once named an outstanding Communist Party member. He was repeatedly awarded the title of "Model Worker" or "Excellent Party Member". This young man was also a good thinker, particularly interested in political issues, with a strong sense of class struggle, and good at seeing things through the eyes of the class struggle. Chen Lining later said that he had been suspicious of Liu Shaoqi since 1957, when, at the "Eighth Congress" in September 1956, Liu Shaoqi delivered a political report on behalf of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China, declaring that the exploiting class had basically been eliminated in China and that "the question of who had won over whom between socialism and capitalism in China had now been resolved". In 1962, Liu Shaoqi's *On the Self-Cultivation of Communists* was revised and re-published. Chen Lining took an interest in the book, first comparing the old and new editions, "finding that the revised version had ticked off the names of Engels and Stalin, but rarely mentioned Chairman Mao's

some of the views in Liu Shaoqi's *On the Self-Cultivation of Communists* and the report of the Eighth National Congress from a very early stage, and was later persecuted and sent to a mental hospital. I supported him at the time. But later, some people said that Chen Lining had also made wrong statements about Chairman Mao. They used the incident to attack the Central Cultural Revolution Group. In order to clarify the issue, I had to ask the group's office team to refer his case to the Ministry of Public Security for investigation and handling.

At that time, some people were discussing the view that "one divides into two". Some people asked whether the thought of Chairman Mao could also be divided into two. Some people thought that Mao's thought was a universal truth, so how could it be divided into two? But others thought it was possible. As a result, the latter was said to be an attack on "Mao Zedong Thought". Some people were arrested by the public security authorities for being reported to the public. Many people wrote to the Central Cultural Revolution and brought the matter to its attention. When I read the letter, I asked Chen Boda about it, but he did not take a position; I also asked Zhang Chunqiao about it, but he said that it was a theoretical issue and it was difficult to make it clear at once. I said, "Can I ask the Chairman?" He said, "It is not good to ask the Chairman about this either, what do you want him to say?" "But I still think that this issue has, after all, involved the political life of many people. You say that people are anti-Mao Zedong Thought and have arrested them, can this not be resolved?" I still had to ask the Chairman, and Guan Feng also said he should ask the Chairman. So, at a meeting convened by the Chairman, I asked the Chairman about the fact that some people were now saying that Mao Zedong Thought was something of a general truth and that it could not be divided into two. Some people who said that it could be divided into two were criticised and some were even arrested by the Public Security Bureau. On hearing this, the Chairman said: "How can my thought not be divided into two? There is a difference between what I said yesterday and what I say today. My thinking is also changing and developing, and it can certainly be divided into two. All things are divided into two". When Xie Fuzhi learnt of Chairman Mao's attitude, he immediately ordered all those who had been arrested because of this issue to be released.

## **6.The Demise of the "United Action Committee"**

On 6 September 1966, with the support of the Central Cultural Revolution, the Red Guards of Beijing's colleges and universities united to form the "General Command of the Revolutionary

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teachings". In 1963, he showed some of his writings about Liu Shaoqi to the local Party leader who concluded that he was mentally ill and sent him to a psychiatric hospital. He was kept there for two months. On his release, he penned a 10,000-word letter to Chairman Mao and asked the Secretary of the Hunan Provincial Party Committee to forward it to the Chairman. It was suppressed and Chen Lining was again sent to the mental hospital. In November 1964, Chen Lining was sent to a psychiatric hospital for the third time. After being discharged from the hospital in 1964, he sent two letters to Hunan Daily, criticising, without naming him, *On the Cultivation of Communist Party Members* as "using a set of feudalist moral standards to poison Party members"; and wrote to Mao Zedong and Lin Biao, saying that Liu Shaoqi was a revisionist". He was immediately investigated by the Ministry of Public Security and imprisoned in Beijing's Qingchen Prison. In 1965 he was transferred to a mental hospital where sympathetic doctors reported his case to the Central Cultural Revolution. After reviewing the records and archives of 40 interrogations, Wang Li and Qi Benyu, together with the hospital's Red Flag Combat Team, Qinghua University's Jinggangshan Corps, the "Eastern Reds" of the Geological Institute and the "8.18" of Beijing Hospital, personally went to the hospital and took Chen out of custody. On 17 January 1967, the newspaper *Capital Red Guards* reported Chen's story and his criticism of Liu in a four-page article entitled "Diary of a Madman". For a time, he was a celebrity and his *Madman's Diary* was published and widely read. Later when Wang, Guan and Qi fell, Chen was again arrested and imprisoned, and the conclusion was that he was "falsely anti-Liu Shaoqi and really anti-Chairman Mao". He was later released and sent back to Hunan Province.

Rebellion of the Red Guards of the Capital Colleges and Universities" (the "Capital Three Departments"). After the thorough criticism of the bourgeoisie's reactionary line began in October, the rebel group, represented by the "Capital Three Divisions", grew rapidly and became the majority faction.

After the disintegration of the ranks of the West, East and Sea Pickets, a small number of old Red Guards, many of whose fathers had been criticised and attacked by the rebel groups, became dissatisfied with the support given by the Central Cultural Revolution to the rebel groups representing their own interests. On 5 December 1966, these "Old Red Guards" joined together to form the "Capital High School Red Guards United Action Committee", known simply as the "United Action Committee". They issued a manifesto to "thoroughly criticise all forms of bourgeois reactionary lines", in fact opposing Chairman Mao's Cultural Revolution line, which was implemented by the Central Cultural Revolution, while continuing to fight indiscriminately.

The "Three Departments of<sup>326</sup> the Capital" and the rebel Red Guards of the secondary schools had a way of dealing with the "United Action Committee". There were many more of them than the "UAC". Wherever the "UAC" was causing trouble, they were surrounded by many people. "They could not talk to them, and they could not fight them, so they had to resort to "Of the 36 plans, the best plan is walking away". When they met them again, they had to adopt a policy of avoidance, and the "UAC" could not fight with the "Three Departments of the Capital" and other rebel Red Guards. However, they were not willing to do so. On one occasion, several members of the "UAC" were caught stealing a motorbike and were taken to the Ministry of Public Security. The Ministry of Public Security took them into custody. They then gathered and stormed the Ministry of Public Security. They smashed the windows of the office of the Ministry of Public Security and beat up the Vice Minister of the Ministry.

The first time Xie Fuzhi was reluctant to capture the "UAC". Many of these little guys were the sons and daughters of big cadres, so how can they be captured? Chen and Xie's army was said to be a corps, but in fact it was as good as a field army. Xie was the political commissar of this army and a good brother of Chen Gung who was indispensable. Xie Fuzhi was very experienced and clear-headed. But in the end, he was forced into the "Liangshan"<sup>327</sup> by the "UAC".

Xie Fuzhi could only arrest a few of the leaders and lock them up, but he also gave them preferential treatment. But this made the "United Action Committee" even more reluctant to give up, and they mobilised their members to storm the Ministry of Public Security several times in quick succession. The more the Ministry of Public Security gave in, the more they made a fuss. Xie Fuzhi then came to me to discuss what to do. I said, "I'm afraid it's difficult even for the Premier to do this. If we really want to do it, we have to consult the Chairman and the Vice Commander. But it would be inappropriate for you to go to the Chairman and Generalissimo Lin without the Premier". I thought about it for a while and gave him the idea of going to the people. I said, "Didn't Stalin famously say, "When you are in trouble, go to Antaeus (which means to draw strength from the masses)<sup>328</sup>. You go

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<sup>326</sup> The "thirty-six strategies", is a tactical thinking system in traditional Chinese culture which originated during the Northern and Southern Dynasties. It consists of six sets of strategies each containing six sets of tactics. Although they are military strategies, the best is considered to be "walking away", or avoiding conflict.

<sup>327</sup> The Liangshan Mountains were a cold, inhospitable and impoverished region of old China.

<sup>328</sup> On 5 March 1937, in a Speech in Reply to Debate, Stalin said: We may take it as the rule that as long as the Bolsheviks maintain connection with the broad masses of the people they will be invincible. And, on the contrary, as soon as the Bolsheviks become severed from the masses and lose their connection with them, as

and mobilise the masses". He said where to mobilise them. I said, "First, you should liaise closely with Li Li, the secretary of the new Beijing Municipal Committee, and the street cadres in Beijing are a great force. They are now criticising Peng Zhen's old Beijing Municipal Committee and they are full of revolutionary enthusiasm".

Ma Li and I were friends. We were in the same task force during the Four Clean-ups, and I even came to his defence at the beginning of the Cultural Revolution. So, as soon as I called him and told him, he immediately organised a team from the streets near the Ministry of Public Security, and they immediately mobilised many street cadres and activists to defend the Ministry. Because the "UAC" activists were armed with daggers and other weapons, the old men and women from the streets also came with kitchen knives and rolling pins. There were dozens or even hundreds of them. Those "UAC" elements were bullies of the weak, but also afraid of the tough. They were not afraid of the police because they knew that the police could not arrest them or beat them up. But when they saw so many people coming, they had no choice but to flee. Later on, they were smart enough to know that it would take some time for the masses to come, so they went to the Ministry of Public Security and ran away when they saw that the "street army" was about to come. When they saw them coming, some police officers changed into plain clothes and shouted, "The people are coming, they are coming!" Xie Fuzhi thanked me and said that my tactic was really effective.

On 16 December, a mass meeting was held in the Workers' Gymnasium in Beijing to accuse the United Action Committee, with more than 10,000 people attending. The meeting was organised by the "Three Departments of the Capital", and all of us from the Central Cultural Revolution Group who could attend attended the meeting. At the meeting, the masses denounced and accused the bloody crimes of the UAC, and the crowd was in an uproar. Jiang Qing was also very angry when she heard the news reports and accusations of the masses. When she spoke at the meeting, she asked who was behind the lawlessness of the UAC, who had beaten, killed and raided homes. At this point, someone from below came up with a note saying that it was Zhou Rongxin, Yong Wentao and Xu Ming from the State Council. Jiang Qing then named Zhou Rongxin and Yong Wentao and Xu Ming on the spot, told Zhou and Yong to stand up, and did not tell Zhou Rongxin and Yong Wentao to sit down until the end of the meeting. Once the meeting was over, Jiang Qing left without saying what to do with them both. At this point, the presenter of the meeting came to ask me what to do with them, and they both looked at me. I said, "Let them go home".

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soon as they become covered with bureaucratic rust, they will lose all their strength and become a mere squib. In the mythology of the ancient Greeks there is the celebrated hero Antaeus who, so the legend goes, was the son of Poseidon, god of the seas, and Gaea, goddess of the earth. Antaeus was particularly attached to his mother who gave birth to him, suckled him and reared him. There was not a hero whom this Antaeus did not vanquish. He was regarded as an invincible hero, Wherein lay his strength? It lay in the fact that every time he was hard pressed in the fight against his adversary he touched the earth, his mother, who gave birth to him and suckled him, and that gave him new strength. But he had a vulnerable spot – the danger of being detached from the earth in some way or other. His enemies took this into account and watched for it. One day an enemy appeared who took advantage of this vulnerable spot and vanquished Antaeus. This was Hercules. How did Hercules vanquish Antaeus? He lifted him off the ground, kept him suspended, prevented him from touching the ground and throttled him. I think that the Bolsheviks remind us of the hero of Greek mythology, Antaeus. They, like Antaeus, are strong because they maintain connection with their mother, the masses who gave birth to them, suckled them and reared them. And as long as they maintain connection with their mother, with the people, they have every chance of remaining invincible. This is the key to the invincibility of Bolshevik leadership.

After the meeting, Xu Ming gave me a call. Xu Ming and I usually knew each other very well. She was the Deputy Secretary General of the State Council, the Deputy Director of the Premier's Office, and also Kong Dan's mother. She was in charge of the State Council's mass correspondence and visits. I was in charge of the public's letters and visits from the Central Committee of the Party, so we often worked together and trusted each other. She told me on the phone that the Premier had criticised her, and criticised her severely, and told her to stop her work and reflect on it. She felt under a lot of pressure and asked me to help her to go and explain to Jiang Qing. She was crying on the phone. She said that her son, Kong Dan, was involved in the "West City Pickets", but that even his father, Kong Yuan, did not know about it, and the Premier did not know about it. She said that because Chairman Mao supported the Red Guards, Zhou Rongxin and she had given them some support, mainly in the form of a house, a car and some funds for their offices. But she didn't know anything about the lawlessness they did, and she was definitely not behind it. She hoped I could speak up for her. I believed what she said, so I told her that I would speak up for her when the right opportunity arose. She thanked me.

On the day I spoke to Xu Ming, I met Jiang Qing and told her that Xu Ming had called me and she said she didn't know what the "West Pickets" and "UAC" had done. I said, "Maybe it's true what she said. She is an indispensable person around the Premier, so let her review the situation". Jiang Qing agreed. She also said that when she met the Premier, she would tell him about it.

However, the day after Xu Ming spoke to me, the Premier told us that Xu Ming had committed suicide. At that time, my heart was shocked and saddened by it. It was because she was a good worker and a good person. After that, the Premier never mentioned Xu Ming's death again. I know that he was also very sad. I don't think it was the pressure of Jiang Qing naming her that day that caused Xu Ming to die.

At the beginning of the Cultural Revolution, Xu Ming was in charge of the State Council's reception station, where students and teachers who were oppressed by the capitalist-roaders' line, such as Li Gui of the Geology Institute and Kuai Dafu of Qinghua, went to petition and complain about the work group. Xu Ming's attitude at the time should have been supportive of the work group. After Kuai Dafu's complaint, Xu Ming's speech, which reached Qinghua, said: "Ye Lin is sent by the Central Committee and can be relied on completely". Xu Ming also failed to stop the old Red Guards from attacking Chen Boda in a clear manner. In September, the "West City Picket", led by Kong Dan, openly confronted and opposed the petition by the Geological Institute's Shuang Fanghong to the Ministry of Geology criticising the work group, and the petition by Beijing Aeronautical University Red Flag to the National Defence Science Committee. All these were reported to Chairman Mao in the Central Cultural Revolution's briefings. Chairman Mao had a clear-cut instruction: "Xu Ming, who supports the right and oppresses the left, should be transferred to another job if she cannot be corrected." Jiang Qing's naming would have reminded Xu Ming of Chairman Mao's criticism of her. The power of her Chair was indeed too much for her to bear.

## **7. Jiang Qing's speech on "Making New Contributions for the People"**

From the end of 1966 onwards, a number of "UAC" elements were arrested by the Ministry of Public Security. Most of them were turned over to the Ministry of Public Security by the public. The son of a late general, whose father was an old comrade of Xie Fuzhi, was turned over to the Ministry of Public Security because his son had copied a reactionary slogan aimed at Chairman Mao, and Xie Fuzhi had him imprisoned. The son of the famous general Chen Shiqu also participated in the "UAC" and was

also turned over to the Ministry of Public Security. The Ministry of Public Security left him alone and handed him over to the army to be dealt with. The army released him back to his family. But when Chen Shiqu found out about it, he personally sent his son to the Ministry of Public Security. Chen Shiqu had joined the revolution during the Jinggang Mountain period. When Chairman Mao found out about this, he praised him for his "great righteousness". Later on, Dong Biwu also wrote a report to Chairman Mao on his youngest son, Dong Liangliang, for his participation in the "UAC". After reading Dong's letter, the Chairman told the Ministry of Public Security to release all the arrested "UAC" members.

When it was time to release them, the Chairman told the Premier, Jiang Qing and those of us from the Central Cultural Revolution to go and meet them together. Jiang Qing spoke to them, saying, "You have suffered," and then gave them a sage lecture. Many of those who were imprisoned at the time confessed their mistakes to Jiang Qing. Some of them even shouted slogans on the spot, "Thank you, Auntie Jiang Qing!" But some of them were not convinced and, fearing that their ranks would be divided, they sang a poem written by Chairman Mao, "I lost my proud Poplar and you your Willow"<sup>329</sup>. There was nothing Jiang Qing could do about them. Then Xie Fuzhi announced Chairman Mao's instructions to release them and they shouted "Long Live Chairman Mao!" Then they left.

Later on, Chairman Mao told Jiang Qing about the story of "Shilong Talks to Empress Dowager Zhao"<sup>330</sup> during the Warring States period. Chairman Mao also said at that time that if things were not done properly, these cadres' sons and daughters might become a disaster for the Party and the country in the future.

Chairman Mao then asked Jiang Qing to give a speech to the generals at an enlarged meeting of the military commission, "Making New Contributions for the People". In her speech, Jiang Qing said the same thing as in "Shilong Talks to Empress Dowager Zhao": "A gentleman's zeitgeist is decimated after five generations", encouraging the old cadres to continue the revolution and to educate their children to continue the revolution, to make new achievements for the people and not to eat the old capital. Chairman Mao's use of historical allusions is truly masterful and has a profound meaning.

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<sup>329</sup> On May 11, 1957, Mao wrote a *Reply to Li Shuyi* which opened with this line. The "proud Poplar" (pronounced "yang") refers to Mao's first love and wife, Yang Kaihui, who was executed by the Guomindang in 1930. Li Shuyi had been a classmate of Mao's and was a good friend of Yang Kaihui's. She had been introduced to her husband, Liu Zhixun, who was killed while fighting alongside Mao in 1932. Liu's name has the same pronunciation as "willow", hence the opening line of Mao's poem. The singing of this poem was meant as an act of defiance of, and humiliation for, Jiang Qing.

<sup>330</sup> The story of the Empress Dowager Zhao and Shilong is a famous piece from the Warring States Period. It tells of when the state of Qin took advantage of the change of power in the state of Zhao to attack Zhao and captured three of its cities. Zhao is in a critical situation and asks Qi for help. The state of Qi would only send troops if they took the youngest son of Queen Wei of Zhao, Chang'an, as a hostage. The state of Zhao is in crisis because the Empress of Zhao dotes on Chang'an and refuses to have him taken hostage. This article writes that in the critical situation of facing a strong enemy, the Empress Dowager Zhao having strictly resisted admonishment, is approached by Shilong who takes advantage of the situation, overcomes strength with softness, and persuades the Queen Mother Zhao to let her beloved son be taken. The story of quality in exchange for salvation and relief from national distress extols Shilong's quality of putting national interests first and his ability to do ideological work. Jiang Qing's speech, and her explanation of this story's significance, can be found at [Jiang Qing \(1967\): To Make New Contributions for the People - Speech at the Enlarged Meeting of the Party Military Affairs Committee \(marxists.org\)](http://marxists.org/jiang-qing/1967-to-make-new-contributions-for-the-people-speech-at-the-enlarged-meeting-of-the-party-military-affairs-committee)

## Chapter 13: The Blows Suffered by Intellectuals in the Cultural Revolution

1. The fight against "cow demons and snake spirits" in the early days of the Cultural Revolution
2. The truth about the persecution of some "celebrities" during the Cultural Revolution
3. Protection of intellectuals by Chairman Mao and the Central Cultural Revolution Group during the Cultural Revolution
4. Protection of National Cultural Relics during the Cultural Revolution by the Central Cultural Revolution

### 1. The fight against "cow demons and snake spirits" in the early days of the Cultural Revolution

The Cultural Revolution began with the criticism of Hai Rui's dismissal of from office, and was first launched in schools. This made some of the "authorities" in the academic world, as well as some teachers and school leaders, bear the brunt of the mass movement at the same time. In the early days of the state, Chairman Mao had said that after the proletariat had seized power, it was not enough to carry out a revolution in the economic and political spheres, but we also had to carry out a critique of the bourgeoisie in the ideological and ideological spheres. Otherwise, the victory of the proletariat is not secure. On the eve of the Cultural Revolution, based on the historical lesson of the emergence of revisionists in power in the Soviet Union and the situation in China at that time, Chairman Mao again proposed, "The phenomenon of the bourgeois intellectuals ruling our schools can no longer continue." Both the situation at the time and the situation after Chairman Mao's death proved the correctness of Chairman Mao's need to criticise bourgeois ideology.

At the beginning, this onslaught on intellectuals was mainly carried out through academic discussions and academic criticism. From the publication of the editorial of the People's Daily on June 1, 1966, "Sweeping Away All Cow Demons and Snakes Spirits", and the broadcast to the whole country on the same day of "the big-character poster of Nie Yuanzi and seven others at Beijing University", many universities and secondary schools started to struggle against "bourgeois reactionary academic authorities" and teachers with such and such problems in their history. However, those who were attacked at that time were basically appointed or authorized by the leaders of their units. When the work groups sent by Liu Shaoqi and his group moved into the schools, the groups only tried to stop the students from expressing their opinions to the leaders and posting big-character posters, but did not stop the struggle against the intellectuals. On the contrary, the "cultural revolution committees" of the schools, organised by the work groups and mainly composed of the "sons of high cadres" and "sons of the revolutionary cadres", put up fights on the campuses against what they designated as "reactionary academic authorities". During the struggle, there were insults to human dignity such as hanging signs, wearing high hats and parading through the streets. Later on, this situation quickly spread and became more and more widespread, especially when some "sons of high cadres" and "sons of revolutionary cadres" took the lead, and there were further cases of illegal detentions, shaving of the yin and yang heads, and even severe torture. Such methods of criticism and struggle were not advocated by Chairman Mao, but were explicitly opposed by him.

I saw this myself when I was in the party. Once I was out in a car on an errand and the car was driving down a small hutong towards the main road. Just as I was leaving the hutong I saw a woman, probably around 30 or 40 years old, who was crying and covering her head with her hands as she ran along. I looked at her and saw that she had no hair on half of her head. I hurriedly told the driver to stop and walked down to ask her what had happened. When she saw that we were in uniform, she said that she had been fought by the students at school and that they had cut off all my hair, so I had no face to see anyone and I had to hurry home. I asked, "Why are they fighting you?" She said, "The students say that I am engaged in bourgeois education, but I am teaching according to the textbooks, so how can it be bourgeois education?" It turned out that she was a language teacher. Seeing how embarrassed she was walking, I said, "Why don't we take you home?" She said no, her home was just ahead.

When I returned to my office in Diaoyutai, I told the people in the Cultural Revolution Group so that they were aware of the situation and said that not only were they cutting the hair in the yin and yang style, but there were also many "Red Guards" cutting the hair and trouser legs of people's parents in the streets.

An incident I experienced at home also struck a chord with me. My daughter was born in 1955, and was just eleven years old and still a primary school student. Once I went home to see her, and I saw her banging a belt against a stool. I said, "What are you doing?" She said that her classmates at school had criticised her for not being combative, saying that she was afraid to hit a teacher and told her to go home and practise how to hit someone. I said, "You all beat up teachers at school?" She said that they were all hitting the teachers now, and whoever did not hit the teachers was said to be non-combative and non-revolutionary. When I heard that, I thought the problem was really serious. I said, "Did you hit the teacher?" She said, "My teacher is usually very nice to me, so I don't want to hit him". I said, "It is clearly stated in the central documents that hitting is forbidden, so hitting is a struggle, right?" She recited to me a quote from Chairman Mao: "A revolution is not a dinner party, or writing an essay, or painting a picture or doing embroidery; it cannot be so refined, so leisurely and gentle, so temperate..." I said, "No, this is what was said during the fight against the landlords before Liberation. Your teacher is not a landlord. You have an opinion, you can criticize him, but you can't beat them".

Later, we reported the situation of these violent incidents that took place on campus to Jiang Qing, Chen Boda and Chairman Mao, who gave clear instructions in this regard that beating, hanging signs, jetsetting and shaving yin and yang heads were all considered martial fighting and were all prohibited.

After the end of the Cultural Revolution, it is a complete lie to present all these beatings as having been carried out with the support of the Central Cultural Revolution Group. The Central Cultural Revolution Group had never been resolute in opposing and stopping the beatings, and many of the major decisions concerning the Cultural Revolution in large and medium-sized schools in June and July 1966 were made by the Standing Committee and the Secretariat under the front-line leadership of Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping, and the Central Cultural Revolution Group still had very little say at the time.

Others have described the achievement of Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping in sending a work group to the school as going to stop the beating. This is not quite the case. Most of the work groups were not in the schools to stop the beatings, they only prevented the students from rising up against the

leaders. They generally put up a brutal fight against students who rose up against the leaders and the "bourgeois academic authorities" they threw at them. Before Chairman Mao's instructions, only a small number of work groups followed his consistent teachings and stopped the martial fighting in different areas.

## **2. The truth about the persecution of some "celebrities" during the Cultural Revolution**

Although Wang Renzhong was the deputy head of the Central Committee's Cultural Revolution, he was a firm enforcer of Liu's and Deng's capitalist-roader and anti-democratic line in Hubei and Wuhan, and he did not fight against those in power, but only against academic authorities such as Li Da<sup>331</sup> and some teachers and professors appointed by him. During the Great Leap Forward, Wang Renzhong was notorious for his "boastfulness". Li Da opposed Wang Renzhong's practices. At that time, Wang Renzhong also raised the slogan of "learning from Marx and surpassing Marx", which was also criticised by Li Da. So Wang Renzhong and Li Da had a deep grudge. When the Cultural Revolution began, Wang Renzhong described Li Da as the Wu Han of Wuhan and mobilised students to fight against him. Li Da was already 76 years old and in poor health, and on 19 July 1966, he wrote to the Chairman to ask for his rescue. When I saw Li Da's letter, I presented it to the Chairman, in which Li Da begged him to save his life. When Chairman Mao saw the letter, he gave the following instructions: "Comrade Tao Zhu should read it and pass it on to Comrade Renzhong for discretion." I remember that at a meeting of the Central Committee, Chairman Mao said in the presence of Wang Renzhong that Li Da could be criticised, but that he was the first theoretician in the Party to propagate Marxism-Leninism and should be protected. But Wang Renzhong did not take any protective measures for Li Da after receiving the Chairman's instruction, resulting in Li Da being seriously ill from the fight, not being rescued in time, and being persecuted to death. After Li Da's death, the Chairman said at a meeting that Li Da was the propaganda minister of the First Congress of the Communist Party of China, and that his interpretation of the Theory of Practice and the Theory of Contradiction was the best. During the capitalist anti-corruption line, Wang Renzhong directed the struggle in Wuhan towards intellectuals, academic authorities and teachers and students. He wanted to catch the rightists among them who had slipped through the net. And he arrested people to a great extent. After the work group was withdrawn, these battered people rose up in rebellion. The first rebel factions in Wuhan were formed. Behind Wang Renzhong's back was the Central Cultural Revolution Group, which supported organisations such as the "West City Pickets" and later the "United Action Committee", and behind Wang Renzhong was Ye Jianying and others.

The death of Lao She was a big shock at the time. Chairman Mao was very fond of Lao She, and I was present when he went to see "Long Shu Gou". As soon as the performance was over, the Chairman stood up and waved hello to Lao She from afar. The Chairman often talked to Lao She. Lao She was a scholar and he knew all the twenty-four histories with great enthusiasm. The Chairman was always

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<sup>331</sup> Li Da (1890 - 1966), was an outstanding Marxist theorist, propagandist and educator, and one of the main founders and early leaders of the Chinese Communist Party. He was a delegate to the First Congress of the Communist Party of China. From 1922 to 1923, he was invited by Mao Zedong to be the director of the Hunan University of Self-study. From 1927 to 1941, he taught at various universities throughout China. After the founding of New China, he served as Vice-President of the Central School of Political and Legal Cadres, President of Hunan University and President of Wuhan University. He also served as President of the Chinese Philosophical Society, Member of the Academy of Sciences of China and Standing Committee of the Department of Philosophy and Social Sciences, Director of the Preparatory Committee and President of the Wuhan Branch of the Chinese Academy of Sciences.

very happy to see Lao She. I can see that he liked Lao She as much as he liked Guo Moruo. Once the Chairman said to Lao She that Kangxi was a man who had done great service to the Chinese nation. The current map of our country was set by Kangxi. Lao She was very happy to hear that, because he was a Manchu. He said, "This is good. I always felt that the Manchus had killed so many Han Chinese, and I could not hold my head up. Now we can hold our heads up". Chairman Mao said that Kangxi had also done credit to the Chinese nation. Jiang Qing also liked Lao She's plays. But how did it happen that Lao She, whom everyone loved, was unaccountably beaten to death and thrown into a lake during the Cultural Revolution. Jiang Qing asked us several times about Lao She's death, who actually killed him. She even wondered if Zhou Yang's remaining party had ordered him to do it. We all said that it was impossible, and that we did not think that Zhou Yang's party had the power or the need to do so. Jiang Qing said, "You don't understand, they are trying to fight against the Cultural Revolution under the banner of the Red Guards and have ulterior motives". She asked me to look into it. I had suspected that Ye Xiangzhen<sup>332</sup> and her people were responsible for this, but there was no solid evidence. Jiang Qing also asked Xie Fuzhi to investigate, but no solid evidence was found. After half a day of investigation, some people put the blame on his wife Hu Jieqing and his children, saying that they wanted to make a clear distinction between themselves and him. Lao She was beaten outside and scolded at home. He could not find warmth, and that is why he committed suicide. After the end of the Cultural Revolution, when Deng Xiaoping and his men came to interrogate me, they did not mention Lao She to me at all, they only mentioned the struggle against Wang Guangmei and Liu Shaoqi. I asked them in turn who had killed Lao She. But they did not answer. It seems that they knew very well who had done it, but would not say.

There are many similar things. Many people now say that Shangguan Yunzhu was persecuted to death by Jiang Qing, which is nonsense. On the contrary, Jiang Qing said more than once that Shangguan was the best of the old actors and had progressive ideas. During the criticism of *The Inside Story of the Qing Court*, Jiang Qing even urged me not to involve Shangguan. She said that although Shangguan had been married to Yao Ke, the writer and director of *The Inside Story of the Qing Court*, she had nothing to do with *The Inside Story of the Qing Court*. When *The Inside Story of the Qing Court* was criticised, Shangguan was also criticised by the masses in the unit, she did not answer well, and when Wenhui Bao reported the situation to the central government, Jiang Qing specifically asked me why Shanghai was fighting against her. Jiang Qing said that Shangguan was an honest person. Jiang Qing knew Shangguan's husband Yao Ke. Yao Ke was the scriptwriter of the film *The Inside Story of the Qing Court*. Jiang Qing said that the controversy about *The Inside Story of the Qing Court* was mainly about Liu Shaoqi's comments on it, and not mainly about criticising Yao Ke. Although the criticism of Shangguan had nothing to do with me, I immediately told Zhang Chunqiao about Jiang Qing's opinion at that time and asked him to deal with it. Chunqiao promised to inform the Shanghai authorities immediately. Regrettably, the tragedy of Shangguan jumping off a building still happened later. Jiang Qing even said to me, "Why should we struggle Gai Yutian?"<sup>333</sup> How did

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<sup>332</sup> Ye Xiangzhen is the second daughter of Marshal Ye Jianying. During the high tide of the Cultural Revolution, Ye Xiangzhen was the head of the Red Guards of the Chinese opera's "rebels" organisation, and also the leader of the "rebels" of the capital's art colleges. One night in December 1966, two cars full of Red Guards stopped at Peng Zhen's residence and handed over a letter to the doorman. The Red Guards forced their way into the gate, snatched Peng Zhen from his bed, and got rid of the security guards who followed. Ye Xiangzhen and others kidnapped Peng Zhen and Premier Zhou had to negotiate with them for his release.

<sup>333</sup> Gai Yutian (1888 - 1971), performed in the Shanghai area for a long time. After 1949, he became the vice-chairman of the Federation of Literary and Art Circles of Zhejiang Province and the chairman of the Zhejiang Branch of the Chinese Dramatists' Association. 1954 saw the filming of *The Stage Art of Gai Yutian*, and 1963 saw the filming of the colour Beijing Opera film *Wu Song*. In the summer of 1966, when the temperature in

Jiang Hua<sup>334</sup> get into it?" I said, "I'm afraid it's not up to Jiang Hua, he can't control it". These unjust cases were all committed by people with very suspicious backgrounds.

This was also the case with the escape and death of Ma Sicong, Fu Cong and others. But after the Cultural Revolution, they blamed all these things on Jiang Qing and the Central Cultural Revolution. Yet they did not produce a single piece of decent evidence, but let some unscrupulous writers go about fabricating plots and spreading lies in order to deceive the people of China and the world.

The only people who have had problems with Jiang Qing in history are those around Zhou Yang. Zhou Yang's brother had behaved rudely with her. And Zhou Yang listened to his brother and did not accept her organisational relationship. Jiang Qing was always unhappy about this. But during the Cultural Revolution, Jiang Qing did not ask me to fix Zhou Yang and his brother. At that time, I was a very trusted subordinate of Jiang Qing and if she wanted to fix anyone, she would have told me first.

The court that tried her later said that she told Ye Qun to call for the persecution of Zheng Junli<sup>335</sup> and a nanny surnamed Qin. The purpose was to try to cover up her history as a traitor, which was a planting of evidence and a frame-up. At that time she had not even been connected to the organisation, so what was she called a traitor for? In fact, if Jiang Qing really wanted to arrest someone in Shanghai during the Cultural Revolution, would she not have asked Zhang Chunqiao or Yao Wenyuan to go there, but to ask Ye Qun to send someone? This is not to give people an advantage! The circumstances of these events are very suspicious. According to my observation, the relationship between Jiang Qing and Ye Qun was mostly political, and Jiang Qing had a good relationship with Zheng Junli and his wife before the Cultural Revolution. Unbelievable.

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Hangzhou reached thirty-eight degrees, Gai Yutian was dragged out for a parade, where they put him in a tall hat and Wu Song's costume and loaded him onto a rubbish truck. Gai Yutian, who was nearly 80 years old, could not withstand such humiliation and torture. He leapt out of the cart in anger and fell to the ground, breaking his lumbar vertebrae. But he was still taken to criticism sessions. The most brutal one was in 1968 at the Youth Road Light Stadium in Hangzhou, where "capitalists of all sizes" and "reactionary academic authorities" from the provincial government were escorted into the venue, more than 500 of them, each with a plaque around their necks. A group of rebels pinned Gai to the ground with a pole between his legs and broke both of them.

<sup>334</sup> Jiang Hua (1907 - 1999) joined the Communist Youth League in October 1925. In 1928, he followed Mao Zedong up to the Jianggangshan Soviet, picked up the gun and set foot on the long journey of armed struggle. He was responsible for political work in the Red Army and took part in the Long March. After Liberation, he had political and military leadership roles in Zhejiang Province with its capital at Hangzhou. During the three years of economic hardship, Zhejiang Province transferred large quantities of grain and foodstuffs to support the whole country, which was praised by Mao Zedong and Zhou Enlai. The work of Zhejiang Province also summed up many good experiences, such as the participation of cadres in labour and other materials, which were valued by Mao Zedong, who made criticisms and recommended them to the whole country. When the Cultural Revolution began, Jiang Hua was imprisoned and criticised, and in January 1967 Zhou Enlai ordered a special plane to bring him to Beijing for protection. In January 1975, Jiang Hua was elected President of the Supreme People's Court. After Mao's death he took the side of the Rightists, presiding over the trial of Lin Biao and Jiang Qing's group.

<sup>335</sup> Zheng Junli (1911-1969) was a stage performer, film actor, writer and director. In 1935, he starred in the drama film *New Women*, and in 1940, he filmed the long documentary on the resistance war, *Long Live the Nation*. In 1961, he directed the drama film *Spring in the Dead Wood*, co-starring You Jia and Shangguan Yunzhu. In 1965, he directed the drama film *Li Shanzi*, based on the play *Red Propagandist* by Cho Baek-ryong in North Korea, which was the last film he directed in his life. On 23 April 1969, Zheng Junli was struggled against and died unjustly at the age of 58.

Jiang Qing did tell me a few times about the nanny named Qin. She said that when she was in Shanghai, there was a time when life was very difficult and sometimes she even went hungry. Thanks to a nanny named Qin, she was treated well. The nanny worked for a rich family during the day and used to bring her some food at night. She used to take care of saving face for Jiang Qing, saying that she could just have a taste of her cooking. Jiang Qing was very grateful to her. After liberation, she was asked to come to Beijing to work in a kindergarten, but the nanny said she was not used to living in Beijing and wanted to go back to Shanghai. During the Cultural Revolution, Jiang Qing asked me to look for her when I had the chance to go to Shanghai, to see how she was living and if I could take care of her. But then I don't know who put this nanny away. I reckon it was probably something that Ye Qun called for. She may have done the wrong thing to please Jiang Qing. But Jiang Qing didn't even know about this. The first thing that happened was that Deng Xiaoping and his people asked the nanny to testify against Jiang Qing. Jiang Qing was stunned to see the nanny and she told her sincerely that she did not know about it. I believe Jiang Qing was telling the truth.

In fact, Jiang Qing had no great enemies in the Party. She joined the Party in 1933 and soon lost contact with the organisation, after which she did not resume Party relations until the late 1930s. By 1938 she had married the Chairman, so what enemies could she have had in the Party? But why were there so many people who hated her? Jiang Qing told me that some people, such as Xiang Ying<sup>336</sup>, were actually discontented with the Chairman, but they dared not do anything to him, so they all came after her, even going so far as to create rumours about her and bury the Chairman through her. But I am afraid that Jiang Qing's sometimes bad temper and inability to get along with people were also important reasons.

### **3. Protection of intellectuals by Chairman Mao and the Central Cultural Revolution Group during the Cultural Revolution**

When Zhang Shizhao's<sup>337</sup> home was raided on 29 August 1966, Zhang wrote to Chairman Mao asking for his help. on 30 August the Chairman immediately approved: "Send it to the Premier for his discretion. It should be protected." And at the same time, the Chairman also told the Premier to see who else needed protection measures and to hurry up and protect them. The Premier immediately followed the Chairman's instructions and took care of the matter.

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<sup>336</sup> Xiang Ying (1898-1941) was a well-known activist of the workers' movement, one of the early leaders of the Party and the Red Army, and one of the founders and main leaders of the New Fourth Army. However, he was not sufficiently aware of the principle of independence and autonomy in the anti-Japanese national united front, did not take adequate measures to develop behind enemy lines, was not sufficiently prepared to deal with the anti-communist conspiracy of the Guomindang reactionary faction, failed to seize a favourable opportunity to transfer the headquarters of the New Fourth Army and the troops in southern Anhui, and hesitated and mishandled the transfer in January 1941, which was responsible for the serious losses suffered by the New Fourth Army in the South Anhui Incident. In January 1941, at the age of 43, he was killed by traitors in the Bee Cave in Mao Lin, Jing County, Anhui Province.

<sup>337</sup> Zhang Shizhao (1881- 1973) was a famous democrat, scholar, writer, educator and political activist. He was the deputy director and second director of the Central Research Institute of Literature and History, a member of the Standing Committee of the Second and Third National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, and a member of the Standing Committee of the Third National People's Congress. In his later years, he was most anxious for the peaceful reunification of the two sides of the Taiwan Strait, and to this end, in 1973, he travelled to Hong Kong to work for the restoration of ties with Taiwan despite his 92 years of age. However, he died before his work was completed.

I heard the Premier tell me that Zhang Shizhao's house was raided by someone under Nie Yuanzi. After listening to the Premier's instructions, Nie Yuanzi hurriedly told her people to return every single thing that had been taken. Later, according to the Chairman's instructions, a list of people who needed protection was drawn up and troops were sent to provide effective protection. The first on the list was Song Qingling, followed by Guo Moruo, Zhang Shizhao, Cheng Qian, He Xiangning, Fu Zuoyi, Zhang Zhizhong, Cai Tingkai, Shao Lizi, Jiang Guangqi, Sha Qianli, Zhang Xiruo and Li Zongren. After Li Zongren came several vice-premiers of the State Council, and many ministers and vice-ministers. Jiang Qing took a look at the list and said, "Premier, there are not many famous people in the list, how come they are all from your State Council? It is not necessary to mention the Vice-Premiers of the State Council, but there are so many ministers and vice-ministers?"

In any case, through this incident, the Chairman not only protected Zhang Shizhao, but also protected other people who had to be protected in case of emergency. It was not the policy of the Cultural Revolution, nor the arrangement of the Central Cultural Revolution Group, but the work of some radicals and even people with ulterior motives for the Cultural Revolution.

Jiang Qing was a lover of talent, and she had an eye for it. She protected many people during the Cultural Revolution, especially those who had talent.

Bai Shuxiang<sup>338</sup>, who played Wu Qinghua in *The Red Detachment of Women*, had a blood debt to her father, a senior member of the Guomindang, who was suppressed by the People's Government after Liberation. Jiang Qing still protected her. I heard Jiang Qing talk about this several times at meetings. At that time, the head of the literary arts group of the Cultural Revolution Group was Jin Jingmai, who was so authoritative at that time that all the model opera troupes were under his control. Jiang Qing said, "I told you to get Bai Shuxiang over, but why don't you ever get her over". So Jin Jingmai hurriedly approached Liu Qingtang of the Central Ballet to do some work. She was later given the role of B in the *Red Detachment of Women*. This was a big deal in the model theatre company at the time. Later, when Chairman Mao died and Jiang Qing was arrested, Bai Shuxiang came forward to accuse Jiang Qing of persecuting her. If Bai Shuxiang really said this, then either she was being used or she took Liu Qingtang's mistreatment of her as persecution by Jiang Qing. Liu Qingtang was an accomplished artist, but not a perfect person, not as disciplined as Qian Haoliang or Yu Huiyong. In the case of Bai Shuxiang, without Jiang Qing's protection at the time, her fate would have been very unpredictable.

At one point, I reported to Jiang Qing that Guangdong had struggled against Hong Xiannu. She was given a shaved yin-yang head and told to go to a farm to raise chickens. Jiang Qing said, "How can

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<sup>338</sup> Bai Shuxiang (1939-) successfully portrayed the female protagonist Qiong Hua in the Chinese ballet "The Red Detachment of Women". She was the deputy director of the Central Ballet, a member of the China Federation of Literary and Art Circles and a director of the China Dancers Association. She is currently Vice-Chairman of the China Federation of Literary and Art Circles, Chairman of the China Dance Association and a member of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference. In 1965, she was accused of being a typical example of the White Specialists (as opposed to those who were both red and expert) and was forced to leave the stage and take part in productive labour. During that period, she hauled dung, planted rice seedlings, swept toilets, dug holes in the ground, drilled wells, did all kinds of work, and at night had to confess her problems, be criticised and write confessions of guilt. As a result of Premier Zhou's concern, Bai Shuxiang was recalled from the countryside in 1974 and resumed her practice, returning to the stage after nearly 10 years of absence.

that work!" She also wanted to tell Hong Xiannu to transplant the model opera into Cantonese opera. She asked me to bail her out. I went to Wu Faxian and told him that Jiang Qing wanted to protect Hong Xiannu and that she should transplant the model operas. Wu Faxian immediately went to Huang Yongsheng and protected her.

Jiang Qing also protected the composer Li Jiefu<sup>339</sup>. As soon as the Cultural Revolution began, the Northeast Conservatory of Music designated Li Jiefu as a black-line figure and the students wanted to criticise him. Jiang Qing said to me, "Get him to Beijing for protection and let him stay at the Beijing Hotel at the state's expense". I immediately wrote a report and Jiang Qing gave instructions on it. The original copy of Jiang Qing's instructions was enclosed in a book that was returned to me when I was released from prison. I went to speak to the rebels at the Shenyang Conservatory of Music in accordance with Jiang Qing's instructions, and did their work. Later, Li wrote me several letters expressing his gratitude. After the September 13 incident, someone reported that Li had written a song in praise of Lin Biao and the Fourth Field Army, and Jiang Qing criticised Li in turn. So, Jiang Qing didn't look into it any further.

Zhuang Zedong, Zhang Xuelin, Li Furong and Xu Yinsheng of the Sports Committee also took a hit during the Cultural Revolution. Jiang Qing also asked me to go and protect them. She said that they were all little heroes fighting for the country, so what was the point of going to fight such people. Some people said they were in the black with Liu Shaoqi. Jiang Qing refuted that, saying they were just children, what did they know about the line? Another person said that they were following He Long and were He Long's people. Jiang Qing said, "What can they have to do with He Long? They had never fought in a war, they had not been involved in the internal struggle of the army, so how could they be He Long's people?" The Premier was very happy to know that I was going to protect them. He then asked Rong Gaotang to come to Diaoyutai to find me. Rong Gaotang was my old leader when I was studying at the Central League School, so he came to Diaoyutai to find me and we were all very happy to meet.

There are many, many more such things.

#### **4. Protection of National Cultural Relics during the Cultural Revolution by the Central Cultural Revolution**

The few of us in the Central Cultural Revolution Group were actually all active in protecting cultural relics, paintings, calligraphy and classics. Because we all knew something about culture, we knew how precious those things were and that they could not just be destroyed. When I heard that someone was destroying cultural relics, I was very distressed. Once I took Guan Feng with me to report the destruction of cultural relics to Jiang Qing, who in turn reported it to the Chairman. At that time, Kang Sheng and Chen Boda were also very supportive of me doing so. Chairman Mao was

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<sup>339</sup> Li Jiefu (1913- 1976) joined the Communist Party of China in 1938. He served as an instructor of Yan'an People's Drama Club, and was head of the Art Troupe of the Ninth Column of the Northeast Field Army. From the beginning of 1972, for the next ten years, whether it was on the radio or on the TV, the songs made by the red musician were suddenly not heard, because Li Jiefu's "association with Lin Biao" was a serious political error. On December 17, 1976, Li Jiefu died of a heart attack in Shenyang at the age of 63. On November 20, 1979, the Liaoning Provincial Commission for Discipline Inspection made a decision: Li Jiefu actively joined Lin Biao's counter-revolutionary conspiracy group. However, considering his entire history and all his work, and because he was dead, no more disciplinary action was taken.

very unhappy with the fact that some people did not seriously engage in "struggle, criticism and transformation", but liked to destroy cultural relics.

On 27 January 1967, the Chairman called me to a seminar with some of the revolutionary rebels who keep books and cultural relics, as well as archaeological and museum units. I spoke at the meeting about the need to resolutely protect cultural relics and asked for concrete measures to be drawn up. Immediately after my speech was made public, it was reported by the Japanese news agency and also by other countries. Chairman Mao was pleased to read these reports from the Reference News. He affirmed my speech and the approaches I proposed, saying that they were all the right things to do. That speech of mine was later followed by a summary, which set out in detail and guided the people concerned on how to protect cultural relics, paintings, calligraphy and classics during the Cultural Revolution. Wang Li also talked about this in his Memoirs.

It is true that during the Cultural Revolution of August 1966, during the "smashing of the four olds", some antiquities were still destroyed. This has been the cause of some people's discontent with the Cultural Revolution, both at home and abroad. But some people knew what was going on, and knew that the destruction of cultural relics was mainly the result of blind radicalism by the so-called "old Red Guards" in the early days of the movement, and that it was soon stopped by the Central Cultural Revolution. But in order to deny the Cultural Revolution, they kept their mouths shut about what really happened at the time. In fact, the Central Cultural Revolution Group did not issue a single instruction or speech encouraging the destruction of cultural relics.

The criticism of Confucius, the cleaning up of the Confucius temple and the digging up of Confucius' grave were initially raised by the local rebel faction in Qufu, who wrote to the Central Cultural Revolution to report on the situation of the local Cultural Revolution movement. Chairman Mao's Marxist principle that "rebellion is justified" was the guiding principle of the Cultural Revolution, while Confucius' principle, in the final analysis, was also the same: "rebellion is unjustified". Therefore, we feel that the criticism of Confucius was a proper part of the Cultural Revolution. But it was a big deal, and it would be better to let the masses do it spontaneously than to have the Central Cultural Revolution take the initiative to guide it in order to prevent undue damage. When Tan Houlan and other student rebels at the Northern Normal University, heard about this, they reacted very positively. Chen Boda expressed his support for Tan Houlan's revolutionary spirit. The matter was then put up for discussion at a meeting of the Central Cultural Revolution Group, which was attended by both the Premier and Kang Sheng. The Premier spoke at the meeting, and Kang Sheng and Jiang Qing were also concerned about this matter. Guan Feng, an expert in the criticism of Confucius, made many good suggestions about the criticism of Confucius, but he was cautious about cleaning up the Confucian temple and digging up the grave of Confucius. He did say, however, that the Confucius temple and Confucius' tomb were symbols of the oppression of the people by the feudal ruling class for thousands of years, and it was good to clean them up, riding on the east wind of the Cultural Revolution. However, experts should be involved and they should not dig or destroy them indiscriminately. At the meeting, Kang Sheng analysed that there was probably nothing in Confucius' tomb. Confucius was a poor professor and had no money, at most there were a few bundles of bamboo slips. Chen Boda said that it was good to have bamboo slips dug up to make up for academic research. He reckoned that the body would have decomposed long ago and that Confucius' descendants could not preserve the tomb as Qin Shihuang did. So, to dig or not to dig is just a matter of formality. I, of course, actively supported the clean-up, and I proposed that the state might as well send archaeologists with them, so that the masses' desire to dig the tomb could be satisfied and an archaeological excavation could be carried out at the same time. In the end, the

Premier took the views of all parties and came up with the opinion that a scientific clean-up should be carried out in conjunction with an archaeological institute.

After obtaining the Central Government's approval, Chen Boda, Guan Feng and I conveyed the message to Lin Jie of the Red Flag magazine, asking him to go to the Northern Normal University to make a mobilisation report. In November 1966, Tan Houlan organised a team and drove to Qufu in great numbers, combined with teachers and students from local colleges and universities to set up a "National Red Guard Revolutionary Rebellion Liaison Station for the complete smashing of Kong's shop", and revolted against Confucius in the city of Qufu.

When the Red Guards rebelled in Qufu, the Shandong Provincial Committee immediately called the Central Cultural Revolution for instructions. I immediately replied to the Shandong Provincial Committee by telephone on behalf of the Central Cultural Revolution in accordance with the Premier's instructions at the Central Cultural Revolution meeting, asking them to tell the Red Guards that the pagoda areas in the Confucius Temple, which predate the Ming Dynasty, must not be smashed or damaged and must be protected. Those from the Qing Dynasty could be smashed, but not those from the Kangxi and Qianlong Dynasties. The Confucius Temple can be renovated, just like the rent collection yard. Confucian tombs can be dug up, but with the participation of archaeologists who know about cultural relics and the protection of cultural relics in the tombs. Chen Boda also told Tan Houlan and the others directly about the above spirit. Later on, Tan Houlan reported that according to the spirit of the Premier's instructions conveyed by Chen Boda, the monuments and plaques of the Confucius Temple and the cultural relics to be protected were written in red letters for protection and photographs were kept.

After the archaeological team went there with the students, a rebellious group of mainly local poor peasants dug up Confucius' tomb and found it full of yellow earth, with nothing inside, not even a piece of bamboo slip, not to mention any precious relics. In fact, it is not certain that it was Confucius' tomb, but perhaps it was just a random pile of earth. Confucius did not have a high political status at the time, his highest official position was that of a secretary-general, and the state of Lu was a tiny place, so there was not much left for him. When Confucius died, his disciples had not yet compiled the Analects, so it would not have been possible to put them in there either. He lived his life as a narrator and did not write his own monograph. And the various texts of Poetry, Shu, Rites and Music could not have been placed in it either.

Therefore, the so-called tomb of Confucius was only rebuilt by his descendants after he was made a 'teacher of all people'. The people who built Confucius' tomb at the time of his death were not bureaucrats or rich relatives, so it makes sense that there were no burial goods in the tomb. In fact, for thousands of years, Confucius' ideas had served to help the feudal rulers secure their own ruling class position, and his tomb was really just a symbol to fool people. With regard to the cleaning of the Confucius Temple, Tan Houlan and her team were following the Premier's instructions conveyed by Chen Boda that the monuments and plaques from the Qing Dynasty, before Kang, Yong and Qian, were cultural relics and should not be destroyed, and that the later ones could be cleaned up and dealt with. Tan Houlan and the girls were cleaning up the Confucius Temple's heritage monuments and plaques according to this principle.

After Guan Feng and I were knocked down, some people in Qufu City themselves rose up again to revolt against Confucius, and it was called outright anti-Confucianism. They criticised us for harbouring Confucius and not allowing them to smash things from Kangxi, Yongzheng and Qianlong.

They wanted to smash them again, so a very large monument repaired during the Kangxi period was smashed with a crack. After the end of the Cultural Revolution, some people said that Tan Houlan and the others were responsible for all these things, but in fact they weren't, it was the people in Qufu City who were doing the second great revolt against Confucius.

In Zhongnanhai there is also the issue of heritage conservation. The guards of Zhongnanhai said that there were many imperial monuments and other things in Zhongnanhai that had to be removed. The Premier said that the cultural relics in Zhongnanhai should be preserved, and that things from the three Qing dynasties (i.e. Kangxi, Yongzheng and Qianlong) should be preserved, and that many things from 1840 onwards were also cultural relics and should also be preserved. I conveyed the Premier's advice to the soldiers, who carried it out. They knew that things from the Kangxi, Yongzheng and Qianlong dynasties could not be moved or smashed. So, all those stone monuments erected in Zhongnanhai by the emperors of all generations were preserved.

## Chapter 14: Criticising the bourgeois reactionary line

1. The introduction of the "bourgeois reactionary line"
2. Chairman Mao presided over the Central Working Conference in October
3. The Liu Shaoqi I knew
4. The Deng Xiaoping I knew

### 1. The introduction of the "bourgeois reactionary line"

In Lin Biao's National Day speech on 1 October 1966, the concept of "bourgeois opposition to the revolutionary line" was introduced. This speech was drafted by Zhang Chunqiao and revised by Chen Boda. When the Central Committee met beforehand to discuss it, Wang Lizhao had raised the "bourgeois counter-revolutionary line". The Chairman said that opposition to revolution did not mean counter-revolution. The Premier said that the Chairman was right and that a distinction should be made between opposition to the revolution and counter-revolution. Therefore, on the morning of 1 October, Lin Biao used the term "bourgeois line of opposition to the revolution" in his speech. However, when the press release was issued that day, it reflected that there was no difference between the words "opposition to the revolution" and "counter-revolution" when translated into foreign languages. So Jiang Qing asked us to meet that evening to discuss and study the matter.

In the latter part of the 11th Plenary Session of the 8th Central Committee, Guan Feng first proposed the "bourgeois reactionary line" during a panel discussion, which caused great concern at the time. However, the communiqué issued by the conference did not adopt Guan Feng's formulation. Guan Feng's statement was apparently derived from Chairman Mao's "Bombard the Headquarters – My First Big-Character Poster" that "..... stands on a reactionary bourgeois position and practices bourgeois dictatorship" is quoted in this statement. Chairman Mao had repeatedly challenged us many times during this period on whether the masses of the people were to be protected or suppressed. It is the fundamental difference between the dictatorship of the proletariat and the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie; it is the fundamental difference between the Communist Party and the Guomindang. These words of Chairman Mao were directed at those in power in the Party who were always thinking of using the army to suppress the rebellious masses. However, Chairman Mao had not yet raised it to the level of line struggle at that time. However, after the 11th Plenary Session of the 8th Central Committee, many people mentioned the issue of the line in big-character posters.

When the Central Cultural Revolution Group met to discuss the issue, Chen Boda said that it was better to refer to Guan Feng's "bourgeois reactionary line". Everyone agreed with Chen Boda's statement. When the Central Cultural Revolution Group discussed this issue, the Premier was not present. At the meeting Jiang Qing asked Guan Feng to write a letter to the Chairman about this proposal. The Chairman read the letter and agreed with the formulation of the "bourgeois reactionary line", and approved the letter to other comrades of the Central Committee. This formulation was then settled. Jiang Qing later said that there was really no shortage of philosophers in the Central Cultural Revolution Group and that the issue of the line was mentioned at that time. Later, when Guan Feng was being investigated, Jiang Qing said that Guan Feng was credited with the Cultural Revolution and that he had proposed the "bourgeois reactionary line".

In the thirteenth issue of Red Flag magazine, published on 2 October 1966, the editorial "On the Great Road of Mao Zedong Thought" was published. This editorial was drafted by Guan Feng and

Wang Li and signed and approved by Chen Boda. In this editorial, the concept of the "bourgeois reactionary line" was openly introduced for the first time, as determined by the Cultural Revolution Group and approved by the Chairman.

The introduction of the "bourgeois reactionary line" was of fundamental significance. At the time, it seemed to refer to the period from 1 June 1966, when Nie Yuanzi's big-character poster was broadcast nationwide, to 26 July, when the Central Committee decided to abolish the work groups, after the work groups sent by Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping suppressed students from rising up to participate in the Cultural Revolution movement and staged white terror against the masses in an attempt to change the direction of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution movement to one of suppression of the masses. In fact, this had already happened repeatedly during the Anti-Rightist Movement in 1957 and the "Four Clean-ups" Movement in 1965. More than twenty years later, the June Fourth Incident in 1989 was a complete and total exposure of this line.

In the period of August and September 1966, after Chairman Mao's decision to abolish the work groups, the bourgeois reactionary line took on new manifestations. With the support of some of the former leaders of the work groups and some senior figures in the Party, the mass organisations of the conservatives who had supported the work group's line came to the fore and continued to uphold and defend the work group's line of suppressing the rebellious masses. During this period, the old Red Guards, represented in particular by the "West City Pickets", even put up the banner of "protecting old cadres" from criticism and attacks by the rebellious masses, while intentionally directing the spearhead of the struggle of the Cultural Revolution movement towards indiscriminate killings in society, raiding homes at will and creating the so-called "red terror". When the Central Cultural Revolution Group discussed the situation of the Cultural Revolution at that time, Guan Feng said that it was a variant of the "Liu and Deng capitalist and bourgeois reactionary line" that had gone into society.

From September 18 to 20, 1966, a symposium was convened by the Central Cultural Revolution for some teachers and students of Beijing's universities and colleges. This symposium lasted for three days, and I attended all of them. At the symposium, it was suggested that although the Eleventh Plenary Session of the Eighth Central Committee had re-elected the Standing Committee of the Central Committee and ended the leadership of the movement by Liu and Deng, it did not proceed to systematically criticise the issue of their right-leaning opportunist line. From the actual situation of the development of the Cultural Revolution Movement, it is clear that a right-leaning opportunist line that confronted the Party Central Committee headed by Chairman Mao had indeed existed in the Party for a long time. The Cultural Revolution Movement should have mobilised the masses to openly criticise this right-leaning line and make it known to the general public.

The editorial in the thirteenth issue of Red Flag, published on 2 October 1966, in effect confirmed the existence of this line and thus brought the struggle over the line within the Party into the open. After the masses had been mobilised, Chairman Mao, in order to reverse the direction of the struggle of the Cultural Revolution Movement, which had deviated from the focus of rectifying the capitalist-roaders, explicitly put forward the criticism of the "capitalist and bourgeois reactionary line", and made the correct direction of the struggle of the Cultural Revolution Movement clearer and more distinct to the whole Party and the masses. This was also a clear and firm support from Chairman Mao and the Party Central Committee for the rebellious mass organisations that opposed the work groups' line. The masses who rose up to join the rebellion everywhere thus had a new ideological weapon, thus creating greater pressure on the central departments and the leaders of the provinces and municipalities.

## 2. Chairman Mao presided over the Central Working Conference in October

From 9 to 28 October 1966, the Central Committee held a working conference in Beijing, which was chaired by Chairman Mao himself. The conference was attended by the leaders of the Central Committee and its departments, in addition to the main leaders of all the major regions, provinces and cities of the country. The theme of this meeting was to criticise the bourgeois reactionary line.

It was only with the support of the people that the Communist Party overthrew the reactionary rule of the Guomindang and thus seized state power. Moreover, the Communist Party's assumption of state power was fundamentally different from the rule established by the exploiting classes in the past. It was for the benefit of the great masses of the people and served the people, and never used the power in its hands for the benefit of individuals or a particular group. But in fact after taking control of state power, a change took place among some cadres of the Communist Party. In the beginning, it was when the officials got bigger and longer in office that they could not listen to the opinions of the masses below them. They often adopted a repressive attitude towards the masses who put forward their views to them, and even retaliated against them. A prime example of this was the movement in 1957, which went from the Communist Party's own rectification to a massive "anti-rightist movement". It is true, of course, that there were bourgeois right-wing elements in the attack on the Communist Party. But in countering the bourgeois right's attacks, the leaders of many departments and units branded people who had given them their views in good faith as "rightists". This was how the anti-rightist expansion came about. They saw themselves as the embodiment of the Party, and to oppose them was to oppose the Party. I experienced the "Eight Secretaries Incident" incident in Zhongnanhai, and I felt this particularly deeply.

At the time of the Three Years' Difficulties, some cadres had a greater taste of power in their hands, and not only could they enjoy "special provisions" that were not available to ordinary people, but some even used their power for their own financial gain. At that time, the "three self and one guarantee" proposal was ostensibly to get rid of the difficulties in economic construction, but if it had been implemented, would not those who held power have really benefited? It was in response to the tendency of the upper echelons and some cadres to take the capitalist road, and the tendency of some upper echelons and cadres to turn from servants of the people to masters of the people, to become corrupted and degenerate into a privileged bureaucratic class, that Chairman Mao launched the socialist education campaign, the "Four Clean-up Campaigns". Chairman Mao's aim in launching this campaign was clear: the focus was to rectify those in power in the Party who had taken the capitalist road. However, when Liu Shaoqi directed the campaign, he changed it into a campaign to purge the grassroots cadres and the general public, to resolve the contradiction between the "four cleans and the four uncleanes"<sup>340</sup>. As a result, Liu Shaoqi had a major political disagreement with Chairman Mao.

When the Cultural Revolution started, Liu Shaoqi was still up to his old tricks, trying to turn the students and the masses, who had been mobilised by Chairman Mao to oppose the bourgeoisie and revisionism politically, ideologically and culturally, into "rightists" who had launched an attack on the Party. Moreover, the seriousness of the problem lies in the fact that this is by no means just the thinking of Liu Shaoqi alone or of a few people, but it has formed a considerable force within the Party.

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<sup>340</sup> The goal of the movement was to cleanse politics, economy, organization, and ideology (the four cleanups). It was to last until 1966 and to focus on those in leadership positions who were being corrupted by the privileges of their positions. Under Liu Shaoqi's influence, the focus changed to "four uncleanes" in the same categories, but amongst the grass roots. In this way, the scope of the campaign was greatly extended.

Liu Shaoqi made a self-criticism at the congress, but although his self-criticism was long, it was only a repetition of the criticisms made by Chairman Mao against him on previous occasions, and there was no sign of his own sincerity. Therefore, it was considered a "fake self-criticism".

Deng Xiaoping also made a long self-criticism at the congress, but his attitude was better than Liu Shaoqi's. However, many people were still dissatisfied with his self-criticism.

### **3. The Liu Shaoqi I knew**

After I entered Zhongnanhai, I also met Liu Shaoqi for the first time at a ball held in Zhongnanhai. At that time, in my eyes, he was also the leader of the Party and the country, and so I had great respect for him. In my work, however, I had very little contact with him.

It was around the time of the "suppression of counter-revolution" campaign in 1952 that we handled a letter from Hunan. The letter was about Yang Jianxiong, a relative and secretary of the Hunan warlord Zhao Hengti, who was a classmate of Liu Shaoqi, who was arrested by Zhao Hengti in Changsha in 1925 when Liu Shaoqi was the leader of the National Federation of Trade Unions. At that time, Zhao Hengti was known to kill major Communist Party cadres upon arrest. It was only after Yang Jianxiong pleaded with Zhao Hengti that he released Liu Shaoqi. When he was released, he gave Liu Shaoqi a set of "Four Books" and told him to read them and change his thinking. After liberation, Yang Jianxiong was arrested by the People's Government during the "anti-rebellion" campaign. During his interrogation, he said that he had saved Liu Shaoqi's life. The local government saw that he had told the story in a coherent and specific manner and did not seem to be a fake. So they sent the material he had written to Beijing, together with a letter he had written to Liu Shaoqi asking for leniency. The letter was first sent to the Ministry of Public Security and then forwarded to Zhongnanhai, as I was in charge of handling letters in Beijing at the time, so it was sent to me first. As soon as I read the letter, I saw that it was about Hunan. So I passed the letter on to Zhu Gu, the section chief in our secretary's office who was responsible for handling letters from the central and southern regions. Zhu Gu sent the letter to Liu Shaoqi. Sometime later, I asked Zhu Gu if the letter had been dealt with. Zhu Gu told me that Comrade Shaoqi had written a direct instruction on the letter, saying that there was no such thing and that the local government should execute the man immediately. At that time, I thought to myself, "The letter mentions your personal historical situation, and you should have reported it to the Chairman, or at least shown it to other comrades of the central leadership, so how could you just order that person to be shot. However, Liu Shaoqi was the vice-chairman of the Central Committee, so I didn't dare to say anything. Later, during the Cultural Revolution, the matter was brought up again by the rebels in Hunan Province, and the letter that Liu Shaoqi had approved back then was also recovered.

In 1958, when I was being punished in the "Eight Secretaries Incident", we only knew that Yang Shangkun was punishing us, but later we found out that Liu Shaoqi had instructed Yang Shangkun to do so. He Zai, whom we opposed, was very close to Liu Shaoqi and Liu Shaoqi had the intention of replacing Tian Jiaying with He Zai.

In 1962, when I listened to Liu Shaoqi's speech at the Seven Thousand Cadres Conference, I had a lot of views in my mind. When he talked about the mistakes made since the Great Leap Forward, he said that the Central Government was responsible for them, without saying what he was responsible for. In fact, he was the one who was most enthusiastic when the "communist wind" was blowing and "high targets" were being proposed. Chairman Mao said at the meeting that he should be responsible for the Central Committee first, because he was the Party Chairman. But Liu Shaoqi, in his speech, clearly shifted the responsibility for the mistake up to Chairman Mao and down to the provinces and cities. So, later on, Lin Biao, speaking at the congress, came up and said that it was not

Chairman Mao who had made mistakes, but we, the people, who had made mistakes, and that we had not done what Chairman Mao had said. Lin Biao's speech clearly meant something. Lin Biao's speech was met with a round of applause from the whole audience.

After Liu Shaoqi took charge of the Central Committee at the front line, he had tight control over the Central Organization Department and the Central Office. An Ziwen and Yang Shangkun were his right-hand men.

In fact, Liu Shaoqi was quite a powerful man. The historian Lu Zhenyu worked with Liu Shaoqi in Wuhan back in 1927. He later worked for Liu Shaoqi as a political secretary. At the beginning of the founding of the country, it was rumoured that Liu Shaoqi ordered the disbanding of the workers' pickets in 1927 on the eve of Wang Jingwei's anti-communist campaign, and handed over the weapons in the hands of the workers to Wang Jingwei, and ran away to Mount Lushan to recuperate himself. Someone reported these matters to the Chairman. It is said that Liu Shaoqi suspected that Lu Zhenyu had told the story and had Lu Zhenyu put in prison. By the time of the Cultural Revolution, it was Guan Feng who suggested that the Central Government order Lu Zhenyu to be released. Lu Zhenyu posted many of Liu Shaoqi's mistakes while in prison and after his release.

As far as I can remember, Liu Shaoqi was a man of ideals. His ideal was not communism, but "new democracy". In fact, his philosophy of governance was what some people are now very keen on, "turning the revolutionary party into the ruling party" and turning the ruling party into a new ruler representing the new interest groups. Chairman Mao once satirised him as "Emperor Liu".

I attended most of the meetings of the Central Committee after the May 16 Circular. I witnessed with my own eyes how Liu Shaoqi and his group treated the mass movement. They were unforgiving to students, workers and cadres who rose up in the lead to voice their opinions. And they always suppressed the masses as "bad people" on the pretext that there were bad people among them. At that time, we in the Central Cultural Revolution Group had little say in the meetings of the Central Committee chaired by them. I could only report the meeting to Chairman Mao through Jiang Qing. Jiang Qing conveyed to me Chairman Mao's instructions for us to go to each school to find out what was going on, and when we did, we found that in almost every school the rebellious students and the masses had been attacked by the "work group" and not only were they criticised, many of them were also labelled as "reactionary students" and imprisoned. Within a few days of the "anti-interference, catching fish" campaign, more than 10,000 people were arrested in Beijing alone. It later also caused some mass suicides. If Chairman Mao had not stopped them in time, the number of people who would have been punished and hit would have far exceeded the "anti-rightist" movement of 1957.

#### **4. The Deng Xiaoping I knew**

In my opinion, at first Deng Xiaoping did not have much prestige among the leaders of the Central Committee, and many people did not take him very seriously. But Chairman Mao not only valued him, he even liked him. Dong Lao<sup>341</sup> said, "Five horses entered the capital", and Gao Gang was the first one. In fact, the fastest promoted of the five horses was Deng Xiaoping. This was because Gao Gang was already the vice-chairman of the state when the country was founded. It was only later that I realised that the reason why Chairman Mao valued Deng Xiaoping was not entirely because he had been a former "Maoist", but because he had really strong political organisational skills.

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<sup>341</sup> A respectful term for Dong Biwu.

At that time, the Central Secretariat always had a special stenographer to take notes at its meetings. However, on one occasion, the stenographer was busy, so I was asked to help take notes on short notice. It was a meeting to discuss industrial issues, and the meeting was so chaotic that it was impossible to take notes as you spoke and I spoke. But when it came to Deng Xiaoping's speech, he summed up everyone's views in a few items by summarising them at a high level. In this way, my record went smoothly. Everyone listened and agreed. I was immediately impressed with him.

He didn't usually read much, nor did he talk much about theory. But there were some things, especially some theoretical issues raised by Chairman Mao, that others had to ponder several times before they understood, but he was able to grasp the main points after listening to them once. At that time, those who often played bridge with him, such as Wu Han, Wan Li and Lu Zhengcao, were actually his senior advisors.

One of his greatest strengths was his ability to capture the mind of Chairman Mao. Chairman Mao was eloquent, brilliant and unpredictable. Some of his thoughts were beyond even the Premier, Chen Boda and Jiang Qing's comprehension. Deng Xiaoping, on the other hand, could grasp them very accurately. It can be said that he was a very clever man. The letter he later wrote to Chairman Mao, "Never to overturn the case", was on the level of the famous "Gu Wen Guan Zhi" in terms of timing and his grasp of the Chairman's psychology. Although it was politically deceptive, it was enlightening and thought-provoking for a leader who was a man of virtue.

However, you can hardly say that he has any political beliefs. What he aspires to is mostly European and American capitalism, and he believes in the philosophy of pragmatism and utilitarianism: "It doesn't matter whether it is a black cat or a white cat, so long as it catches mice", and he often does things without a bottom line. He dared to throw away even the classical theories of Marxism-Leninism, the fundamental principles of Mao Zedong Thought, and even the moral and human norms of society.

## Chapter 15: Criticism of "Peng, Luo, Lu and Yang", Pang Dehuai and other issues

1. Criticism of "Peng, Luo, Lu and Yang"
2. The death of Zhang Linzhi and others
3. Jiang Qing's entanglement with Song Qingling and Kang Keqing
4. The fight against Peng Dehuai
5. The question of Li Lisan
6. Some of the old cadres protected by the Central Cultural Revolution during the campaign

### 1. Criticism of "Peng, Luo, Lu and Yang"

On December 12, 1966, a loyalty meeting was held in the capital's Workers' Stadium with 100,000 participants to defend Chairman Mao to the death and fight against the "Peng, Luo, Lu and Yang" counter-revolutionary revisionist group. This was the first time in the Cultural Revolution that the masses participated in a public meeting to criticise the senior cadres of the former Central Committee. However, this meeting was not initiated and organized by the Central Cultural Revolution Group. For such a big meeting, criticizing such big figures, neither Chen Boda, the head of the Central Cultural Revolution Group, nor Jiang Qing, the first deputy head of the Group, were present at the meeting.

In September 1966, Ye Jianying attended a meeting of literary and artistic workers of the army and received representatives of literary and artistic schools. During and after the meeting, Ye Jianying made a speech in support of Jiang Qing's literary revolution and the model opera. I was also invited to attend this meeting. When I returned, I reported this to Jiang Qing. Jiang Qing was very happy when she heard about it. She personally called Ye Jianying and said, "Marshal Ye, I was very touched to hear that you had spoken at the meeting of representatives of literary and artistic institutions in support of the literary revolution and the model opera!" Ye Jianying told Jiang Qing on the phone: "My daughter Ye Xiangzhen is a student at the Central Academy of Drama, and she often tells me about the situation in the literary and artistic circles. She and her husband, Liu Shikun<sup>342</sup>, both support you. They have both studied the speech you made at the symposium on the work of literature and art for the troops, and I have also read it. We all thought it was very good and very important". Jiang Qing said to me after talking to him on the phone: "I heard that Ye Xiangzhen and the others also support the Cultural Revolution and the literary revolution, and often report the situation in the literary and artistic circles to Marshal Ye. You should go and talk to Ye Xiangzhen and

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<sup>342</sup> Liu Shikun was a concert pianist who first met Ye Xiangzhen in 1959. They were married in 1962. In 1966, when the Cultural Revolution began, four of Marshal Ye's six children and his two sons-in-law were all imprisoned. After much deliberation, Liu Shikun said to Ye Xiangzhen, "I have already been labelled as a counter-revolutionary, but you have not yet been named, so let's divorce! This way you won't be implicated, and maybe we can save Marshal Ye." Liu Shikun and Ye Xiangzhen finally went through the divorce procedure at the Beijing Garrison Command. . In the early 1980s, Ye Xiangzhen directed the nationwide sensation "The Wilderness", for which Liu Shikun was responsible for recording the music. During the filming of The Wilderness, Ye Xiangzhen met the famous cinematographer Luo Dan and began a relationship with him. Subsequently, Ye Xiangzhen and Luo Dan got married.

tell her to actively participate in the Cultural Revolution". Jiang Qing also said that a meeting of the literary and artistic rebels will be held in Beijing soon, with all the art schools and model theatre troupes coming. "You should arrange for Ye Xiangzhen to make a speech at the conference".

Although I did not know Ye Xiangzhen at that time, I had been classmates with her birth mother during her rotation at the Party School and knew some things about her family, and I also knew something about Ye Jianying and Ye Xiangzhen from her mother. After Jiang Qing had spoken, I went to see Ye Xiangzhen and arranged for her to speak at a conference on the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution in the capital's literary and artistic circles held on 28 November 1966. In her speech, Ye Xiangzhen spoke quite well in support of Jiang Qing's speech on the literary revolution and in support of the model operas.

Originally, at the beginning of the Cultural Revolution, the work group of the Central Academy of Drama was sent by the PLA Academy of Military Sciences, of which Ye Jianying was the president from 1958 until 1972. So, this working group was supportive of Ye Xiangzhen, who also served as the head of the Cultural Revolution Preparatory Committee of the Central Academy of Drama. By the end of July that year, after Chairman Mao decided to abolish the work groups, Ye Xiangzhen immediately turned around and started to oppose the work group. People said, "You are not under pressure at all, why are you against the work group?"

After Ye Xiangzhen changed from being a pro-work group to an anti-work group rebel, and her reputation was already quite big. Now that she was speaking on such an occasion, she became an instant sensation, a representative of the rebel students at the Central Academy of Drama, and an influential figure in the entire literary and artistic world. She became the student leader of the rebellions in the literary and artistic circles, and was listened to by many rebels in the theatre, ballet and dance companies and many other literary and artistic groups.

After this, Ye Xiangzhen came to see me. At that time, Li Na also came to the Cultural Revolution office and Ye Xiangzhen met with her and they talked a lot about the literary revolution.

From the very beginning of the Cultural Revolution, Ye Jianying's attitude was very positive. In front of Chairman Mao, he always appeared as a staunch revolutionary leftist. At that time, I also thought that his opposition to Peng Zhen and to Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping was all true. He was particularly opposed to Luo Ruiqing, saying that Luo Ruiqing was very disrespectful to him, as well as to Chen Yi, Nie Rongzhen and Xu Qianqian, all veteran marshals, and considered everyone to be beneath him.

The day after the Literary and Artistic Conference on 28 November, in the middle of a meeting, Ye Xiangzhen came over to me and said she wanted to report to me on her work. The seats on either side of me were full at the time, so she half-crouched down in front of me to talk to me. She said that they had raided Li Bozhao (Yang Shangkun's wife, who was then the director of the Central Academy of Drama), and had raided her home and burned many of her photos and clothes of Feng Caixiu's plays, which had been placed with her. Then she told me that we should not only fight against Li Bozhao, but also against Yang Shangkun. I said, "Of course Yang Shangkun's problems are bigger than Li Bozhao's, but he is not in the literary field and is not the same thing as his wife". She said, "That doesn't matter, we have to fight too. 'Peng, Luo, Lu and Yang' all had to be criticised". She wanted me to support them. I said, "Fighting 'Peng, Luo, Lu and Yang' is a big deal, and it needs the approval of the Central Government. You have to go to the Premier". She said, "Hey, the Premier is so busy, how can I find him?" I said, "Your father is always with the Premier, you should go and

listen to him, he is an old revolutionary, he has experience, don't mess around". When she heard me say that, she went away.

By noon one day in early December, Premier Zhou called and asked me who had taken Peng Zhen, Luo Ruiqing and Lu Dingyi away. The Premier spoke in a very stern tone. I quickly said, "Premier, I didn't know about this, how could I have the guts to do that?" After I said that, I immediately remembered that Ye Xiangzhen had asked me about organizing people to criticize "Peng, Luo, Lu and Yang". I then told the Premier about this. When I said this, the Premier understood.

Later, Ye Xiangzhen told me that the Premier had found her and asked her to hand them. She said that the Premier was really a master negotiator and that she was no match for him. In two words, the Premier made her agree to all his terms. The Premier said, "If you hand over those persons now, you will meet for criticism, and after we have studied and approved it, they will be handed over to you for criticism. Aren't you still missing one Yang Shangkun? You will not find Yang Shangkun. You can't find him, but if you hand them over to me now, I will give him to you to struggle against."

At that time, Luo Ruiqing was living in the hospital and Lu Dingyi had just moved out of Zhongnanhai, so they were both relatively easy to find. But the walls of Peng Zhen's house were so high that it was difficult to get in without opening the gate. Ye Xiangzhen later told people that they first used a trick to get in and then escorted Peng Zhen out through the small gate. But I also heard that they had someone climb the fence first and then open the door. The wall of Peng Zhen's house was so high that it was not easy for ordinary people to climb over it and enter. Anyway, Ye Xiangzhen was a trendsetter of her time, so it's no wonder that after her comeback, she turned back to directing films amidst the new trend, directing *The Wilderness*<sup>343</sup>, which also made quite an impact!

The next day, I met Ye Jianying at the Premier's place. I said, "Marshal Ye, your daughter is really good, she has arrested Peng Zhen and the others". I said this deliberately in front of the Premier, meaning to tell him that the arrest of Peng, Luo and Lu was supported by Ye Jianying and had nothing to do with the Central Cultural Revolution Group. How clever Ye Jianying was! He heard what I was saying and immediately said, "Oh, how capable can my daughter be as a child, she was guided by Jiang Qing and you guys to do such a little thing". The sensitive Premier Zhou had long understood everything from our conversation, so I didn't have to explain any further.

Later they held a conference to fight against "Peng, Luo, Lu and Yang", and Jiang Qing told all the people from the Central Cultural Revolution Group not to attend. She said, "It's their business, let's not get involved". But the Premier disagreed, saying that it would not be good if no one from the Central Cultural Revolution went to such a big event. So, the Premier asked me, Wang Li and Guan Feng to go to the conference in a neutral way. Jiang Qing told Ye Qun not to go either. But Ye Qun went anyway. She changed into civilian clothes, put on a hat and a big mask, and went quietly to see the event. She mainly wanted to go to see Lu Dingyi come off the stage.

The criticism meeting was conducted in a very poor manner. When struggling against Peng Zhen, it was just shouting slogans and reading from a script; when Luo Ruiqing broke his leg, he was put in a basket and carried up to be struggled against, making it unbearable for the crowd to watch; when

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<sup>343</sup> "Wilderness" was directed by Ye Xiangzhen and based on the play of the same name by Cao Yu. Although set against a background of landlord oppression in the old society, the play has been described as one which "profoundly illustrates the writer's perplexity about the 'dilemma of life' and his philosophical contemplation of the mysterious universe". Its focus is on personal revenge and its tragic consequences. It premiered in Hong Kong in 1981 and in the rest of China in August 1988.

struggling against Lu Dingyi, Lu Dingyi was very nervous and kept shouting; and when fighting Yang Shangkun, no material was produced at all, not even the bugging incident was mentioned.

From then on, I had very little contact with Ye Xiangzhen. She sometimes came to me, and I was wary and spoke to her less. But by then she had already met several heads of rebel groups. This girl was really something. Within a few days, she had enlisted Zhu Chengzhao from the Geological Institute. After Zhu Chengzhao made friends with her, he slowly ended up listening to her and not to us.

Later in July 1967, Ye Xiangzhen took Zhu Chengzhao and some others on a train to the south. Along the way, she unscrupulously abused Jiang Qing and the Central Cultural Revolution, and was planning to smuggle herself into Hong Kong. Those who went with her urgently reported the situation to us. Jiang Qing read the material and took it to the Premier, telling him, "Look at how these people are cursing us, and they are trying to smuggle themselves into Hong Kong". After reading it, the Premier said to Jiang Qing, "I will take care of this matter and you should leave it alone". In the future, there would be no more "extraneous" incidents. As a result, the Premier discussed with Ye Jianying and had Ye Xiangzhen, Zhu Chengzhao and Liu Shikun interrogated in isolation.

## **2. The death of Zhang Linzhi and others**

Zhang Linzhi was an old cadre who joined the revolution at a very early age. He had been the Minister of Coal since 1957. In the 1950s, the Ministry of Coal had not paid enough attention to the safety of coal mines, and mine accidents occurred frequently in large and small mines. One mine accident resulted in dozens or hundreds of deaths. At that time, there was selective reporting in the newspapers of mining accidents that occurred, but there was a great deal of internal notification. The daily letters from the public were often filled with tears and complaints from the families of the victims. My colleagues and I were heartbroken and in tears when we read them. So what would happen and in which place, where there is another gas explosion in a coal mine, was the thing we dreaded most.

To emphasise the importance of coal mine safety production, the Central Government also held an exhibition on coal mine safety production at Yingtai in Zhongnanhai. Chairman Mao also went to see it. At the exhibition, he urged that safe production in coal mines be ensured. Later on, whenever people visited the exhibition, the comrades who interpreted it would tell them that Chairman Mao had also come to visit and had repeatedly urged us to improve safe production in coal mines.

Chairman Mao repeatedly approved documents requesting the Ministry of Coal to seriously address the issue of safety in production. He also got the leading comrade in charge of economics to talk with him and repeatedly spoke about the need to pay attention to the safety of workers, and especially to the safety of coal mine production. Safety must come first, and it is better to produce less and to ensure safety. In his early years, Chairman Mao worked in the Anyuan coal mine and also went down into the mine. He saw with his own eyes the families of coal miners with their children standing above the mine after the explosion, waiting for news that their loved ones were down there, not knowing whether they were dead or alive and the cries and screams were so loud that the scene was miserable.

Chairman Mao also approached Zhang Linzhi several times, asking him to solve this problem of safety production. He said that he would rather shut down coal mines that are dangerous than have

people die. He also said, "You are serving the people. How can you serve the people when they die? If a worker dies, his family will be finished".

But after Zhang Linzhi went back, mining accidents continued to occur one after another, and nothing seemed to be resolved. And during the three years of hardship, there were many letters complaining about the privileges of the leaders of the Ministry of Coal and the leaders of the coal mines, eating more and taking more of the provisions of the state's special care for coal miners. Most of the problems reflected in these letters were also reported to Chairman Mao.

Chairman Mao was furious at these problems within the Ministry of Coal, especially the safety issues, and said that Zhang Linzhi was a "dead bureaucrat" who had no regard for the lives of the people. Chairman Mao also criticised the Premier over the mine disasters. During the Cultural Revolution, when Jiang Qing raised the criticism of Zhang Linzhi at a meeting of the Cultural Revolution Group, the Premier also said, "What is this Zhang Linzhi doing?" Despite the fact that the country's foreign exchange was so tight, the Central Government granted him a lot of foreign exchange to import safety equipment, but how could so many things still go wrong?

In 1965, Liu Shaoqi and Chairman Mao had an argument when discussing the "Twenty-three Rules" of the "Four Clean-ups" campaign. Liu Shaoqi confronted Chairman Mao and asked him what was a party in power that followed the capitalist road. Who are the people in power who follow the capitalist road? Can you name one person? According to Chairman Mao, a capitalist-roader is someone who always wants to follow the capitalist road and is not willing to follow the socialist road. These people only know how to defend their own privileged interests and do not care about the lives of the common people. So, he followed up Liu Shaoqi's questioning by saying, "Who is a capitalist-roader? The Minister of Coal, Zhang Linzhi, is".

Although Chairman Mao had already named Zhang Linzhi at that time, he was still sitting firmly in the position of Minister of Coal. After the start of the Cultural Revolution, he followed Liu Shaoqi in his capitalist-roader and bourgeois reactionary line. When students from coal mines, mining colleges and the coal ministry put up big posters about him, he would punish the students and the workers and cadres who gave him advice. As long as those were putting up big-character posters about him, he considered them rightists and arrested them. Liu Shaoqi wanted to "catch fish and counter interference", but what he did at the Ministry of Coal was "catching anti-Party elements and ambitious people", saying "These people want to take advantage of the discontent of the masses and use the mass movement to usurp the power of the Party".

During the Cultural Revolution movement, we also received many letters from the people of the Coal Ministry about how Zhang Linzhi was a big eater and drinker, and had been so since the time of the Great Leap Forward. And he drank very heavily, drinking the most expensive wines. Worse still, a member of the party group of the Ministry of Coal wrote to the Bulletin that Zhang Linzhi had gone so far as to abuse Chairman Mao as Qin Shihuang, a dictatorial dictator, after drinking. The fact that he cursed the Chairman may have had something to do with the fact that the Chairman had named him during the dispute between Mao and Liu. These things were widely spread around the Ministry of Coal at that time. This is why Kang Sheng said that Zhang Linzhi was Peng Zhen's "diehard follower". The people in the Central Cultural Revolution Group also generally had a bad impression of Zhang Linzhi.

On December 14, 1966, the Central Cultural Revolution held a meeting in the Great Hall of the People with representatives of student rebel groups in Beijing, at which Jiang Qing said that Zhang Linzhi was a die-hard member of Peng Zhen's party and called on the students to carry out criticism

against him. In late December, at a meeting of the Central Cultural Revolution Group chaired by the Premier, Jiang Qing again said that there was a capitalist-roader who had been named by Chairman Mao but had not yet been criticised, so was someone shielding him? After Jiang Qing's speech, the Premier also spoke, saying that Zhang Linzhi was bureaucratic and disregarded the safety of coal mine production, and that he wanted to organise criticism of Zhang Linzhi.

However, it is useless just to talk about fighting, someone has to do it in concrete terms. At the meeting, Jiang Qing asked me to go and mobilise the masses to criticise Zhang Linzhi. The Premier also agreed that I should go, and he asked me to explain clearly to the masses why Zhang Linzhi should be criticised. I was very active in carrying out the Premier's and Jiang Qing's instructions and went to the Mining Institute after the meeting to mobilise the masses, and the Premier even asked me to take some PLA soldiers with me.

I went to the Mining Institute, found the rebel students, held a mass meeting and mobilised them to organise a meeting to criticise Zhang Linzhi. I spoke at the meeting and called on the students and workers to put up a resolute struggle against Zhang Linzhi. But at the same time I also stressed in my speech that we should listen to Chairman Mao and insist on using civil combat, not armed combat, and not beating people. People from the Mining Institute and the Coal Ministry also assured me that there was no need for armed struggle. All my speeches were later published in the original records and reproduced in various tabloids. The records also contained my words of caution to them to fight civilly, not martially, and not to beat people up.

But to my surprise, the situation changed as soon as the conference for the struggle against Zhang Linzhi began. At first the struggle at the Ministry of Coal and the Mining Institute was relatively civilised. But after the January Revolution in Shanghai, workers' rebels rose up all over the country. So many coal mine workers, and the families of those who died, came to Beijing to seek justice from Zhang Linzhi, and many came from outside places specifically to attend the meeting to criticise Zhang Linzhi. When these coal miners, especially the families of those who had been beaten up during the movement and whose loved ones had died in the mine disaster, joined in, it was a big deal. Some of the families of those who died complained that they had been beaten up even though they had voiced their opinions to the leaders, and some of them were branded as counter-revolutionaries and imprisoned. This immediately aroused great public anger. The workers had strength in their hands, and when they thought of their grievances, they fought without mercy. The students of the mining institute were unable to stop them. Zhang Linzhi was in trouble, and he was beaten up very badly indeed. He couldn't take it anymore and hanged himself on 22 January 1967. I read his autopsy report and it said that there were many subcutaneous injuries and bruises and blood spots on his body. This was all from the beating, of course.

When Zhang Linzhi died, the Premier was naturally very unhappy, and he said that he could no longer give an account to Chairman Mao. In his speech on 17 February 1967 (the day after the Old Marshals' furore at Huairentang), the Premier also spoke of this incident, saying that he was very sad that he had not even been able to protect his own minister. "One cannot treat cadres with such cruel struggles and merciless blows". Later, I heard from someone who had been a member of the Jiang Qing Task Force that after Zhang Linzhi's death, the Premier was furious, and after my arrest, the Premier said that Qi Benyu had killed Zhang Linzhi<sup>344</sup> and that he could be shot. However, when I

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<sup>344</sup> For Zhou Enlai's comments on July 31, 1970, after Qi Benyu's arrest, see Zhou Enlai *Selected Works Vol 2*, p. 475-6.

was still free, I did not hear him say that he wanted to shoot me when he learned of Zhang Linzhi's death, and at that time he still often gave me instructions on my work.

I am certainly responsible for the death of Zhang Linzhi, and I have always felt guilty about it. I knew at the time that there was a lot of public outrage against Zhang Linzhi, so I should have taken into account the possible consequences. But when I organised the criticism I did not specifically set up people to control the scene of the criticism, and my failure to do so was a serious dereliction of duty on my part. I do not shirk this responsibility. In particular, I later heard that Zhang Linzhi had performed bravely during the war years, was a general capable of fighting, and had made great contributions to the revolution. And in terms of personal character, he was also relatively decent, with no problems other than eating and drinking.

As far as I know, during the Cultural Revolution, an old cadre was actually beaten to death in the course of criticism. Although it was totally wrong to beat someone to death at random, there was a reason for this incident. He was the secretary of the party committee of a university in Beijing, and a very senior cadre. When the Premier found out that this man had been killed, he became angry and said that this man had been meritorious in the past, so how could he have gotten him killed. He asked me to find out who had done it. When I went with my men to investigate, the situation became clear. It turned out that this was a man who was worse than a beast. Before the Cultural Revolution, he had raped a beautiful female student from his school. After he raped her, she was in a trance, she didn't even eat and she looked terrible. The school teacher didn't know what had caused her to become like that, and was afraid that something would happen to her, so he brought her mother to the school. When the mother came and asked, the student didn't say anything specific, only that she had been bullied by the leader and didn't want to live. Her mother thought that a teacher or cadre from below had done it, and insisted on going to the top leader of the school to sue. As a result, she found the secretary of the party committee. The party secretary took one look at her mother, who was even more beautiful than her daughter. He raped her mother as well. After the rape, he told her that she was not allowed to talk about it outside, and that she could take care of her daughter in any way she wanted, or else he would threaten her. When her mother was raped, she couldn't resist, so she grabbed a handful of flesh from the man's body and held it tightly in her hand. She also saved the underwear with the filth left on it as well. Then the mother said to her daughter, "I know all about you, be strong and don't be afraid. We will have to avenge this one day". Less than two years later, the Cultural Revolution began and that mother went to school. She was very clever, and to protect her daughter, she did not speak about her daughter, but about herself. When she did so, other girls who had also been defiled by that party secretary also came forward. The old cadre was usually a bully at school, and he was very dominant. He also messed with the intellectuals and the cadres below him, and he did it all very well. This time when the masses rose up, it was a big deal! The mother showed everyone the evidence she had kept and then took it to the Public Security Bureau for a test. The crowd was outraged and spontaneously rose up to hold a criticism meeting, beating the man badly. Although the Central Government had a rule at the time that men and women should not be involved in matters of lifestyle during the Cultural Revolution, this was no longer a matter of lifestyle, but a story of the new capitalist-roader Huang Shiren and a new Xi'er<sup>345</sup>. I compiled all the materials I had researched and took them to the Premier to report to him. While reading it, the Premier slapped his hand on the table and cursed, "This is still the

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<sup>345</sup> Xi'er is the victim of the cruel landlord Huang Shiren in the model opera "White-Haired Girl". After he abuses her, she hides in a temple until her hair turns white. Eventually she gets her revenge.

Communist Party! This is a bandit or a bully!" I asked the Premier what to do about it. The Premier was furious and said, "Don't deal with it, just burn the corpse and forget about it". I told the Premier that I should tell the people that they should also stop talking about it, because it would have a bad impact on the Party. The Premier said, "Yes, no one should mention it again".

I have been struggling with my thoughts as I write this. Because back then, the Premier said that he would not mention it again. But now I am mentioning it again. It is because I consider that it was because the blockade of the Party's capitalist-roaders was not fully exposed back then, and the masses were not made fully aware of the true nature of the capitalist-roaders, that the present situation of a massive resurgence of capitalism throughout the country today has been created.

### **3. Jiang Qing's entanglement with Song Qingling and Kang Keqing**

At the beginning of the Cultural Revolution, some people in Shanghai with ulterior motives smashed the tombstones of Song Qingling's parents under the banner of the Red Guards. Mistakenly believing that Jiang Qing had told them to do it, Song Qingling scolded Jiang Qing for being nasty. Jiang Qing was furious when she found out.

It was a big deal at the time. Once I went to a meeting with the Chairman and Song Qingling was there, and she asked, "Who is Qi Benyu?" I stood up and said, "It's me". She took one look at me and said, "Oh, it's you". Then she didn't say anything, she said, "Sit down". I knew in my heart that she had probably heard the rumour that Jiang Qing had asked me to send someone to smash her parents' tombstone. In fact, she had wronged me. I had no choice but to protect her, so how could I have sent someone to smash her parents' tombstone? When Shanghai was liberated, the Shanghai underground party instructed us to organise a people's security team to protect her house, and we faithfully carried out the instructions from our superiors.

But Jiang Qing also lost her temper because Song Qingling scolded her, and told me at a meeting of the Central Cultural Revolution Group that she was no big deal. The Premier was also present at the meeting, but he didn't say a word. When he returned, the Premier immediately told Fu Chongbi to send troops to secure Song Qingling's residence. But they waited for three days; however, nothing happened. One day, the Premier ran into me at a meeting and called me into a small room at the side of the conference room. He asked me, "Who did you set up to go to that meeting and how did you set it up?" I knew he was asking about Song Qingling, and I said, "How could I have arranged this? Jiang Qing said that in a fit of anger, and she never spoke to me about it again afterwards". When the Premier heard that, he said, "Oh, you are a good comrade!"

Before that, the Premier had ordered Shanghai to have the tombstones repaired immediately. The Premier showed the restored photos to Song Qingling, who saw that her parents' tombstones were erected better than before and knew that she had wrongly blamed Jiang Qing, so she apologised to her. Later, when Chairman Mao found out about this, he told Jiang Qing that you should be more generous and take the initiative to go and see her. On the National Day that year, I saw Jiang Qing and Song Qingling talking and laughing on Tiananmen Square, making up again.

It was also Jiang Qing who asked me to set up the big-character posters of Zhu De and Kang Keqing inside Zhongnanhai. As mentioned earlier in Part II, Chapter 3, Kang Keqing and Jiang Qing had a long history of conflict, and both she and the Party's elder sisters opposed Jiang Qing's marriage to

Chairman Mao. Among the wives of the leaders of the Central Committee, only Zeng Zhi<sup>346</sup>, the wife of Tao Zhu, was still on good terms with Jiang Qing, and Zeng Zhi was also a good friend of He Zizhen. Deng Yingchao, too, often visited Jiang Qing, probably at the behest of the Premier, but it is not clear how she felt about it.

Later, I learned that Chairman Mao was disgusted with the posting of the big-character posters of Zhu De and Kang Keqing. But the Chairman knew in his heart that it was Jiang Qing's idea and he knew that she and Kang Keqing had a big conflict. So the Chairman did not criticise me once on this matter. But I am still very uneasy when I think of this incident.

Later, Renmin University prepared to hold a 10,000-strong congress to fight against Zhu De. The reason was that the students of Renmin University wanted to criticise their deputy party secretary, Sun Yang, who was Zhu De's secretary.

Sun Yang's father, Sun Bingwen, was the Deputy Director of the Political Department of the Whampoa Military Academy and was then an aide to the Premier. He was later killed by the Guomindang. Sun Yang didn't know it at first, but when he was a student at Pudong High School in Shanghai, he was classmates with Chiang Ching-kuo<sup>347</sup>, so he hung out with them all day and joined the Revival Society. Later the party organisation got in touch with him and told him that his father was a martyr, and he immediately ran away to Yan'an. The students of Renmin University said that Sun Yang was a spy and struggled against him. Even Sun's sister, Sun Weishi, was struggled against with him. Sun Weishi was the adopted daughter of the Premier, but for some reason, the Premier did not protect Sun Weishi very well, and later Sun Weishi committed suicide as a result of the criticism. Now people are saying that Jiang Qing persecuted Sun Weishi, which is unjustifiable. I did not hear that Jiang Qing persecuted Sun Weishi, but I know that Ye Qun wanted to persecute Sun Weishi. Ye Qun hated Sun Weishi because she had been in love with Lin Biao in Moscow and Ye Qun was always afraid that she would come back to steal Lin Biao. So, she seized on the fact that she had joined the KGB in the Soviet Union to fix her. In fact, at that time, both the Communist Party of China and the Communist Party of the Soviet Union were branches of the Communist International and often exchanged information, and personnel could be dispatched to each other. At that time, joining the KGB was an honourable thing to do and unreliable people were not allowed to join.

I did not know much about Zhu De's opposition to the Chairman in the past. Jiang Qing told me about Zhu De's past opposition to the Chairman at Jinggang Mountain, so I supported the decision of the Renmin University students to hold a struggle conference. When the Premier found out, he immediately called me to him and he told me that Zhu De was not the biggest capitalist-roader in the Party. Wasn't this a diversion from the general direction? The Premier also said that the last time the Central Committee met, someone had fought against Zhu De. I asked the Premier, "I often come to take notes at meetings of the Central Committee, so how come I didn't know anything about this

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<sup>346</sup> Zeng Zhi (1911-1998) was the wife of Tao Zhu. In 1924, she was admitted to a Women's Normal School. The school actively participated in activities against the old ethics and education, against inequality between men and women, and against bureaucratic warlords. In 1926, she was admitted to the Hengyang Peasant Movement Training Institute, rejected an arranged marriage and joined the CCP. She did underground work in Hunan, and participated in the Xiangnan Uprising in 1927. She supported Mao Zedong at Ruijin and followed him to the Jinggangshan revolutionary base. In 1934 she met and married Tao Zhu. She supported him when he was struggled against during the Cultural Revolution. In December 1977, Zeng Zhi resumed work and served as Deputy Minister of the Organization Department of the CPC Central Committee.

<sup>347</sup> Chiang Kai-shek's son.

meeting? The Premier said that it was a top-secret meeting, which you could not attend. The Premier also said that the Commander-in-Chief explained at that meeting that he used to have ambitions when he was in Jinggang Mountain, but he only thought about it in his mind and did not say it out loud. It was still there at the time of the war against Japan. But when it came to the Liberation War, there was none. During the Liberation War, those big battles, with heavy casualties and frightening battlefields, were commanded by the Chairman himself, and he could only be a staff officer. At that time, he already knew that he was not qualified to be the leader of the Party. Now that he is so old, he has no such idea. The Premier said that the Chairman was disgusted when he heard that Liu Shaoqi had met to criticise Zhu De. The Chairman said, "Some people say that Zhu De is the black commander, if Zhu De is the black commander, then I am the black political commissar".

The Premier told me to go and cancel the mass meeting at Renmin University immediately. I immediately complied with the Premier's instructions, called Renmin University, and asked my secretary to go to Renmin University to convince them to cancel the mass meeting.

When I was released from prison in 1986, the Commander-in-Chief had long since passed away and Kang Keqing was still alive. I wrote a letter to Kang Keqing and made a self-criticism. I said that I had made a mistake in this matter. Although we had withdrawn the conference to criticise the Commander-in-Chief, we were still at fault. I never gave you a self-criticism before because the words I gave you at that time seemed like I was seeking some kind of "leniency" and I did not mean it. Now that I have completed 18 years in prison, I do not admit to any of the charges they have put on me. But in opposing Commander-in-Chief Zhu, this was indeed my mistake, and I am now making a self-criticism of it to you. Kang Keqing's daughter later wrote in her book, *My Father Zhu De*, that Qi Benyu later wrote a review to my mother that he was wrong, in a sincere manner, and so on.

My office used to be in the same compound as the Commander-in-Chief's home. The Commander-in-Chief used to come to see us in his office. He also gave me a copy of his handwritten copy of *The Fugue of the Orchid*, with the words "Comrade Benyu" and his seal of "Zhu De" on it. Although that copy of the *Fugue of the Orchid* was later confiscated and lost, every time I think of it, it makes me feel even more at home. But every time I think of it, my guilt towards the Commander-in-Chief is increased.

#### **4. The fight against Peng Dehuai**

At the time of the Cultural Revolution, Peng Dehuai was working on the construction of the Great Third Line in Sichuan. Li Jingquan fought with Peng Dehuai at the Lushan Conference and Peng Dehuai supported Tian Jiaying in his criticism of Li Jingquan, who hated Peng Dehuai with a passion. So, when Peng Dehuai arrived in Sichuan, he watched him very closely and kept reporting his every move to the Central Committee. I received a report from the Southwest Bureau, just two pieces of paper, very simple. It said that Peng Dehuai was now at ease in Sichuan, going around reading big-character posters and reversing his own problems. When he saw the big-character posters criticising Liu Shaoqi for opposing Chairman Mao, he laughed and said, "You only know to oppose Liu Shaoqi now, I opposed him back in 1959, and you are still fighting me". So, I wrote a report together with Guan Feng, saying that Peng Dehuai's reversal activities should cause us to be vigilant.

I remember that on 13 December 1966, at a meeting of the Central Cultural Revolution chaired by the Premier, the issue of Peng Dehuai was discussed. Jiang Qing said at the meeting: "We are so busy, but Peng Dehuai is there gloating and relaxing". She proposed to bring Peng Dehuai back to

Beijing for criticism. During the discussion, everyone, including the Premier, agreed with Jiang Qing that Peng Dehuai should be transferred back to Beijing. But how to bring him to Beijing? At first the idea was to use the PLA to go and bring him back. The Premier said that it was not right to let the troops bring him back, but that it was better for the masses to do so. Wang Li and Guan Feng said, "Then let the Red Guards take him". Thus, a consensus was formed to let the Red Guards bring Peng Dehuai back to Beijing on behalf of the masses. The Premier also said that he could not take a plane, but a train, because planes were unsafe and prone to accidents, and it was impossible to say what had happened. Some people said that trains were now very tight and chaotic. The Premier said to get a special train carriage, and he went to talk to Fu Chongbi in the garrison. Then the Premier asked me to go and contact the Red Guards. I asked the Premier what I should do when I brought him back. The Premier said, "Tell me when you bring him back, and I will arrange for what follows".

After the Central Cultural Revolution had met and made its decision, on the morning of the 14th, I asked Yan Changgui to inform Zhu Chengzhao to take care of the matter. Zhu Chengzhao proposed to ask the teachers and students who were in Sichuan at that time to organize this matter with Wang Dabin. I knew that Wang Dabin was a stable person and would not act blindly, so I agreed. Soon after Wang Dabin arrived in Chengdu, someone reported to me that Peng Dehuai had persuaded the people who had gone to the Geological Institute to become sympathetic to him. I criticized the people from the Geological Institute, and at the same time hurriedly found someone to inform Han Aijing<sup>348</sup> that the Geological Institute was not active in the matter of Peng Dehuai and was dragging its feet, and asked him to go on with the matter. The Red Guards' main business was to provide a wide range of services to the public. I said to Han Aijing that if they wouldn't bring Peng Dehuai back, then you will have to go and bring him back. But in the end, it was Wang Dabin and the others who brought Peng Dehuai back. Peng Dehuai said to Wang Dabin, "You are only anti-Liu Shaoqi now, I was anti-Liu Shaoqi at the Lushan meeting. You are saying that I am anti-Chairman Mao, but I am not. I am anti-Liu Shaoqi". Wang Dabin believed in Peng Dehuai's words and thought that the Peng Dehuai case was wrong and that Peng Dehuai was pro-Mao and anti-Liu. These are all things that Wang Dabin told me. Wang Dabin is a relatively honest person and I believe he would not tell lies.

After Wang Dabin had brought Peng Dehuai to Beijing, he called me to say that "Hai Rui" had been brought. I asked if it was safe on the way. He said we hadn't even touched a hair on his head. I said, "Good, you have accomplished an important task, thank you". At the same time, a reporter from the Central Cultural Revolution's "Express Group" also called me to tell me that Peng Dehuai had been brought in. I reported that the Red Guards had brought Peng Dehuai back and were waiting for instructions on where to send him. The Premier immediately said, "OK, that's fine, I'll make the arrangements, don't worry about it". He then went to the office of the Central Cultural Revolution Group and called the garrison to find Fu Chongbi. I was behind him and heard the Premier on the phone instructing that food and accommodation should be guaranteed, and that a few more quilts should be sent, so he would not freeze. The Premier also said on the phone that where Peng Dehuai lived should be kept secret and they were not allowed to say. They were not allowed to take him for a struggle session, and any struggle had to be approved by him. They were also not allowed to go to

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<sup>348</sup> Han Aijing (1945 -) was one of the five prominent Red Guard leaders in Beijing. In 1957, he subjected Peng Dehuai to various struggle sessions. After the rightists came to power and ended the Cultural Revolution, Han Aijing was arrested in 1979 and sentenced in 1983 to 15 years in prison. After being released from prison, Han Aijing worked in the technical information room of an arsenal in Zhuzhou City, Hunan Province, and was later transferred to the factory's Shenzhen Office in Guangdong Province. He joined a state-owned enterprise holding company as general manager, and retired in 2003.

his residence to besiege it. The physical and mental condition of Peng Dehuai had to be reported to him at all times. The Premier put down the phone only after everything had been arranged.

In July 1967, the Beijing Aviation College and the Geological College held a joint conference to struggle against Peng Dehuai. Before the struggle conference, the Red Flag of Beijing Aviation College, under the auspices of Han Aijing, first held a small criticism meeting and asked Peng Dehuai to give an account of his crimes against Chairman Mao. Peng Dehuai did not admit it. On impulse, Han Aijing first slapped Peng Dehuai in the face. After the end of the Cultural Revolution, Han Aijing paid a very heavy price for this slap.

Peng Dehuai was always placed under the protection of the Premier in the garrison. At that time, anyone who wanted to fight Peng Dehuai had to report directly to the Premier. Even people from the Military Commission and the General Administration had to ask Zhou Jiading for permission to struggle against Peng Dehuai, and the Central Cultural Revolution Group did not have the power to approve criticism of Peng Dehuai. Without the Premier's consent, no one could move Peng Dehuai, and no one knew where he was being held.

After the end of the Cultural Revolution, the people who came to interrogate me in prison asked me why I had to seize Peng Dehuai back from Chengdu. I replied that there was a report from the Southwest Bureau and that the Premier had presided over the meeting and made the decision, which I had carried out. You can check the archives for these specific facts. They did not pursue the matter any further. At that time, they wanted to liberate Li Jingquan, and they also wanted to defend Premier Zhou.

## **5. The question of Li Lisan**

On the issue of Li Lisan, I had made a public statement during the Cultural Revolution that his lover Li Sha was a Soviet KGB agent. I said this at the time based on some tabloid revelations. At that time, it was thought that the KGB was working as a spy outfit for the Soviet Union, so it was considered problematic. By the time I saw the relevant investigations after the Cultural Revolution, Li Sha had no connection with the KGB. I felt I had made the mistake of framing someone for a crime. Although no one came to hold me accountable for this mistake later, I was always troubled in my mind.

Li Lisan had been the leader of the CPC Central Committee decided by the Communist International and had presided over the Central Committee. The reason why I took a stand like that back then and supported the mass criticism of Li Lisan was because I had a bad impression of him. Historically Li Lisan was very unjust to Chairman Mao, he criticised him for being right-leaning and opportunist, and expelled him from his post as a member of the Central Politburo and a member of the Central Committee, though not from the Party. However, the news went down that he was expelled from the Party, so the Chairman could no longer serve as a Party representative in the Fourth Red Army, but only as a division commander.

Originally, Li Lisan was a friend of Chairman Mao's in the early years. The Chairman had a recollection. In his early years, he posted a proposal soliciting friends in a newspaper in Changsha and made a few friends. Because he only met Li Lisan once, and Li Lisan didn't say much, he was only counted as half a friend. Later, Chairman Mao gave Li Lisan the Communist Party and trade union organisations in the Anyuan coal mine, which he had opened up, and Li Lisan thus made a name for himself in the workers' movement. This led him to the Central Committee, where he became the

leader of the National Federation of Trade Unions. Later he went to the Soviet Union to gain the trust of the Communist International and sent him back as the de facto head of the Party Central Committee, but when he came back, he made a big fuss about Chairman Mao. I think this man was so unethical that he smacked of what the Chinese call an inferior person gaining power and being ungrateful. It so happened that a rebel faction of the North China Bureau proposed to criticize Li Lisan and approached me, so I said a few words to support them. Later, I reported this to Jiang Qing and the Premier, who said at the time that it would be good to let the masses criticise him. Li Lisan was in the Soviet Union, involved in the internal struggle of the Communist International, and was sent to Siberia. When the Seventh Congress was held in Yan'an, Chairman Mao still persuaded everyone to elect him as a member of the Central Committee, despite the past. At that time, he was in Siberia and was not informed at all about this. It was Chairman Mao who asked someone to intervene with the Soviet Communist Party to fetch him back to China, and upon his return he was given the important task of being involved in the leadership of the Northeast Bureau in Harbin. These are the things that he, and his Party comrades, admired most about Chairman Mao, the Premier said.

## **6. Some of the old cadres protected by the Central Cultural Revolution during the campaign**

In fact, Jiang Qing had protected many old cadres during the Cultural Revolution. The Central Liaison Department struggled against Wang Jiaxiang. When Jiang Qing found out about it, she told Wang Li and me to stop the fighting. Wang Jiaxiang had been good to the Chairman in history, and he was a man of merit. Wang Li and I worked with the rebels in the Liaison Department and the Foreign Ministry respectively, and they stopped fighting Wang Jiaxiang.

Jiang Qing and Li Fuchun had a particularly good relationship. When she went to Yan'an, her organisational ties were restored after Li Fuchun had checked them out. Li Fuchun was then the Minister of Organisation of the Central Committee and he was also the Director of the General Office of the Central Committee. Some people in Yan'an were spreading gossip about Jiang Qing. Li Fuchun immediately approached those people and reprimanded them. He said, "No nonsense, no more rumours, liberalism will be punished. Don't create rumors, if you do, you will be responsible for party discipline (Li Fuchun's words). When Li Fuchun said this, the people lower down did not dare to talk nonsense. So, Jiang Qing and Li Fuchun were on very good terms. During the Cultural Revolution, when anyone wanted to knock down Li Fuchun, Jiang Qing immediately called me to go and said, "Tell them that you can't oppose Li Fuchun". So, at that time, there were people in the State Planning Commission and the Ministry of Education who put up big-character posters of Li Fuchun. I went and told them that they were not allowed to oppose Li Fuchun. They asked why. I said, "There is no reason, just don't oppose him".

During the Cultural Revolution movement, the rebels in the agricultural port wanted to bring down Tan Zhenlin<sup>349</sup>. But the Chairman said that he should still be protected. Jiang Qing asked me to go to the masses to do work. I then said at a general meeting that Tan Zhenlin was following Chairman Mao's path of co-operatives and that he was opposed to the household contract responsibility system. I said that although Tan had made mistakes, we should see that he was not the same as Liu

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<sup>349</sup> Tan Zhenlin (1902-1983) joined the Communist Party of China in 1926. Former member of the CPC Central Committee, secretary of the Secretariat of the Central Committee, member of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee, Vice Premier of the State Council, Vice Chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress, and Deputy Director of the Central Advisory Committee.

Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping. He was with Chairman Mao in the Party and insisted on the socialist road. It is said that Tan Zhenlin was quite satisfied after hearing this and said, "This boy has finally spoken a few words of humanity".

Jiang Qing also asked me to bail Wang Zhen<sup>350</sup> out, and afterwards Wang Zhen wrote me a letter in his own handwriting to express his gratitude.

Jiang Qing also spoke up for many old cadres, such as Xie Juezai<sup>351</sup> and Jiang Hua (Jiang Hua had worked for the Chairman as a secretary). Even Ye Zilong, who had made a serious mistake, was spoken for by Jiang Qing, who said that although he had made a serious mistake, he had done a lot for the Chairman and had been with him during the war in northern Shaanxi.

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<sup>350</sup> Wang Zhen (1908-1993), joined the Communist Youth League in 1927 and transferred to the Communist Party of China in the same year. In 1929, he joined the Chinese Workers' and Peasants' Red Army and was a general. He has served as a member of the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee, a vice premier of the State Council, a member of the Central Military Commission of the CPC, a member of the Standing Committee of the Central Military Commission, a president of the Party School of the CPC Central Committee, and a vice chairman of the People's Republic of China.

<sup>351</sup> Xie Juezai (1884-1971), joined the Communist Party of China in 1925. An outstanding member of the Communist Party of China, one of the "Five Elders in Yan'an", one of the Four Elders in the Long March, one of the founders of the new Chinese judicial system, a well-known jurist and educator, an outstanding social activist, and a leader in the field of law. The founder of the people's judicial system. Served as Minister of the Interior Department of the Central People's Government, President of the Supreme People's Court, and Vice Chairman of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference. In May 1966, he was appointed as a member of the Central Committee at the Eleventh Plenary Session of the Eighth Central Committee of the Communist Party of China. He died of illness in Beijing in 1971.

## **Chapter 16: Zhang Chunqiao's handling of the Anting Incident in Shanghai and the convening of the Central Committee's Forum on Industrial Relations**

1. The development of the Cultural Revolution movement from schools to factories and the countryside
2. Handling of the Anting Incident and Zhang Chunqiao's Political Daring
3. Arguments at the National Symposium on Political Work in Industrial and Commercial Enterprises
4. Significance of the Industrial and Commercial Workers' Symposium

### **1. The development of the Cultural Revolution movement from schools to factories and the countryside**

After the announcement of the "Sixteen Articles" at the Eleventh Plenary Session of the Eighth Central Committee, workers in some factories also plunged into the Cultural Revolution movement. According to the original regulations at that time, the Cultural Revolution Movement was to be carried out in the same way as the original "Four Clean-ups" campaign in urban and rural areas, except for schools, industrial and mining enterprises and other systems. It was also stipulated that students from schools should not go to factories and rural areas to join the movement. However, in many factories, some workers were branded as "counter-revolutionaries" and "bad elements" by the leaders of their units or by the "Four Clean-up" teams sent there because they had given their opinions to the Party Committee and the leaders during the campaign. Some of them were even illegally imprisoned and tortured. After the October Work Conference of the Central Committee had put forward the criticism of the bourgeois reactionary line, these workers, who had been wrongly suppressed by the unit leaders and the "Four Clean-ups" task force, wrote letters of complaint to the Central Cultural Revolution Group, and some people from outside even came to Beijing to petition and complain. At that time, we received many such people.

From 1960 to 1961, I spent time at the Erqi Locomotive and Rolling Stock Factory in Changxindian, Beijing, and the Machine Tool Factory in Tianjin, and from September to October 1966, workers from the Erqi Factory kept writing to me, and some even came to me at Diaoyutai, to tell me about the Cultural Revolution movement in the factory. I heard some leaders in charge of industry in the State Council at that time say that the factories were also in chaos now and that the workers were not working. They said, "The factories must not be in chaos, what will the country do when the production in the factories stops?" So, I went to the Changxindian Erqi factory to have a look around. What I saw there was not what they said it was. The workers were working as usual, and the machines in the workshops were not stopped. As we all know, industrial production is social production, one links to another, if you stop one link, the rest have to be affected or stop together. Therefore, the movement in the factories was mostly done after work hours. Some workers went out to join social movements, but they also did so in their spare time. Otherwise, their wages would have been affected as well.

After learning about it, some workers at the Erqi Factory were indeed designated as "bad elements", "counter-revolutionaries" or "anti-Party cliques" for giving advice to the leaders. Some of them were

quite familiar with me, and I knew that they were good people. Therefore, I took a stand and said that it was wrong to make the workers angry in this way. It is legitimate for workers to express their opinions to the leaders. The factory leaders should listen to the opinions put forward by the workers, but not punish them.

My statement at the Changxindian factory immediately spread among the factories and workers. A number of factories, like the workers at Shougang<sup>352</sup>, came to me and complained to me about the factory leaders and asked me to support them.

I also reported all this to Premier Jiang Qing and the Central Cultural Revolution Group.

## **2. Handling of the Anting Incident and Zhang Chunqiao's Political Daring**

On 10 November 1966, the Anting Incident broke out in Shanghai. With the help of the Red Guards from the "Three Departments" in Beijing and the Red Guards in Shanghai, the workers of the Shanghai rebellion united to form the "General Department of Labour", a city-wide workers' rebellion. After consulting Tao Zhu, Cao Diqu of the Shanghai Municipal Committee decided to adopt the "three no's" policy of "not participating, not recognising and not supporting" the establishment of the "General Department of Labour". Cao's decision was supported by Chen Pixian<sup>353</sup>, who was recovering from illness at the time. The Shanghai Municipal Committee handled the founding meeting of the General Department of Labour in accordance with the "three no's" policy, which enraged the workers, so thousands of them, led by Pan Guoping, Wang Hongwen and other leaders of the rebellion, piled onto a train to Beijing to lodge a complaint. The train was ordered to stop at Anting station, some 30 kilometres from the city centre. The workers were furious and stopped the train in protest, demanding that the Central Government and the Central Cultural Revolution take a stand and recognise and support their rebellion as a revolutionary action. This was the "Anting Incident" that shook the whole country.

"After the Anting Incident, Zhou Enlai chaired a meeting to discuss it. Tao Zhu advocated that the momentum of the workers' "disobedience" should be firmly beaten down. The leaders of the State Council in charge of industry handed over the problem to the Central Cultural Revolution, and some of them even looked at the Central Cultural Revolution as a joke, which was evident from the phone calls they made. The Beijing-Shanghai Railway was then a major north-south economic artery. In fact, the Shanghai workers did not block the whole line at that time, but they stopped the trains in protest and affected the schedules of several northbound trains, including several international trains. So, the comrades in charge of industry in the State Council were saying, "Didn't the Central Cultural Revolution support the rebels and cause this great disturbance? If you can't handle it, then we can go to the Chairman and complain about you".

I also immediately reported the situation to Chen Boda, and the meeting decided to ask him to come forward to deal with it. He first sent a telegram in the name of the Central Committee to Han Zheyi of the East China Bureau; later he drafted and sent a telegram to the workers. In the telegram,

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<sup>352</sup> Shougang is the abbreviated name for the Capital Iron and Steel Works, founded in Beijing in 1919 and taken over as a wholly state-owned firm in 1958. Although still state-owned, it has merged with other Chinese companies to form the Shougang Corporation in 1992, and then the holding company Shougang Group in 1996. In 1992, it bought the Marcona iron ore mine in Peru. In 2011 it became part of a consortium of Chinese state-owned companies which bought at 15% share in Brazil's Companhia Brasileira de Metalurgia e Mineracao (CBMM), the world's biggest niobium producer, for 1.95 billion dollars in cash. Niobium is a rare earth used in high-quality steel production.

<sup>353</sup> Chen Pixian (1916-1995) replaced Ke Qingshi as first secretary of the Shanghai CCP following Ke's death in April 1965. He lost his post when the rebels overthrew the Shanghai Municipal Committee, but returned to office as vice-Chairman of the Shanghai Revolutionary Committee in 1975.

although Chen Boda expressed his sympathy for the workers, he did not recognise theirs as a revolutionary action, nor did he recognise the "General Department of Labour" as a revolutionary organisation. He only hoped that the workers would take the overall situation into account and go back to work. When Chen Boda finished drafting the telegram, he asked me to sign it with him. I said, "You are the leader of the group, you can just sign it, why do I have to sign it too, what am I?" He said, "No, some people say that you support the Shanghai Municipal Committee, so you have to sign too, lest people say something about you". So, he forced me to put my name on the telegram. If I can trace the original telegram now, it should still have Chen Boda's signature on it on my behalf. But I insisted that I could not co-sign with the team leader, and in the end, the telegram was sent in Chen Boda's name alone.

Why did Chen Boda say that I was supportive of the Shanghai Municipal Committee? That was because when I went to Shanghai in early April 1966 to organise articles on the philosophy of workers, peasants and soldiers, Cao Diqu gave me a special banquet and he asked me about my comrades whom I had known when I was in the Shanghai underground. I had many comrades from my underground days working in Shanghai, and they were all on good terms with me. I then mentioned Gu Zhigang and Zhang Xiaojun to him and said that these two people were very capable. Gu Zhigang was my introduction to the Party and Zhang Xiaojun was my leader in the underground. At that time, Gu Zhigang was already the leader of the municipal party committee and had a good relationship with Cao Diqu, who had asked me to help him revise the review he had written at the Central Working Conference in October. So Chen Boda said that I was supportive of the Shanghai Municipal Committee.

After sending the telegram, Chen Boda was still planning to send someone to Shanghai. He then approached me and said, "We have to persuade the workers to go back. You have worked in the railway's Erqi rolling stock factory and have some experience, so you should go and make a trip". I said, "I can't go. The workers in Beijing, I could go to the Erqi factory if there was a problem, but I couldn't even go to Shougang because they had a good relationship with the old Beijing Municipal Committee and they wouldn't listen to me. I don't know much more about the Shanghai workers, I'm afraid I can't handle them". I suggested that Zhang Chunqiao had been the propaganda minister of the Shanghai Municipal Party Committee and the leader of the Shanghai Municipal Party Committee's secretariat, so he knew the situation in Shanghai best.

In the end, the Central Cultural Revolution Group met and decided that Zhang Chunqiao should handle the Anting Incident. As soon as he arrived in Shanghai, Zhang Chunqiao went straight to Anting Station without going to the Shanghai Municipal Committee first. He first negotiated with the workers, persuading them to move away from the railway to ensure smooth traffic flow. The workers were reasonable and gave way to the railway. By 12 November, in less than two days, railway traffic was completely back to normal. He then persuaded the workers to go back, but the workers insisted that Zhang Chunqiao promise to vindicate the wrongs they had suffered during the bourgeois reactionary line and restore their political rights as a working class. The workers also complained in front of Zhang Chunqiao about the fact that the Shanghai Municipal Committee had carried out the bourgeois reactionary line and suppressed and persecuted the workers. Zhang Chunqiao was greatly shaken by the workers' complaints. However, he did not agree to the conditions proposed by the workers in Anting, but only insisted that the workers return to Shanghai to solve their problems. But he promised the workers that he would never return to Beijing until the matter was dealt with.

At this time, Zhang Chunqiao was under a lot of pressure. The mandate given to him by the Central Cultural Revolution was only to persuade workers to return to their factories and to restore railway traffic. There was no other mandate given to him. Moreover, the Shanghai Municipal Committee

was positive in its criticism of "Hai Rui Dismissed from Office" and had a good relationship with Jiang Qing. The relationship between the Central Cultural Revolution and the Shanghai Municipal Committee was a matter of hesitation.

Zhang Chunqiao spoke to me on the phone as soon as he returned to Shanghai from Anting. He asked me about my attitude towards this matter. I knew that on the one hand he was probably concerned about my relationship with the Shanghai Municipal Committee; on the other hand, he wanted to know Jiang Qing's attitude towards the matter. I said to him on the phone, "We don't have any other weapons, it's just a dialectical method of one dividing into two. The Shanghai Municipal Party Committee supported the criticism of "Hai Rui Dismissed from Office", which is correct, we do not deny it; but it is wrong to implement the bourgeois reactionary line and suppress the masses, so it must be checked". He was relieved to hear me say so. I also suggested to him that you should not talk to Chen Boda about this matter, for it would be impossible to talk to him for half a day. You should go directly to Jiang Qing to talk about it. Later on, Zhang Chunqiao called Jiang Qing, who told him over the phone not to have any worries, and to do whatever you can to benefit the workers and the growth of the workers' rebellion.

In the end, Zhang Chunqiao signed and agreed to the "five demands" put forward by the Shanghai "General Department of Labour", recognising them as a revolutionary action and the "General Department of Labour" as a revolutionary mass organisation. This was the first time in the Cultural Revolution that the Central Cultural Revolution signed a revolutionary agreement with the working class of a large province or city to support the revolutionary rebellion of the workers. It was a major event of historical significance in the Cultural Revolution.

After Zhang Chunqiao returned to Beijing, the Premier even praised him. In front of us, the Premier said to the leaders of the State Council who were responsible for production that you would not be able to handle this matter. Zhang Chunqiao went and solved the problem. However, when the Premier turned around and walked away, I heard those people muttering, "What are we, who listens to us now? He is the deputy head of the Central Cultural Revolution".

However, the Shanghai Municipal Committee was very critical of Zhang Chunqiao. Chen Pixian telephoned from Shanghai and asked Chen Boda whether Zhang Chunqiao, as a member of the Central Cultural Revolution Group, had the power to bypass the East China Bureau and the Shanghai Municipal Committee and sign the "Five Articles" with the General Department of Industry and Commerce? Some leaders of the Central Committee, such as Tao Zhu, and even Chen Boda, thought that Zhang Chunqiao had violated the Central Committee's regulations on the Cultural Revolution in industrial and mining enterprises by doing so. So, Zhang Chunqiao's signature was a big political risk. But this incident not only showed his courage and boldness, but also showed that he was aware of and ideologically prepared for the Chairman's ideas and his intention to develop the Cultural Revolution movement to the factories and the countryside. On 8 November, when he met with the fighters of the Red Banner of the Beijing Aeronautical University together with me, he supported their going to the factories in tandem and combining with the workers. Zhang Chunqiao also said: Engaging in factories is a matter of direction, and we intend that this is the way we should go next.

Then the complaint went all the way to Chairman Mao. Chairman Mao himself chaired a meeting of the Standing Committee of the Central Committee. The Chairman said that there are always facts before there are concepts. Without facts, how can concepts be formed? How can there be a theory without a reality? Sometimes theory and practice go hand in hand. Sometimes theory comes first, but in reality, the practical always comes first. How can we have a few rules if the workers don't make a revolution first? In this case, Zhang Chunqiao was right to change the past policy in the light of reality. In the past, some of the regulations that restricted workers from participating in the Cultural Revolution were out of touch with the masses.

### 3. Arguments at the National Symposium on Political Work in Industrial and Commercial Enterprises

The meeting began with a discussion of the (draft) Twelve Instructions on the Cultural Revolution in Factories, drafted by Chen Boda, which began on 16 November 1966 when the Central Committee convened the National Symposium on Industrial Relations. The meetings were usually chaired by Tao Zhu, and by the Premier when he attended. Yu Qiuli<sup>354</sup> and Gu Mu<sup>355</sup>, those who were in charge of the country's economy at the time, ministers of the State Council, provincial and municipal secretaries in charge of industry and members of the Central Cultural Revolution Group attended the meeting.

This document was discussed by the Central Cultural Revolution Group. The main content of the document was to point out that the working class was the leading force and the most active factor in the Cultural Revolution, that they bore great responsibility for this Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, and that it was a general trend for the masses of workers in industrial and mining enterprises to rise up and carry out the Cultural Revolution, which was so good that it was unstoppable. At the same time, it was pointed out that the current problem was that the heads of some units had mistakenly pitted the cultural revolutionary movement against production. Some of them used the excuse of grasping production to suppress the revolutionaries and protect themselves, while others used the excuse of leaving production alone to create difficulties for the cultural revolutionary movement. Both of these mistakes were in disregard of the overall situation, contrary to the Party's guidelines and in serious violation of the Chairman's instruction to "grasp revolution and promote production". The document proposed that the workers in the factories could set up cultural revolutionary organisations, they could cohabitate and exchange their experiences with the students. However, the "eight-hour work system" must be adhered to, and the Cultural Revolution must be carried out in spare time, three to four hours a day, without taking time away from production, while allowing the workers to get the necessary rest.

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<sup>354</sup> Yu Qiuli (1914—1999) participated in the peasant riots in Ji'an County in 1929 and the Workers and Peasants Red Army. In May 1931, he joined the Communist Party of China. He participated in the Long March in 1935. After the founding of the People's Republic of China, he served as director of the General Finance Department of the Military Commission, political commissar of the General Logistics Department, Minister of Petroleum Industry, and National Planning Director of the Committee, Director of the PLA General Political Department, and Deputy Secretary-General of the Military Commission. In September 1966, with the approval of Mao Zedong, the central government decided that he and Gu Mu would assist the leaders of the State Council in economic work. From June 1970 to January 1975, he served as director of the Revolutionary Committee of the State Planning Commission, director of the State Planning Commission, and leader of the party's core group. From January 1975 to May 1982, he served as Vice Premier of the State Council.

<sup>355</sup> Gu Mu (1914- 2009), joined the Chinese Communist Youth League in 1931 and became a member of the Communist Party of China in July 1932. In 1934, he went to Beiping (later, Beijing) to join the left-wing cultural movement and became one of the main leaders of the Beiping Left-wing Writers Union. In 1936, Gu Mu was appointed to work in the Northeast Army. After the outbreak of the Anti-Japanese War, he served as a member of the Eighth Route Army. During the period, he actively mobilized the masses to counter rape complaints, reduce rents and interest rates, fully develop production, prosper the local economy, and further improve the lives of farmers. In April 1965, he served as Director of the National Infrastructure Construction Committee. He was criticised at the start of the Cultural Revolution, but in September 1966, the Party Central Committee decided that he would assist the State Council in economic work. After March 1973, Gu Mu served as the director of the Revolutionary Committee of the National Infrastructure Construction Committee, the leader of the party's core group, and concurrently served as the deputy director of the Revolutionary Committee of the State Planning Commission and the deputy leader of the party's core group.

However, under the chairmanship of Tao Zhu, the meeting adopted a totally negative attitude towards the "twelve articles" proposed by the Central Cultural Revolution Group, describing them as useless. Many of those who attended the meeting were very resistant to the Cultural Revolution. Liu Lanbo, Lu Zhengcao and Lu Dong, the ministers, went so far as to make loud noises and leave the meeting to cajole in order to give vent to their discontent with the Cultural Revolution, and many of them stood up at the end of the speech.

In this way, under the auspices of Tao Zhu, Yu Qiuli and Gu Mu organised people from the relevant departments to draft a document opposed to the "Twelve Articles": "Certain Provisions on the Cultural Revolution in Industrial and Commercial Enterprises" (referred to as "Fifteen Articles"). The provisions required that the Cultural Revolution in industrial and mining enterprises should be carried out in accordance with the "Four Clean-ups", in stages and batches, with positive education, without the "Big Four Freedoms", without any collusion, and with eight hours of production.

I didn't go to this meeting much at that time because I had a lot of things to do, but the Premier asked me to go to the meeting several times, saying, "You know more about the industrial situation, you should go to it". In private, I heard Chen Boda complaining that we who wrote the articles were just little people who had no power and everyone looked down on us. In the past, Deng Xiaoping looked down on us, and now these ministers looked down on us in the same way. They changed my manuscript to the point where it was completely overturned, and they started a new one for themselves.

The matter was reported to Chairman Mao, who rejected the "Fifteen Articles". He told Gu Mu and others to take people to several big cities to listen to the views of workers from various factions and then come back to discuss them.

The next meeting was chaired by the Premier. The Premier asked the State Council and the Central Cultural Revolution Group to sit down together to discuss and draft the Eight Opinions on Grasping the Revolution and Promoting Production, based on the Twelve Articles proposed by Chen Boda. After discussion, they were supplemented by ten articles.

The Chairman then asked Lin Biao to chair the Standing Committee of the Central Committee to discuss the "ten articles". Lin Biao spoke at the meeting, and he spoke very strongly. He said that the meeting had not gone well, that some people's thinking was very wrong, and that there was a need for a 180-degree change. He said that we should not passively but actively allow this revolution to enter the factories, the countryside and society. The Cultural Revolution was "unstoppable" and we should not block it, but go forward to meet it. The revolution is not to be braked, but to be expanded. The revolution should be allowed to sweep through every field. Lin Biao had his own views on industry, and he believed that political leadership should be strengthened in industrial and mining enterprises. Lin Biao had a particularly strong opinion of Bo Yibo, and he specifically criticised some of Bo's previous practices on the industrial front. At this time, Bo Yibo was already under investigation for the "Sixty-one Traitors Case" and did not attend the symposium.

The Premier also spoke at the meeting. The Premier said that, on the whole, most comrades did not understand the Cultural Revolution, and therefore resisted and complained about it. He said, "It does not matter if you make mistakes, just change them! You should take responsibility and not be afraid. When we were fighting in the war, we could go to the mountain of swords and the sea of fire; when we were working underground, we could go to prison and purgatory, so what is there to lose now?" He also addressed the state of mind of some cadres who were afraid of the masses, saying that they should be prepared and able to withstand the test. "The evils caused by past work

mistakes should be taught and educated, and be prepared to be tested. Put up Chairman Mao's thoughts, prepare to suffer and lose flesh. These punishments are the result of our past work mistakes, who will bear them if we don't? Who will go to hell if we don't go to hell? Who will enter the tiger's den if we don't? We cannot do this without a kind of spiritual preparation. This battle must be fought, prepare your mind, lead well and it won't be so serious”.

This quote by the Premier was later often quoted to show that the Premier had an attitude of opposition and resistance to the Cultural Revolution, a kind of hopeless tolerance of humiliation. This is not true. In fact, as far as I understand it, the Premier's perception of the necessity and importance of the Cultural Revolution at that time was basically in line with that of Chairman Mao, and was in no way bent on flattery. On some specific approaches, he would have some differences of opinion with the Chairman and the Central Cultural Revolution Group due to the different issues he faced or the different perspectives from which he looked at them. However, generally after he knew the Chairman's intention, he would immediately adjust his views.

The Prime Minister was saying, "Who will go to hell if we don't go to hell? Who will enter the tiger's lair if we do not enter it?" After saying these words, he said to a leading cadre, "How did you make revolution back then? In those days, you fought in wars, went to jail, entered the tiger's den, went to hell, and were not afraid of death. At most, you will lose some flesh, get sick, or be dismissed from office! We should consider the Cultural Revolution from a holistic perspective”.

Therefore, I think the Premier's attitude towards the Cultural Revolution was positive.

#### **4. Significance of the Industrial and Commercial Workers' Symposium**

The controversy that arose at the Industrial and Commercial Workers' Symposium was decisive for the development of the Cultural Revolution movement at that time. The industrial and commercial front was the battleground of life and death that determined the success or failure of the Cultural Revolution. The Cultural Revolution movement could not be carried out by the Red Guards alone; the national economy and the overall situation of the country still lay in the industrial and mining enterprises. The success of the Cultural Revolution depended on whether the working class could act, and whether they would stand on the side of Chairman Mao or on the side of Liu Shaoqi. Therefore, it is not a question of formulating "ten articles" or "fifteen articles", but whether we should unite the working class and organise it to fight against the capitalist-roaders and the bourgeois reactionary line they were pushing.

In fact, attitudes towards the Cultural Revolution aside, I think that people like Gu Mu and Yu Qiuli were also good people. Wang Li and Gu Mu had quite a good personal relationship, and after Wang Li was later investigated, Kang Sheng suggested that Wang Li had previously joined the Guomindang. At this point, Gu Mu came out and said that Wang Li had joined the Guomindang because our underground party had sent him there. Gu Mu was then one of the heads of the Northern Underground Party. I had a very good impression of him because he came out to speak up for Wang Li when he was losing power. I also had a very good relationship with Yu Qiuli. I admire heroes, and Yu Qiuli was a one-armed general, so I thought he was very impressive. So, I always liked to drag him along when I go outside Zhongnanhai to speak. The Premier saw all this and said to me, "You admire heroes and respect old cadres, that's very good”.

In fact, as we all know, in a country as large as ours, production cannot be stopped for a moment. Factories, railways, coal mines, power plants, there are a huge number of problems to deal with at any one time. I remember where Engels said that when production stops for two days, a society will be in chaos and will not be able to sustain itself. This is a matter of common sense.

We in the Central Cultural Revolution Group also knew that the Central Cultural Revolution could not take charge of production with these few people. That is why Chairman Mao always told the Premier to take charge of production, and asked the Central Cultural Revolution and the Premier to work together well, with the slogan "Grasp revolution and promote production", so that both the revolution and production could not be lost. We always tried to work with the Premier.

The fundamental problem at that time was not, as some opponents of the Cultural Revolution accused, that the Central Cultural Revolution Group was using the grasping of revolution to undermine production. On the contrary, it was that some people who opposed and resisted the Cultural Revolution were always doing everything possible to crush the revolution by grasping production. And when the Cultural Revolution movement directly affected the vital interests of these people, they went out of their way to suppress the revolution by sabotaging production.

The Industrial and Commercial Workers' Symposium was an important turning point in the Cultural Revolution. From this point onwards, the working class took part in the Cultural Revolution movement as the main force. The Cultural Revolution movement entered a new phase.

## Chapter 17 Attending Chairman Mao's Birthday Family Banquet

1. My recollection of Chairman Mao's speech at the birthday banquet
2. Implementing the spirit of Chairman Mao's birthday speech
3. My views on Chairman Mao's birthday talk compiled by Wang Li
4. Memories of Chairman Mao's Birthday Speech by Zhang Chunqiao, Wang Li, Guan Feng and Yao Wenyan

### 1. My recollection of Chairman Mao's speech at the birthday banquet

In December 1966, we members of the Central Cultural Revolution Group repeatedly told the Chairman that we wished to have a meal with him on his birthday in order to celebrate. At about 4 p.m. on 26 December, Xu Yefu, the Chairman's secretary, called me and asked me to immediately inform Chen Boda, Zhang Chunqiao, Wang Li, Guan Feng and Yao Wenyan, a total of six people, to come to the Chairman's home in Zhongnanhai at 5 p.m. to have dinner with him. I specifically asked if I should inform Kang Sheng. Xu Yefu replied, "No". I then used the red machine to inform each of them separately, and they were all very happy to receive the call.

We arrived at the residence of the Chairman of the Zhongnanhai Swimming Pool just before 5 o'clock. The Chairman and Jiang Qing received us at home. Also present together that day were Li Na, Mao Yuanxin, Wang Dongxing, Xu Yefu, Wu Xujun and the service staff. Before the meal, the Chairman chatted with everyone.

The Chairman said, "I have a birthday today, I am seventy-three. You want to hold a celebration party, which is not good, because the Party Central Committee has a document on not celebrating birthdays. We will simply have a family banquet at our own home and invite the people of the group, the group leader, deputy group leader and group members. Advisers are exempted. You have worked hard this year, with the "May 16 Circular", the "Marxist-Leninist Posters", the "Bombarding of the Headquarters", the "Great Connections of the Red Guards", one wave after another, and it's still not over yet".

The Chairman also said that Stalin died at the age of seventy-three. "When he died, capitalism was restored in the Soviet Union. The bastion of socialism was breached from within by the Khrushchevs. I will not die yet, but in the future, will capitalism be restored in China? That depends on this Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution. This Cultural Revolution is a struggle between our Party and the agents of the bourgeoisie within the Party, that is, the capitalist-roader faction, those in power within the Party who have taken the capitalist road. The struggle is not just today, it has been going on for a long time. But this time it was a full-scale struggle, from top to bottom, from the Red Guards to the factories, the countryside and the authorities, the whole country was in an uproar".

The Chairman also said to Chunqiao and Yao Wenyan, "Chunqiao and Wenyan are here. Do you want to go back to your old haunts? Shanghai is making a lot of noise! The situation is very good! The Red Guards were up, the cadres of the authorities were up, the workers were up, and there were fires, criticisms, seizures, beatings and smashes everywhere. They were very careful about the way they fought, making a distinction between those who were to be burned and those who were to

be knocked down. They knew how to master the Party's policies. The Cultural Revolution was also very important. In the past, when we talked about the distinction between inside and outside, we were talking about the distinction between inside and outside in matters involving state secrets, not about the fact that revolutionary movements could not be carried out. The most important thing is that the workers have risen up! You two can go back and take a look". He said, "Shanghai is important! Beijing, Tianjin, Shanghai and the big industrial province of Liaoning are our priorities at this stage".

The Chairman said to Guan Feng, who was also there. "You're too thin, you need more meat! How is your research on Laozi going? I haven't had a chance to read the book you sent me. Guan Feng advocates that Laozi is idealistic, while Chen Bodha advocates that Laozi is materialistic. There are also Yang Liuqiao and others who advocate idealism, and Ren Jiyu and others who advocate materialism. The two factions were still arguing and could not be unified". The Chairman said that, in my opinion, Laozi was objective materialism. "Laozi was an official of the royal family of the Zhou Dynasty and belonged to the noble class, but he sympathised with the peasants and often spoke for them, criticising the rulers for oppressing them and taxing them too heavily. So being of aristocratic origin can be revolutionary and progressive! I don't agree with the couplet: 'If the father is a hero, the son is a good man; if the father is a reactionary, the old man is a bastard', it's metaphysical. Even philosophers cannot all be knocked down. Gao Heng<sup>356</sup> has to be defended, and so does Yang Rongguo<sup>357</sup>".

It was almost 5.30 when everyone arrived and the family feast began. The waiters brought eight plates of dishes and a large pot of soup. The dishes included braised pork, roasted fish pieces, wood ear pork, bacon and green garlic, as well as doufu, bok choy and mazha (a wild vegetable). The main course is the chef's homemade longevity noodles and roasted sweet potatoes and corn on the cob. After everyone was seated, the service attendant poured yellow wine for everyone. We all raised our glasses and said, "May Chairman Mao live forever!" The Chairman said, "Long live all of you! You are young!"

After the formal dining, there was less talk from everyone. When the time came to make their farewells, everyone had to stand up again to make a toast, and the Chairman gestured for everyone to sit down, but he himself stood up, and he raised his glass and said:

"Here's to victory in a full-scale civil war across the country next year!"

"To carry the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution to the end!"

When the Chairman said the words "all-out civil war", he said them with a lurch and a thump, and he made them very clear, but the word "victory" sounded a bit lower. Many people might not have heard it clearly. After toasting with the Chairman, they were all thinking about the meaning of the

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<sup>356</sup> Gao Heng (1900-1986) was a famous professor, palaeontologist, expert in pre-Qin cultural history research and ancient text collation. He had published many books on ancient Chinese culture and on the ancient forms of Chinese characters. After 1967, he stopped teaching and was transferred to Beijing to specialize in ancient academic research.

<sup>357</sup> Yang Rongguo (1907-1978) a philosopher from Changsha, Hunan Province, who joined the Communist Party of China in 1938. He used to be a professor at Chongqing Northeastern University and Nanning Guilin Teachers College. After 1949, he served as the Dean and Head of the History Department of the Faculty of Humanities of Hunan University. He was a member of the Standing Committee of the Fourth National People's Congress. He had always been critical of Confucianism. In the "Concise History of Chinese Philosophy" revised in his later years, "the struggle between Confucianism and Legalism" was the main content of the confrontation between the two main lines in the history of Chinese philosophy.

Chairman's toast. "Carry out the Cultural Revolution to the end!" was a popular slogan at the time and the meaning was easy to understand. What was difficult to understand was the first sentence. At that time, the Cultural Revolution movement had formed two factions, and there was already martial fighting, which was called fighting a civil war. But it was Chairman Mao's consistent view to oppose martial fighting and civil war, so how could we toast to it? And it's a "full-scale civil war"! Everyone was pondering, but no one asked the question, and Jiang Qing did not say anything. The Chairman seemed to see that people did not understand his words, and after taking a few bites of noodles, he went on, one after another, to say that not only were the students suppressed, but also the rebels in the departments and in the factories and mines, were also under siege. There was no big democracy, not even a small one, and giving advice to the leaders was considered anti-party and anti-socialist. The fervent mass movement was suddenly turned into a cold and dull place. Those leaders who were opposed by the rebels used to ask the masses to unconditionally obey the Party leadership and be the Party's taming tools. This time they provoked the masses to fight the masses again, organising party members and activists to fight the rebels. As a result, in many places, two major factions have formed among the masses, one wanting revolutionary rebellion and the other wanting to protect the old order, and the two factions are fighting a civil war, and in some places there are even armed battles. We have to support the revolutionary rebel faction, educate the masses about the Cultural Revolution, unite most of them and fight for the victory of the Cultural Revolution. A while ago, we were afraid that the Cultural Revolution would immediately affect production, so we tried to put the Cultural Revolution in factories and rural areas one step behind, not knowing that the objective facts would often break our expectations. The revolutionary rebels in the schools and institutions combined with those in the factories and the countryside to open up a new dimension of the Cultural Revolution at once, as was the case in Shanghai. In China's revolution, intellectuals must take the path of combining with workers and peasants in order to win, as was the case with the May Fourth Movement and the Cultural Revolution. The Cultural Revolution throughout the country next year will follow this path. The struggle between the two factions will be more intense, but the revolution will always triumph in the end.

After eating, the Chairman talked to us again for a while. The main content of the Chairman's talk was that he wanted us to comprehensively criticise the bourgeois reactionary line from an ideological and theoretical point of view. We were told to grasp the Great Criticism and told each of us to write articles.

When talking about writing a major critique, Chairman Mao specifically said to me that you should write one too. I told Chairman Mao that I had always wanted to write an article on the film "The Inside History of the Qing Court" and whether it was patriotism or treachery, because no one had done a special study on this issue since Chairman Mao raised it. Chairman Mao said, "Okay". I said, "But I don't know the history of the Boxer Rebellion very well". Chairman Mao said, "It doesn't matter, you go and write. When you write it, give it to me and I will let you what I think.

After that, we said goodbye to Chairman Mao and went back to our respective places.

## **2. Implementing the spirit of Chairman Mao's birthday speech**

This talk by the Chairman gave us a great shock, and we all agreed that this talk by the Chairman was very important. Not only did the Chairman outline the causes and process of the Cultural Revolution, but he also pointed out the direction of work for the coming 1967.

The next day Jiang Qing and Wang Li made a report on the general meaning to Kang Sheng, and the Premier respectively. The Premier told Tao Zhu the spirit of the Chairman's talk. Both the Premier and Kang Sheng found the content of the Chairman's talk profound. The Premier said that when the Chairman spoke of a civil war, he meant that the struggle between the revolutionary faction led by Chairman Mao and the capitalist-roader faction within the Party was a civil war, not a gunfight or a factional war. Chairman Mao had always opposed martial fighting between the two factions and fighting a civil war. Jiang Qing told the Premier's opinion to Chen Boda, who was then discussing with Wang Li, Guan Feng and me the drafting of a New Year's Day editorial for the Red Flag magazine. We all agreed that it seemed possible to change the term "civil war" to "class struggle".

On the evening of the 27th, Chen Boda summoned three people, Wang Li, Guan Feng and myself, to draft a New Year's Day editorial with him based on the spirit of Chairman Mao's speech. After agreeing on the theme, Chen Boda and Guan Feng made up sentences and dictated, Wang Li took notes and I added comments. The editorial was drafted in the early hours of the morning and was ready to be rewritten in a day. The title of the editorial was "Bringing the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution to an End", a phrase from Chairman Mao's toast. And the theme of the editorial was "Unite under the great red banner of Mao Zedong Thought and wage a comprehensive class struggle throughout the country."

Guan Feng asked whether it was good for us to take the words of the Chairman and make such changes. I said that there was not much difference in meaning. Besides, the manuscript we wrote had to be sent to the chairman for review. This is a completely different matter from what Tian Jiaying did. Don't worry. Later, when the Chairman approved the article, he did not make any further changes. This means that the Chairman also agreed with the changes we made.

Later on, at a meeting of the Central Cultural Revolution Group, we discussed how to implement the Chairman's call for us to write a major critique. Guan Feng said that he was going to criticise Liu Shaoqi's *On the Cultivation of Communist Party Members* from an ethical and moral perspective. However, Guan Feng encountered some difficulties in writing this article because Chen Boda participated in the revision of Liu Shaoqi's *On Self-Cultivation* when it was reprinted. So Guan Feng's article went back and forth with Chen Boda several times. I heard Guan Feng say that Chen Boda always checked the revised version of *On Self-Cultivation* with his own copy, and if it was not his, he would find various reasons to block it, saying that it was not the main one. When Chen Boda revised *On Self-Cultivation*, he was very active, more so than when he took part in the editing of Mao's *Selected Works*.

Yao Wenyuan was originally prepared to criticise Liu Shaoqi's erroneous line from the history of the struggle on the cultural front since the criticism of the movie "The Legend of Wu Xun". But then somehow it turned into a criticism of Tao Zhu. Originally, Yao Wenyuan's article criticising Tao Zhu did not include the criticism of "doubting everything and overthrowing everything" and the criticism of the "May 16" conspiracy, but Chairman Mao added it for him. The criticism of "May 16" later developed and evolved into a nationwide campaign to purge the "May 16" elements.

At that time, Wang Li proposed that he should criticise the "Three Peaces and One Less" and the "Three Freedoms and One Guarantee". But later he wrote only one article criticising the "three freedoms and one guarantee". The criticism of the "Three Peaces and One Less" was washed away by the Wuhan "July 20 Incident". At that time, Wang Li was encouraging a rebellion in the Foreign Ministry, so his criticism of the "Three Peaces and One Less" was directed at Chen Yi, and even

involved the Premier. Wang Li himself said that he was mainly criticising Wang Jiaxiang, but in fact the Premier made all the decisions on diplomatic matters, and Wang Jiaxiang was not the main character. Whenever I saw Wang Li speak at a meeting to criticise the "Three Peaces and One Less", the Premier's face was always very ugly. Wang Li was so leftist at the time that he elevated the term "Three Peaces and one Less" to "Three Surrenders and One Destruction"<sup>358</sup>. But this article was not written later.

Zhang Chunqiao originally intended to criticise Liu Shaoqi from the social base, from the social roots of the creation of the capitalist-roader movement. But for whatever reason, this article never came out later. Zhang Chunqiao was more thoughtful in his thinking, but slower in writing his articles.

For my article, the theme had already been decided in the Chairman's presence. So, from that day onwards, I took leave from Chen Boda and was often shut up alone in my office in Diaoyutai or at home writing articles, and I did not attend many things.

### **3. My views on Chairman Mao's birthday talk compiled by Wang Li**

The Chairman's birthday talk has never been officially conveyed to the public. Therefore, many people saw the "Chairman's Birthday Talk" compiled by Wang Li later in his Reflections.

There are now five versions of this birthday talk by the Chairman, namely, Zhang Chunqiao's, Guan Feng's, Wang Li's, Yao Wenyan's and my own. All the versions are merely posthumous, as the Chairman spoke extemporaneously at a family dinner, and none of us took live notes. Of the five versions, Wang Li wrote the longest and the most, while Guan Feng wrote the shortest and the least. Guan Feng's version was relayed by Yan Changgui. As far as I know, Guan Feng himself had a collated draft, which is probably more detailed than the one relayed by Yan Changgui, and which is now in the possession of his descendants. In my opinion, the version that differs most from the original among the five versions is that of Wang Li. The family banquet lasted about an hour and a half, and apart from the meal, the speeches lasted only a few minutes. The Chairman's talk was conducted in a chatty manner, with Chunqiao, Wenyan, Guan Feng and I interjecting in between, so it could not have been a long speech. The birthday talk compiled by Wang Li contains over 8,000 words, excluding his own comments, which amounted to 3,000 to 4,000 words, many of which were his play on words, not those of the Chairman. For example, he said that Chairman Mao said that "all arguments that attempt to block the workers and peasants from participating in the Cultural Revolution should be refuted." "This is the essence of his disagreement with Tao Zhu." I don't remember the Chairman saying this, and by the end of December 1966, the Chairman had not yet openly criticised Tao Zhu. Then there is the big paragraph about not arresting people indiscriminately; I remember that was said by the Chairman at another meeting, and the issue was not talked about at the birthday family dinner.

In his recollections, Wang Li said a great deal about what the Chairman did not say that day, while he skipped over some of the things he said at the time, or even said he did not say them. He said, "Some people said that Chairman Mao said that 'a comprehensive civil war should be launched throughout the country'", but "I don't remember hearing him say that". This is not true. Apart from

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<sup>358</sup> Both Wang Li and Kang Sheng have been attributed with putting forward this slogan, which was a criticism of Liu Shaoqi for surrendering to imperialism revisionism and reactionaries, and destroying the national liberation movements.

him, Guan Feng, Zhang Chunqiao, Yao Wenyuan and I all heard the Chairman speak of an "all-out civil war". I also remember that when drafting the 1967 New Year's Day editorial, Wang Li also discussed this phrase and said that he did not quite understand what the Chairman meant by it, but at this time he said he did not remember it.

#### **4. Memories of Chairman Mao's Birthday Speech by Zhang Chunqiao, Wang Li, Guan Feng and Yao Wenyuan**

Appendix ①.

##### **The Family Dinner on Chairman Mao's Birthday in 1966 (25 December 1966)**

Reminiscences of Zhang Chunqiao

When I walked into his residence on December 25, 1966, he was talking with Li Na and Li Shi<sup>359</sup>, and the air was lively. When he saw me enter, he said, "You want to go back to your old home!" For a moment I was confused, not knowing what he was referring to, until he said, "The situation in Shanghai is good, the Red Guards are up, the workers are up, the authorities are up, beating down, burning, criticizing, and the policy is good, so you can go back and see." Only then did I understand what he meant. Going down, I was surprised to find that he was much more familiar with Shanghai than I was. He was good at summarising bits and pieces of material. He also talked about how the focus of work lately was Beijing, Tianjin, Shanghai and Liaoning - we were supposed to be celebrating his birthday, but it had turned into a working meeting since. In between, I even asked Guan Feng: How is your research on Laozi going? When he saw that I wasn't panicking, he explained that he (Guan Feng) thought Laozi was idealistic, while Chen Boda thought Laozi was materialistic, and that there was no agreement between them. I think Laozi is an objective idealist. It is hard to find a second person in our party who is still thinking about philosophical studies at a time like that when the Chairman is so busy. During the meal, there was less talk and the air seemed less lively. Chen Boda raised his glass to "wish Chairman Mao a long and prosperous life!" He only said in return, "Long live all of you!" and put the glass down. There didn't seem to be any easy words to say. After a while, when the noodles were ready, he suddenly stood up, raised his glass and said, "To all-out civil war!" Everyone raised their glasses, but I never understood the meaning of the toast. In fact, much of what followed was included in those words.

(From a letter from Zhang Chunqiao to his daughter Weiwei, January 1989)

Appendix ②.

##### **Guan Feng's Recollections of Chairman Mao's Birthday Talk in 1966 (December 26, 1966)**

Narrated by Yan Changgui

During his lifetime, Guan Feng once told me, "What Chairman Mao said at that time was: 'To the launching of an all-out civil war throughout the country!' I was so baffled when I heard it that I found it hard to understand and changed 'all-out civil war' to 'all-out class struggle' when I was drafting the New Year's Day editorial of Red Flag magazine." This memory of Guan Feng may be correct. Qi Benyu, who was present at the time, said when he received some of the revolutionary rebels at the

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<sup>359</sup> Li Shi was an alias used by Mao Yuanxin, Mao's nephew.

General Administration Drama Troupe on 10 January 1967: "The situation now is, in a word, in a nutshell, a nationwide class struggle for all the people, on all fronts, in all regions, which, in gunpowder terms, means an all-out civil war." (See March 1967, edited by the Red Guard Liaison Station of the Beijing Glass General Factory: Speech of the Chief, book 1, p. 84) I think this can be seen as a corroboration of Guan Feng's memory. Obviously, if Chairman Mao had not said so, Qi Benyu would not have been able to or dared to say so.

Appendix ③ :

### **Mao Zedong's talk on his 73rd birthday (December 26, 1966)**

Compiled by Wang Li

I have seen a number of national and international studies of the Cultural Revolution in China that do not know about or ignore an important talk given by Mao on his 73rd birthday. This makes it difficult to make a scientific assessment of the background to the January Storm and the series of major events that followed it, the Cultural Revolution and Mao Zedong. So I will first present it objectively, and then offer my personal views.

On December 26, 1966, Chairman Mao celebrated his birthday in the evening [Note: it was the afternoon, not the evening.] On short notice, Chairman Mao and Jiang Qing invited Chen Boda, Zhang Chunqiao, Wang Li, Guan Feng, Qi Benyu and Yao Wenyuan to dinner at the swimming pool in Zhongnanhai. There was no Lin Biao, Premier, Tao Zhu, Kang Sheng or Li Fuchun. Chairman Mao was already waiting when we arrived. It was very hot in the house that day. The meal was in accordance with his usual practice, which he used to do for foreigners, four dishes and one soup. Today each of us had a small bowl of noodles, along with roasted white potatoes and boiled corn. Before the meal, Chairman Mao said a lot of things. He never celebrated his birthday, and this time it was a birthday. It was actually an important meeting.

What impressed me most about Chairman Mao's speech this time was that he said, "The socialist revolution has reached a new stage in its development, there has been a restoration in the Soviet Union and the fountainhead of the October Revolution is no longer available. The lesson of the Soviet Union shows that the new central question is whether the proletariat can retain power after seizing it and whether it can prevent the restoration of capitalism. The problem lies within the party, and fortresses are most easily broken from within. The class struggle is not finished, the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution is an all-out contest with the agents of the bourgeoisie, especially the petty bourgeoisie, within the Party, and this contest has existed since the seizure of power." Chairman Mao said, "This time I have created a document - the 'May 16 Circular' - broadcast a big-character poster and set up a big coming together of Red Guards, a big connection that has united the whole country. The whole process of the Cultural Revolution was a battle against the reactionary bourgeois line, and it is still going on. There is still a certain market for the bourgeoisie in the Party, and there are still a large number of cadres whose world view has not been reformed or has not been reformed properly."

"Why are they able to hoodwink the masses? Because they are communists. The Communist Party has won the world, the status of workers has improved, the peasants have been given land, and they all embrace the Communist Party. These people coveted the credit of heaven for their own and saw themselves as the embodiment of the Party. Whatever they say, they call it the leadership of the Party, and to believe in the Party is to believe in them personally. They advocate no principles and

unconditional obedience. Not obedience to the correct leadership of the Party Central Committee, but unconditional obedience to their immediate superiors. They advocate blind obedience and slaveism. I disagree with them, and this is a major disagreement. I do not agree with them in protecting themselves against the masses and advocating blind obedience. I have always insisted that only correct leaders who adhere to the revolutionary line should be obeyed, and that wrong leaders who endanger the revolution should be criticised. This is a political principle as well as an organisational principle. It is to be followed and to be understood and grasped by the masses as well. In this way, those who follow the capitalist road and those who stubbornly adhere to the reactionary bourgeois line surrender their arms. One wants to carry the socialist revolution to the end, the other wants to preserve the capitalist order, the old framework, the old organisation, the old rules. One wants to revolutionize and the other wants to preserve, that is, the continuation of the struggle between the two lines." (Note: The above two paragraphs are mostly Wang Li's own rendition; Chairman Mao meant this, but only mentioned it in two or three sentences, not at length.)

Chairman Mao said that a new situation had emerged in the recent period, with the masses of workers, peasants and soldiers rising up, breaking through all kinds of resistance, establishing their own revolutionary organisations and joining the Cultural Revolution. In addition, revolutionary students have changed, grown and improved. Revolutionary students went to the workers and peasants and combined with the workers and peasants. Another feature was that revolutionary cadres from the Party and state organs rose up in rebellion. The main force was the workers, and it would not have been possible without the combination of students and workers, nor without the cadres of the organs. The revolutionary movements in modern Chinese history all started with students and developed into a combination with workers, peasants and revolutionary intellectuals before they came to fruition. This is the objective law. This was the case with the May Fourth Movement, and it was also the case with the Cultural Revolution.

The concept of Chairman Mao's speech was: a comprehensive class struggle throughout the country. During the meal Mao raised his glass in a toast and said, "To a comprehensive class struggle throughout the country." This was also said before the meal. In addition to the above words, he said many other things before dinner. These words are to be found in later articles. Although they are not in bold, the thought is Mao's. The words "comprehensive class struggle throughout the country" are an accurate summary of his thoughts on the current situation and his future approach. It has been said that Chairman Mao said, "A comprehensive national civil war should be launched", but I don't remember hearing him say that this time. When he said "comprehensive nationwide", he was referring to industrial and mining enterprises and the countryside. He said that the Cultural Revolution must be carried out in industrial and mining enterprises and in the countryside, otherwise it would be abandoned halfway. (Note: Wang Li's recollection of these two paragraphs is incorrect. Chairman Mao was proposing a toast to the victory of a full-scale national civil war the following year.)

The slogan "grasp revolution and promote production", as Chairman Mao said, is to grasp the revolution in order to promote production. Only when people's thinking is revolutionized can the problem of the direction and road of production be solved, and only when the old framework that hinders the development of the productive forces is removed can a new set of rules and regulations be created to promote the development of the productive forces. Chairman Mao said that there were people who pressed for revolution on the pretext of grasping production; they were concerned about their own crowns, they were concerned about preserving those old conventions of capitalist revisionism. They are afraid that the masses will revolutionise over their own heads. They used to

feed on the old frameworks and could not walk or talk without the old set. To provoke the masses to stop production and to provoke them to fight the masses is a bourgeois reactionary line. If we continue along this path, we will become capitalists ourselves. Any argument that blocks the development of the Great Revolution among the workers and peasants, and any argument that resists the workers and peasants in the Cultural Revolution, should be refuted and is wrong. The participation of workers and peasants in the Cultural Revolution is an unstoppable historical tide, and anyone who tries to block it will be swept away by it. Chairman Mao said that this was the essence of his disagreement with Tao Zhu. (Note: I do not remember Chairman Mao mentioning Tao Zhu during this talk.)

At that time, quite a few people, including myself, did not understand this. Originally, it was said that the Cultural Revolution would not be held below the local committee level. Later on, the Cultural Revolution was to be carried out in industrial and mining enterprises and in the countryside as well. Both instructions were drafted in accordance with Chairman Mao's instructions, but I, one of the drafters, did not realise at first why Chairman Mao had made such a major change. It was only after the talk on Chairman Mao's birthday that I realised.

Chairman Mao also said, "What will be changed if we fight, criticize and reform? What will be changed just in the cultural sector, in institutions and schools? What will be changed in the Cultural Revolution of the whole country? The industrial, mining and rural areas, which are the basis of the social economy, are still the same as before, so what else is there to change? Then there would be no goal." To this day people probably do not know the background to this question either. The Cultural Revolution was a tragedy, and Chairman Mao did not achieve the aims he originally envisaged. Some people really think that Chairman Mao meant for the world to be in chaos, but why call it chaos when you have made it yourself? It was only on this occasion, on Chairman Mao's birthday, that he spoke more thoroughly.

Chairman Mao believed that the old machine should be changed into a new machine, the old methods into new methods, the old order into a new order, the old system (not so much the socialist system, but the old rules and regulations) into a new system, and the old discipline (absolute obedience to direct superiors) should be got rid of. This is how Chairman Mao's ideas about great democracy came about. He thought that our old system was similar to capitalism, feudalism and the Soviet Union. He thought that greater democracy was good because it would make it easier to attack the enemy, and would also enable direct supervision of the leading organs and leaders at all levels, creating a new social atmosphere.

Chairman Mao also spoke of the dictatorship of the proletariat as the guarantee of the great democracy of the proletariat. Without the dictatorship of the proletariat, not only is there no great democracy, but also no small democracy. The dictatorship, which must guarantee the democratic rights of the people, must guarantee the normal conduct of the masses in speaking out boldly, in writing big-character posters, and in their large coming together; the dictatorship must not interfere with or even suppress them, and must not arrest people indiscriminately. Only murder, arson, poisoning (poisoning does not mean saying strange things against the leaders, but actually going and putting out poison), causing traffic accidents, assassination and espionage, which are in force and counter-revolutionary, should be subject to dictatorship and sanctioned according to the law, if there is concrete evidence. The revolutionary masses should be mobilised to help supervise the dictatorship and guarantee the realisation of a great proletarian democracy.

Chairman Mao repeatedly said that poisoning was not a question of ideology, that those with reactionary ideas and those who adhered to bourgeois ideology could not be arrested as long as they did not break the law. We had to present facts and reason with them and debate with them. He said that the dictatorship was limited to a very small area. On the question of the Party, no matter whether they were in power and on the capitalist road or stubbornly adhered to the bourgeois reactionary line within the Party, whether they were in the government or the democratic parties, even if there was evidence of secret agents, none of them should be killed. I have heard Chairman Mao say this many times during the Cultural Revolution. This was something he insisted on. But he did not insist that most of them should not be arrested. But then it was expanded to the point that the majority of those who had been defeated had to be arrested. He did not insist on the non-arrest of large parts as he had mentioned in the past. (Note: This paragraph and the following so-called speeches of Chairman Mao are mostly deductions).

Chairman Mao said that it appeared that the struggle between the two lines within the Party could not yet be said to have been resolved. He said that the struggle did not start with the Cultural Revolution, but with socialism. Should we engage in socialism or capitalism? The struggle between these two paths is reflected in the Party, which is a struggle between two lines. He said that this struggle has not yet been concluded. After Liu Shaoqi, this struggle is still going on. This problem exists at all levels and in all fields. They occupy leading positions in the Party and have influence in many areas. To remove these influences and to solve the problem ideologically at all levels and in all fields, there is still deep and detailed work to be done and a very long struggle to be waged.

Chairman Mao said that there must be revolutionary leading cadres to take part in the Cultural Revolution, to break the rules of puritanism, to break the boxes that bind the masses, to go to the masses, to be with the workers and peasants and students, to take part in the fighting and criticism, to revolutionize the organs. We must insist on distinguishing between two different types of contradictions of different natures, and the criticism of the leading cadres must cure the sick and save the patients, unite the majority and achieve ninety-five percent unity between the two groups. It seemed to Chairman Mao that more and more leaders would come over to the side of the revolutionary masses and support the revolutionary movement of the masses that he had launched. He said that the very few people who refused to turn back, who persisted in their mistakes, who were submissive, who were two-faced, must be beaten by the masses, and that these very few people had "only themselves to blame" (these four words used by Chairman Mao were the words of Tao Zhu).

Chairman Mao said the above before dinner. These were the basic elements of the "comprehensive class struggle in the country" he proposed, and the basis of his call for a comprehensive seizure of power in January. This was also the basis for his repeated emphasis on opposing anarchism. It was also a more complete expression of his thinking in launching the Cultural Revolution. Not much was said at the dinner table, except for a toast. After the meal and a few words of small talk each went back. From Wang Li, *Live History* (Oxford University Press, pp. 100-104, 1993)

Appendix ④ :

**Yao Wenyuan conveys Chairman Mao's instructions (December 27, 1966)**

Narrated by Xu Jingxian

On the afternoon of December 27, 1966, we members of the Shanghai Municipal Committee's writing class, who had just eaten long-life noodles yesterday to celebrate Mao Zedong's 73rd birthday, were gathered on the lawn of No. 2 Wukang Road, discussing how to further expose the criticism of the Municipal Committee. Suddenly, a young man from the literature group ran out of the building and called to me, "Lao Xu, there's a long-distance call from Beijing!" I rushed to the office and picked up the phone receiver, and a very familiar voice rang out - a mix of Shanghai and Zhejiang accents in Mandarin.

"Xu Jingxian? I'm Yao Wenyuan! I want to pass on to you today the instructions of the Chairman ....."

Oh, it was Wenyuan. Since he was transferred to Beijing as a member of the Central Cultural Revolution Group, for several months I always called him when I needed him, but he never took the initiative to call me, especially around the time when the writing class of the municipal committee announced the rebellion, I called Beijing frequently to seek his and Zhang Chunqiao's support and to listen to his views. However, it was very difficult to call him, and even through the red confidential machine, it was difficult to find him, so it was really "a thousand miles to find him". At that time, I muttered many times in my mind, "Even old friends are putting up a fight!" Today, he suddenly took the initiative to call me and to convey Chairman Mao's instructions, which really made me happy. I hurriedly took out my little notebook and prepared to record it.

In a departure from his usual calm tone, Yao Wenyuan said in a tone of uncontrolled excitement:

"Several of us from the Central Cultural Revolution went to Chairman Mao's last night to congratulate him on his birthday and drink a toast. The Chairman was very happy, he seldom drinks normally, and he toasted with us yesterday. The Chairman was very concerned about the situation in Shanghai. He read about your rebellion in the Central Cultural Revolution's "Express" newspaper. The Chairman said: "The situation in Shanghai is very good, workers have risen, students have risen, and now the cadres of the authorities have also risen. I asked the Chairman: What about the Shanghai Municipal Committee's emphasis on 'distinction between inside and outside'? The Chairman said: 'The distinction between 'inside and outside' can be broken, the Cultural Revolution in the organs is important, and the Cultural Revolution in the organs must be done well."

As I listened, I hummed and hawed and wrote down word for word what Yao Wenyuan had conveyed on the phone, my heart boiling with excitement.

Yao Wenyuan went on to say, "The Chairman admires your slogan: 'Burn Chen Pixian! Uncover Cao Diqu! Down with Yang Xiguang! Smash Chang Xiping!' He said that there was a difference between the slogans 'burn', 'uncover', 'overthrow' and 'smash'. Good!"

Yao Wenyuan concluded, "When the Chairman clinked glasses with us, he said, 'May the country's all-out civil war begin!' This issue of Red Flag magazine is going to publish a New Year's Day editorial in accordance with the Chairman's instructions, so you should think about this issue very carefully."

I asked Yao Wenyuan, "Can we hold a meeting to convey Chairman Mao's instructions within the confines of the revolutionary rebellion liaison station of the municipal party committee organs?"

Yao Wenyuan pondered for a moment and said, "Don't hold a meeting, you can blow off steam in the small Fan Garden first!"

I put down the phone, excited, and ran to the lawn of the writing class, saying to everyone, "Comrade Wenyuan just called! Comrade Wenyuan has conveyed to us an important instruction

from Chairman Mao!" I thought, "When I announced the rebellion, although I had the backing of Zhang Chunqiao and Yao Wenyan, I was still not very sure of myself, but now Chairman Mao himself is backing us up, so what am I afraid of?"

In the evening, on the balcony of the glass shed on the first floor of the writing class at No. 2 Wukang Road, I presided over a meeting of the backbone of the revolutionary rebellion liaison station of the municipal party committee organs. The meeting began with me conveying Chairman Mao's instructions, followed by the philosophy group, the history group, the literature group and the editorial staff of the Branch Life of the Municipal Party Office, all of whom vied for the opportunity to speak, some with tears in their eyes, some with solemn oaths, all with an unusually loyal and solemn look.

During the discussion, I reminded the participants to think: "What is the profound meaning in the middle of Chairman Mao's statement that a full-scale civil war has begun throughout the country? What should we do?"

The chubby Zhu Yongjia said, "Our Municipal Committee Liaison Station is in much better conditions than other rebel groups, and we will use these conditions to continue to hold meetings to criticize the Municipal Committee."

Guo Renjie, who had been transferred from the philosophy department of Fudan University to the philosophy group of the Municipal Committee's writing class, said in a Shandong accent, "Didn't Chairman Mao say that the 'distinction between inside and outside' could be broken? Let's dig out the files in the Municipal Party Committee's archives and extract the relevant contents, as a cannonball to criticize the Municipal Party Committee for implementing a reactionary line."

I thought these were good ideas and took a stand and said, "Yes, I will write a note to Ma Tianshui, the secretary of the municipal committee, to approve it, and in a few days organize a few party members to go into the archives of the municipal committee to check the files. This time, the general meeting to criticize the Municipal Committee should be based on the New Year's Day editorial of the Red Flag magazine, and we should be responsible for writing the speeches. The congress was to be held jointly with the 'General Department of Industry', the 'Department of Agriculture' and the 'Red Revolutionary Society' (short for 'Revolutionary Committee of the Red Guards in Shanghai Universities and Colleges'), and to be held with greater force. The congress was prepared by Cheng Qihua, who came from the Party School, and the preparatory office was located at the Party School of the Municipal Party Committee in Huaihai Zhong Road ....."

When everything was settled, it was late at night and we sang the song "To Chairman Mao's Longevity" in front of his portrait. As I sang, I felt my body and mind tremble with excitement: I could not yet predict the outcome of this all-out national civil war, but I had a feeling that I would be a participant in a major historical event, and that I would stand firmly on the side of Chairman Mao in the coming all-out national civil war ....."

As I sang and sang, I suddenly remembered a couplet given to me by the Red Guards at Fudan University after my rebellion.

"Only when the revolution to Beijing is near, do I realise that the Chairman to me is so dear".

Today, I feel this word "dear" even more deeply, and I have truly incorporated it into this song.

We sang very, very softly, and the song only echoed indoors, for just next door to the municipal writing class was a building where a municipal secretary and a minister also lived. It was after

midnight, their house was dark and people had already gone to sleep. We did not want to disturb them. Of course, in their slumber, they would never have imagined that a storm of power in January 1967, which was about to sweep across the country, would be whipping up from the writing class of the Municipal Party Committee just a stone's throw away!

From Xu Jingxian, *Ten Years a Dream* (published by Times International Publishing Ltd., November 2005 edition pp. 6-11)

## Chapter 18: The Overthrow of Tao Zhu and the Changes in the Central Cultural Revolution Group

1. The Tao Zhu that I knew
2. Disagreements between Tao Zhu and Chen Boda and Jiang Qing
3. About a letter I wrote to some comrades in the People's Education Publishing House
4. How Tao Zhu was defeated
5. Changes in the Central Cultural Revolution Group

### 1. The Tao Zhu that I knew

Before the Cultural Revolution began, the General Office of the Central Committee was located in the "A Building" where Liu Shaoqi used to live, and where Wang Dongxing, Director of the Central Office, Tong Xiaopeng, Director of the Secretary Bureau, and I had our offices. The work of the General Office of the Central Committee was placed under his leadership. He had just been transferred to Beijing and did not yet have an office space, so we vacated our office space for him. Wang Dongxing and I moved to the C building and Tong Xiaopeng moved to the D building. From that time onwards, I had more contact with Tao Zhu. He was in charge of the General Office and was under Wang Dongxing's leadership as well as mine. I had to report or discuss with him any issues that came up in the Secretary Bureau or anything that the Chairman had entrusted to me. At that time, apart from reporting to Jiang Qing, I also had to write a formal report on the contents of each meeting of the Central Secretariat and the resolutions made at the meeting, which was signed by Tao Zhu and sent to the Chairman and the Standing Committee of the Central Committee. Tao Zhu was very good at writing, and he would revise anything I wrote that was not right.

When he first arrived, he told me quite a lot about his experience of Chairman Mao's thought, about how he had tried to use Chairman Mao's thought to analyse the current situation and find a solution when he encountered difficulties. This gave me a particularly deep impression, and I felt that he was a good student of Chairman Mao. He had also asked me about my personal experience, and I said that I was a secondary school student who had joined the underground party in Shanghai, and I was introduced in a few words. He treated people more equally and also told me about his own history. He said, "I have made mistakes, haven't I?" I was stunned, as I had not heard of any mistakes made by Tao Zhu at that time, so I asked, "How did you make a mistake?" He said, "Everyone makes mistakes, and I almost got caught up in the Gao Gang affair. It was Chairman Mao who criticized and educated me." He said that he had a good relationship with Gao Gang, and before the "Gao Rao incident", Gao Gang had visited him and expressed some views, and he also expressed some views, including those in favour of Gao Gang. Tao Zhu said, later the central government did not pursue me, but I know I made a mistake, I made a self-criticism to the Chairman. I did not know Tao Zhu for long, but he told me all the mistakes he had made. I felt that this person was quite frank, so I respected him. We had a good relationship at that time.

Tao would sometimes talk to me about communist ideals, which was relatively rare among the central leaders I came into contact with. From his conversations with me, I got the impression that he was a man of ideals, that he was interested in and studied communism. His own life, however, was a very sophisticated one, and he was very good at enjoying himself. The things he used at home

were of a higher class at the time, some of which could not be bought with money. Jiang Qing went to his home in Guangzhou and said that it was like the home of a noble and powerful family. I have seen photos of his home furnishings sent to me by the Red Guards, and those things were really good. After arriving at Zhongnanhai, Tao Zhu chose a place to live, picking left and right, and picked the "Wan Zi Lang" where Yang Shangkun used to live, which was the most magnificent courtyard in Zhongnanhai. In terms of aesthetic views, the two of them were in sympathy with each other.

At that time, when the Central Committee met, Tao Zhu designated me, Wang Li and Mu Xin to take minutes of the meeting, and then we drafted a report for him. He was very strict in his requirements, recording which major issues, what comments he had, and which record was incorrectly written, and he personally read and corrected them before sending them to the Chairman. He also asked me privately to keep him informed of my contacts with the Chairman. On one occasion he even criticised me, saying that you should tell us in a timely manner if there were any comments from the Chairman. I promised, but did not do so. This is an iron discipline, the greatest organisational principle. The Chairman's secretaries knew more than I did, but they did not say anything they were not supposed to.

## **2. Disagreements between Tao Zhu and Chen Boda and Jiang Qing**

Tao Zhu had just come to the Central Committee and had views on Chen Boda's speeches at several meetings, at which he criticized Chen Boda. From the very beginning, these two men had been in a bit of a "tit-for-tat" situation. Chen Boda liked to pick on Tao Zhu, and Tao Zhu liked to find problems with Chen Boda. In fact, it was not a big problem, at least I have not heard of any disagreement on principle. The relationship between the two gradually became less and less good, and later developed to the point of often tearing each other down. Of the two, to be honest, I still preferred Tao Zhu to Chen Boda at the time. Apart from the fact that Tao Zhu treated me equally as mentioned earlier, I also liked Tao Zhu's writings, and I liked "The Style of the Pine Tree" he wrote. He wrote well, his writing was simple and vivid, and he had ancient writing skills, and I had a special respect for people with ancient writing skills. Although Chen Boda was also very good in ancient writing, he always mumbled and whined too much. He was always dissatisfied with this, dissatisfied with that, and even sometimes he would show his dissatisfaction with Chairman Mao, complaining that he did not attach importance to him.

But as the Cultural Revolution movement developed, things went wrong. Tao Zhu leaned towards Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping on the issue of sending work groups. He never made light of the fact that they had engaged in the same thing, and did not report truthfully to Chairman Mao. Once Tao Zhu arrived at the Central Committee, he followed Liu and Deng very closely. He openly said that Deng Xiaoping was his teacher. He just wanted to worship Deng Xiaoping as his teacher. Lin Biao was very squeamish about this. I once heard Jiang Qing say to Ye Qun that he, Tao Zhu, was also a subordinate of General Lin (Tao Zhu was the director of the Political Department of the "Fourth Field Army"). How could he be a teacher of Deng Xiaoping? Besides, Deng Xiaoping was less educated than he was, so why should he worship him? So not only did the conflict between Tao Zhu and Chen Boda deepen, but he was also at odds with Jiang Qing. Tao Zhu was very critical of Jiang Qing, and Jiang Qing was also critical of him.

At the 11th Plenary Session of the 8th Central Committee, he became the fourth ranking member of the Standing Committee of the Central Committee within the Party, and was also the Standing Secretary of the Secretariat, as well as the first advisor to the Central Cultural Revolution Group. He replaced Deng Xiaoping as General Secretary (Deng Xiaoping was no longer in charge). In Tao's eyes,

Jiang Qing was a generation younger than him. In his eyes, Chairman Mao, Premier Zhou and Zhu De were of the same generation. Tao Zhu regarded the Premier as his elder brother, and he was always respectful when he saw him; while they, including Lin Biao, Chen Yun and Deng Xiaoping, were of the same generation; the "Red Army" below them were of the same generation; and the "resistance" ones were of the same generation. The "War of Resistance" was another generation; after that, the "War of Liberation" generation. It is difficult to get a "liberation war" leader to lead a "resistance war" leader. Jiang Qing was more than a generation younger than Tao Zhu. So it was not easy to resolve the conflict between him and Jiang Qing. The fact is that Tao Zhu had a theory, and he could talk about everything. The most important thing is that you had to be able to get a good idea of what was wrong. Chen Boda and Jiang Qing were unable to deal with him. Jiang Qing and the Premier sometimes had conflicts, but theirs were easy to resolve.

As a matter of fact, Tao Zhu was in favour of the Cultural Revolution in the abstract, but he was against it in the concrete. When it comes to that cadre seeking privileges and oppressing the masses, Tao Zhu immediately defends people and says he wants to protect them. In fact, he did not really know the situation of the cadres below, many people are actually two-faced, how could you know the bad side of their engaging in privileges or even corruption? Not to mention the fact that some people are also using official officials to protect each other. Tao Zhu was particularly protective of the cadres in the two provinces and the two lakes. So his attitude was different from that of most of the Central Cultural Revolution. If they all did what Tao Zhu did, then they should not engage in the Cultural Revolution. According to the idea of the Central Cultural Revolution Group, if a cadre has serious problems, he should go to the masses to be criticized by the masses, which is also called "burning". As a cadre of the Communist Party, you are for the people, so how can you be afraid of the masses? Chairman Mao also said that you could "burn them", but you should not "scorch them". When the masses, the rebels at the bottom, saw that there were big problems with the cadres, they were of course very angry. Of course, there was a tendency to doubt everything and overthrow everything. At that time, Tao Zhu also said that he wanted to "doubt everything". Once when he went to Renmin University with Deng Xiaoping to meet with students, he said that apart from Chairman Mao and Vice-Chairman Lin, who could not be doubted, all others could be doubted. This was later criticised as "doubting everything". But this was only superficial, what he meant in essence was that one could not doubt everything and could not overthrow everything except for the big and important cases that had been nailed down. If no one could be doubted, then how could you still carry out the Cultural Revolution? Tao Zhu was actually opposing "doubting everything" under the banner of "doubting everything". He was a protector of everything, so what is there to doubt everything? Jiang Qing was right when she said that Tao Zhuang was the biggest "royalist", he did protect everything.

Tao Zhu was very determined in implementing Liu Shaoqi's capitalist-roader and bourgeois reactionary line. From the beginning of the Cultural Revolution, Wang Renzhong was a staunch advocate of the capitalist-roader and bourgeois reactionary line, while Tao Zhu was a staunch protector of Wang Renzhong and others. In Hubei, Wang Renzhong fought against students and workers and made them suffer a lot. He also persecuted Li Da to death. When it came time to criticise the "bourgeois reactionary line", the masses who were oppressed by Wang Renzhong rose up against him. Liu Zhijian was also the deputy head of the Central Cultural Revolution Group, the head of the Army Cultural Revolution Group, and the deputy director of the General Political Department, but he was very active in the General Political Department, and he had made a lot of people suffer from the "capitalist-roader and bourgeois reactionary line". Wang Renzhong and Liu Zhijian fought together as guerrillas during the war, and were life-and-death friends. The two of

them protected each other to the death, and Tao Zhu defended them both in every way. So the three of them, one was the first advisor of the Central Cultural Revolution Group, and the other two were both deputy heads of the Central Cultural Revolution Group. The three of them echoed each other, giving others an impression that they were like a small group and often sang against the rest of the Central Cultural Revolution Group.

When Chairman Mao received the revolutionary masses and Red Guards at the Tiananmen Square on the National Day in 1966, he did not have Deng Xiaoping with him. But in the news photo published in the newspaper, Tao Zhu removed the head of Chen Yi, who was beside the Chairman, and replaced it with Deng Xiaoping's head, creating the illusion that Deng Xiaoping was beside Chairman Mao, which was called "head-swapping". This story was exposed by the Xinhua News Agency and brought to the meeting of the Central Committee. During the meeting in Huaren Hall, I saw Chen Yi lose his temper, cursing, "Fuck, your mother's, son of a bitch, x your ancestors, cut off my head!" At this point, Chen Boda did not come out to give any advice, and was there eating and laughing. The Premier said, "Let's not make any more noise about this, just correct it". But the photo had already been printed in the newspaper, how could it be corrected?

### **3. About a letter I wrote to some comrades in the People's Education Publishing House**

In mid-December 1966, Yan Changgui<sup>360</sup> sent a letter of complaint from several of his classmates when he was a student at the Renmin University. His classmates, who worked at the People's Education Publishing House, had been branded as counter-revolutionaries because they had some opinions about Tao Zhu, and had put up large-character posters of Tao Zhu. Yan Changgui repeatedly begged me to think of ways to save his classmates. So, on 20 December, I wrote a letter to those comrades, giving a reply to the complaints they had made. In the letter I said:

"I cannot say anything about the affairs of your ministry without investigating and studying them. I hope you will discuss them in the spirit of Article 16 and the editorial of the Red Flag magazine, and make the Cultural Revolution in the Ministry of Education thorough. The education front is an important position in the Cultural Revolution, and I hope you will hold high the great banner of Mao Zedong Thought and occupy this position with Mao Zedong Thought. On the question of the five comrades, including x x x x, writing a big-character poster to Comrade Tao Zhu, I personally think it is OK to do so. If you have different views on this big-character poster, you can debate it. But it is wrong to say that this big-character poster is a 'counter-revolutionary' big-character poster, and to say against this big-character poster: 'Smash the dog's head of anyone who opposes Comrade Tao Zhu'. It is even more wrong for someone to describe those who put up the big-character poster as 'counter-revolutionary', to besiege and struggle against them, or even to detain them; no one has the right to do so."

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<sup>360</sup> Yan Changgui, (1937-2021) graduated from the Department of Philosophy of Renmin University of China in 1961. From October 1964 to May 1965, he participated in the "Four Cleanups" in Tong County, Beijing. From January 1967 to January 1968, on Qi Benyu's recommendation, he served as Jiang Qing's confidential secretary and was Jiang Qing's first full-time secretary. In January 1968, he gave some wrong advice to Jiang Qing and was placed in Qincheng Prison until 1975. He then worked under supervision for five years at West Dongting Farm in Hunan. In 1979, he was rehabilitated. He returned to Beijing, to work for the magazine "Seeking Truth", his first real job after graduating from university.

This letter was sent out without going through the Chairman and without being read by Jiang Qing and Chen Boda. But I knew that they would not object to my writing this letter. If they call someone a counter-revolutionary when they criticise a central leader, what kind of democracy is there?

After I wrote the letter, I met Tao Zhu and told him that some people in the Education Press had been branded as counter-revolutionaries because they had given you some advice. I told them that they should not be branded as counter-revolutionaries just because they gave you their opinions. Tao Zhu said, "Right. I have already said this. I've already said that". From what he said, he didn't mind my letter.

My letter was later published in a Red Guard tabloid. Soon after this happened, the conflict between Chen Boda, Jiang Qing and Tao Zhu became more pronounced, and by January 4, 1967, Chen Boda had openly proposed to overthrow Tao Zhu, and Jiang Qing followed suit. Because of the close proximity of these two events, until now people have taken my letter to those comrades in the People's Education Press as a signal to overthrow Tao Zhu. This is actually not the case.

Although I already had some views on Tao Zhu, I did not oppose Tao Zhu until December 1966. At that time, I often had to ask him for instructions, and he was present at every meeting, and when the Premier was present, the Premier presided over the meeting; when the Premier was absent, he presided over the meeting. I wrote that letter just because I heard Yan Changgui's report and excused the people who put up big-character posters for Tao Zhu, and I did not mean to bring down Tao Zhu. But later Yan Changgui wrote an article exposing me, saying that my letter seemed mild but actually contained a murderous intent. He seemed to have forgotten that the letter was actually written by him to beg me, and that many of the words in the letter were too peaceful for him to say at the time.

#### **4. How Tao Zhu was defeated**

The conflict between Tao Zhu and the Central Cultural Revolution Group came to light at the Industrial and Commercial Workers' Symposium held on November 16, 1966. Later on, at a meeting with the student rebels who were fighting against Wang Renzhong, Tao Zhu clashed with Chen Boda and Jiang Qing in person. At a meeting chaired by Premier Zhou on 27 and 28 December, Chen said that Tao was in league with Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping, and that he was Tao's "second generation" (Liu Shaoqi was his "first generation"), classifying Tao as a capitalist-roader. Jiang Qing followed suit and said at the meeting that Tao Zhu should be overthrown. In the morning of 29 December, at a meeting chaired by the Chairman, the Chairman criticised Chen Boda and Jiang Qing, and also spoke in favour of Tao Zhu. On the afternoon of January 4, 1967, when Chen Boda, Kang Sheng and Jiang Qing met with the "Wuhan to Guangzhou Specially Seize Wang Renzhong Rebel Corps", Chen Boda and Jiang Qing openly criticized Tao Zhu in their speeches. The streets were plastered with large slogans saying "Down with Tao Zhu". On February 6 and February 10, Chairman Mao made two public speeches criticizing Tao Zhu in relation to Chen Boda and Jiang Qing, and severely criticizing Chen Boda and Jiang Qing. Chairman Mao said: "Chen Boda, you are "one Politburo Standing Committee member trying to bring down another Politburo Standing Committee member", a "surprise attack". You used to speculate between me and Liu Shaoqi. Tao Zhu performed better than you at Lushan, and you still moved the motions! Jiang Qing, you are self-righteous and dismiss everyone. You two are responsible for the downfall of Tao Zhu. You should review yourselves!" The criticism was very strong. Chen Boda went back to Diaoyutai and cried about it, shouting that he wanted to commit suicide. The Chairman said, "Within a week, the Central

Cultural Revolution Group will meet on its own to criticize Chen Boda and Jiang Qing". He also said, "If no one from your Central Cultural Revolution Group dares to criticise them, then I will find someone to do so myself". I heard the Premier say that at that time Tao Zhu was so grateful to the Chairman that he, in turn, even interceded for Chen Boda and Jiang Qing, hoping that the Chairman would not be angry and would not ask Chen Boda and Jiang Qing to do self-criticism again. What the Chairman meant at that time was that Tao Zhu was the new leader elected by the Central Committee at the 11th Plenary Session of the 8th Central Committee, and people could raise different opinions about him, but he could not be knocked down at every turn.

As instructed by the Chairman, the Cultural Revolution Group held a special meeting at which Chen Boda and Jiang Qing both made a self-examination. At the meeting, people also criticised Chen Boda and Jiang Qing. After I was released from prison, I accidentally found a note from Kang Sheng to me in some of the books returned to me, which made me recall some scenes from the meeting back then. At the meeting, Kang Sheng used an allusion to criticise Chen Boda, saying that you were actually clamouring for favours by calling yourself a "little old man" everywhere. As I had not heard clearly the allusion used by Kang Sheng at the meeting, I asked him about it after the meeting. Kang Sheng wrote on a piece of paper: "Humility is a virtue, but if you are too humble, you are close to fraud; silence is a virtuous act, but if you are too silent, you will enter into treachery". It is also noted (see "Words of an Evening"<sup>361</sup>). From what was left on this note, it can also be seen that the meeting at that time was very serious in its criticism of Chen Boda and his group.

However, on January 8, 1967, at a meeting of the Central Committee, the Chairman spoke and was dissatisfied with Tao Zhu. He said that Tao was introduced to the Central Committee by Deng Xiaoping and that the man was dishonest. His problems were solved only after the Red Guards rose up. Zeng Zhi had doubts about this speech and wrote to ask the Chairman, who did not reply. Although a meeting was held after February 10 to criticize Chen Boda and Jiang Qing on this matter, when Jiang Qing and Chen Boda soon after again proposed to bring down Tao Zhu, the Chairman stopped speaking and Tao Zhu was eventually brought down. It is clear from the above that Chairman Mao's understanding and handling of the Tao Zhu issue was repeated. What happened in this case? Why did the Chairman finally agree to overthrow Tao Zhu? According to my present analysis, this turn of events may be related to the following things that happened during this period.

Firstly, Jiang Qing was disgusted by Chen Boda's cries for suicide after being criticised by the Chairman, and she criticised Chen Boda for being "unproductive." But she was also afraid that Chen Boda would really kill himself. She was afraid that Chen would actually commit suicide, because he had quoted Marx's son-in-law Lafargue as saying that "the suicide of a communist in certain circumstances is a heroic act" (I have not verified this, but it is to this effect). So Jiang Qing went to comfort him. Jiang Qing told him that we should listen to the Chairman's criticism and not fight against him. You don't know the temper of the Chairman? Don't confront him. The Chairman always said, "Spring rain is silent"<sup>362</sup>, the Chairman believed in the material. We should collect the materials and show them to the Chairman, so that he can see the true face of Tao Zhu, the biggest "royalist". And we can't just talk about it, we have to let the people talk about it, the Chairman trusts the people the most.

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<sup>361</sup> "Words of an Evening" is a work by Lin Yutang (1895-1976), a prolific author in both Chinese and English. After 1935 he lived mainly in the US. He supported the Guomindang and is buried in Taiwan Province.

<sup>362</sup> This is a line by Du Fu (712-770) meaning roughly that good things happen without having to make a fuss.

So Chen Boda and Jiang Qing really did that. She told us to gather up all the information in the Red Guards' tabloids (especially those in Guangdong and Hubei) that criticised Tao Zhu and Wang Renzhong and send them to the Chairman to read. At the same time, I was told to check the documents that Tao Zhu and Wang Renzhong had published during that period. It turned out that none of us knew that after Liu Shaoqi had approved the central document "Briefing No. 9" of Beijing University on June 20, 1966, the Central South Bureau had issued five official documents one after another, asking party committees at all levels to resolutely implement them. Of all the central bureaus, the Central-South Bureau issued the most documents on the resolute implementation of the "capitalist-roader and bourgeois reactionary line".

As early as June Tao Zhu supported an anti-rightist and anti-interference campaign in the universities of Beijing on the instructions of Liu Shaoqi, calling for a war of annihilation, for going after the roots and for mapping out the ranks among the masses.

At one point in early July 1966 Tao Zhu addressed a general meeting at Beijing University, saying that to oppose the work group was to oppose the Party leadership, and to oppose the Party leadership was to be counter-revolutionary. There was no room for negotiation, and the masses were asked to seize on this article of opposition to the Party to set off a storm to defeat the "counter-revolution".

Before the Chairman returned to Beijing, Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping also wholesaled the "Report on the Experience of the Cultural Revolution" written by the Central and South Bureau, saying that there were many rightists among the students and that they should wait until they were fully exposed and then counterattack in time. The Guangdong Provincial Public Security Bureau also used the special technical means used to deal with the existing counter-revolution to spy on the student dynamics of colleges and universities, and hundreds of people were targeted. One college even had four or five classes targeted for close surveillance. Many workers and students were arrested, beaten and interrogated under the instigation of Tao Zhu and others. In Wuhan alone, 400 or 500 people were arrested in less than a month and all of them were handcuffed and shackled. There were even those who were sentenced to death. Wang Renzhong said that during this campaign, Hubei had to arrest 300,000 to 400,000 rightists.

As late as 18 July 1966, before the Chairman returned to Beijing, Tao Zhu and Wang Renzhong were still issuing instructions to the Central and South Bureau that this campaign would probably crack down on more rightists than the 1957 anti-rightist campaign. So on and so forth. There were at least dozens of such materials sent up, and even if Chairman Mao had read only some of them, his opinion of Tao Zhu would have changed.

The second incident, in early 1967, I can't remember the exact time, a Red Guard-like man came to the west gate of Zhongnanhai, but he didn't look young anymore. He sent a piece of material to Chairman Mao, saying that he wanted to sue Tao Zhu. The material stated that his birth mother was Tao Zhu's present wife, Zeng Zhi, and that his father, surnamed Cai Xiemin, was an old revolutionary. He was a student of Chairman Mao's Guangzhou Peasant Movement Institute, and later worked as a secretary to Chairman Mao. The Chairman once said that he was a good comrade and very loyal to the revolution. Cai Xiemin was arrested in the 1930s while working underground for the Party. At that time, both Tao Zhu and Zeng Zhi were leaders of the underground party. Zeng Zhi was very beautiful and was already married to Cai Xiemin, but Tao Zhu was secretly pursuing her. After Cai Xemin was arrested, Tao Zhu chased Zeng Zhi down. At that time, there were no divorce or marriage formalities, so Tao lived with Zeng Zhi. Soon Zeng Zhi gave birth to a child, but it was Cai Xiemin and

Zeng Zhi's child. Zeng Zhi sent the child to the child's grandmother. The Red Guard-looking man said he was the child (he took a photo of his father with Zeng Zhi. He said this photo was left behind when Zeng Zhi put him up at his grandmother's house). I don't know how this man investigated in such detail, but he said that the enemy found nothing on his dad and released him. After his father got out, he looked for the organization and found Tao Zhu, asking for his organizational ties to be restored. However, Tao Zhu said that since he had been arrested and the circumstances of his release were still unclear, it was not easy for him to resume his organisational ties, so he did not do so. So, Cai Xiamin had to wander around. During his wanderings, he was caught by the Guomindang again and executed. This "Red Guard" believed that the death of his father, Cai Xiamin, was the result of Tao Zhu's failure to reconnect him to the organisation, and that Tao Zhu had caused his father's death.

We sent the letter to the Chairman. Chairman Mao read the letter carefully because it was from the son of his former secretary. Later I asked Xu Yefu, the Chairman's secretary, how the Chairman had approved it. Xu Yefu said that the Chairman told the boy to go back and gave him a sum of money. He also said that the Chairman had quoted an old saying, meaning that Tao Zhu had a moral deficiency. Xu Yefu also could not remember the old saying that the Chairman said, I checked the idiom dictionary also could not match the old saying that the Chairman said. I think the Chairman believed in this son's words. However, the Chairman could not deal with the matter at that time. For one thing, if Cai Xemin had just been released from the enemy prison and his situation was unknown, then it was really not good to pick up the relationship, and for another, Tao Zhu was a leading cadre and Zeng Zhi was also a relatively good female cadre. If people had been dead for so many years and things could not be verified, what could be done? This son was in his thirties at the time, and the Chairman could only take care of him and give him some comfort.

But after this incident, I found that the Chairman never said anything good about Tao Zhu again. Whether there were any other reasons for the change in the Chairman's attitude towards Tao Zhu apart from these, I am not sure.

Just after the Chairman had protected Tao Zhuo and criticised Chen Boda and Jiang Qing, the Central Cultural Revolution continued to have disputes with Tao Zhu. And around this time there was the matter of Wu Chuanqi. Wu Chuanqi was a rebel in the Department of Philosophy and Social Sciences. This conservative faction was strongly opposed to Wu Chuanqi, and they sent materials to Tao Zhu saying that Wu Chuanqi had joined the Guomindang before Liberation. At a meeting, Tao said that this issue should be examined. Guan Feng and Wu Chuanqi had a good relationship and they often wrote articles together. During the meeting, Guan Feng said that Wu Chuanqi had joined the Guomindang before Liberation, but he had joined the Communist Party by then and had ties with the underground. He joined the Guomindang because the underground told him to do so, in order to qualify to run for the National Assembly delegates of the Guomindang and seek to be elected as a delegate so that he could carry out united front work.

I also knew Wu Chuanqi, who was introduced to me by Guan Feng. I attended the Shanghai Symposium on Philosophy for Workers, Peasants and Soldiers with Wu Chuanqi. I said to Tao Zhu that I should also hear from him personally about this matter. Tao Zhu probably didn't want me to get involved, so he said he would investigate if there were any problems. He also told me, "This matter has nothing to do with you, I know, you and him are just general working relations." Tao also explained, "The Guomindang is not necessarily all bad, there is also a difference between general and key elements of the Guomindang. I just have to check it out." It was at this point. Jiang Qing

spoke up and said, "Joining the Guomindang also depends on why he joined it, I heard that Comrade Tao Zhu also joined the Guomindang back then!" But before Jiang Qing could finish, Tao Zhu became angry. He pointed at Jiang Qing and said, "How can you say that? We were cooperating with the Communist Party, and the Guomindang was a revolutionary Guomindang led by Sun Yat-sen, so how can it be compared with Chiang Kai-shek's Guomindang." He went on to say, "At that time, Chairman Mao had also joined the Guomindang." Jiang Qing was furious and said, "You are slandering Chairman Mao!" The two of them got into an argument. When the Premier saw that something was wrong, he said, "Oh, what you are saying is the same thing". Chen Boda, who had always been at odds with Tao Zhu, then added fuel to the fire and interjected, "You see, what is Tao Zhu's attitude towards Chairman Mao?" When Chen Boda said this, it became a problem with Tao Zhu's attitude towards Chairman Mao. Tao Zhu hurriedly defended himself by saying, "I didn't, Chairman Mao is my teacher, I'm his student ....." and so on, resulting in a meeting that broke up unhappily. This is something that I guess Jiang Qing would tell Chairman Mao about.

Soon after, the central government approved the examination of Tao Zhu. Once, the Prime Minister asked a PLA officer in charge of reviewing Tao Zhu to report to Diaoyutai. The officer said that there was a "rebellion of 61 people" in the Caolanzi Prison in the north, and there was a rebellion of dozens of people in the Suzhou Institute of Introspection<sup>363</sup>. Tao Zhu came out of the Suzhou Institute of Introspection, and there were suspicions about how he came out. He also said that Tao Zhu had an older brother who was arrested. His brother said that Tao Zhu not only joined the Guomindang, but was also a secret member of the Guomindang and an undercover agent for the Guomindang in the Communist Party. The visitor took out the letter written by Tao's brother and showed it to us. His brother wrote on the letter that it was he who had gone to persuade Tao Zhu to betray the Party. Also written was the content of Tao Zhu's reply letter to his brother. But the content of this reply letter was only his brother's recollection and not written by Tao Zhu himself. The content is that Tao Zhu had the intention of compromising with his brother at that time. At that time, there were several people listening to the report together, the Premier, Jiang Qing, Chen Boda, Guan Feng and me.

When I read the material written by Tao's brother, I asked the person who came to report, "Did you force him?" He said, "We didn't do it, the Red Guards did." I asked, "How did the Red Guards do it? Did they force his brother to give an account? Did they beat up his brother?" He said he didn't know. I said, "This material doesn't look real to me. Tao is an educated man, and the tone and writing style on this letter don't look like Tao's; he wouldn't be so lame in writing letters." I added: "Betrayal or not is a big issue, we can't just base the case on the material that a few Red Guards have put together, we have to do our own investigation." What I said at that time had a double meaning, as I suspected that the material was untrue, but I also did not deny that Tao Zhu was suspected of betrayal. But the Premier was pleased to hear this and immediately said, "Comrade Benyu's analysis is very good, and I also have my doubts. Tao is a leader of the underground party and he betrayed at the word of his brother? He didn't betray for so long, and his brother wrote a letter and changed? That easy?" The Premier also said that they should continue their investigation. The Premier also said, "There is no head of this Tao Zhu task force yet, so I think Benyu should be the head of it." I said, "I can't do that, I have too many things to do and I'm afraid I'll delay things." The Premier said,

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<sup>363</sup> The Suzhou Institute of Introspection was a special prison set up by the Guomindang for political prisoners from 1929 to 1938. It was the first special prison with the purpose of "reflection" and "probation" of prisoners. Slightly more relaxed than traditional prisons, inmates could be released after six months of "reflection" if their outlook had changed, or could be kept for up to five years if they remained true to their own political beliefs.

"You just need to have a general direction." Then he immediately drafted a document that the Tao Zhu task force would be headed by Qi Benyu and sent to the Chairman and Lin Biao for approval. The Premier also said, "If you can't figure out anything, come and ask me." It seems that Zhou Enlai was also not convinced that Tao Zhu was a traitor.

After this, the Tao Zhu task force came to report back to me. I said, "You must talk to his brother properly and see if the material his brother wrote is correct." The task force showed the materials written by his brother to Tao Zhu and told him to give an account. Tao Zhu beat the table and scolded his brother, saying that his brother was a Nationalist, that the brothers had always been at odds with each other and that he had not betrayed. Later I told the Premier about the re-investigation by the task force, and he was quite pleased.

In early September 1967, Yao Wenyan's article "Review of Tao Zhu's Two Books" was published in the People's Daily. This article criticized Tao Zhu very severely, saying that Tao Zhu had long been "suspicious of everything" and that his motives were dubious. Although I did not think Tao was a Guomindang agent, nor did I think he was a traitor, I did think it was very wrong for him to faithfully carry out the reactionary bourgeois line of Liu and Deng and to harbour capitalist-roaders. However, my perception of Tao Zhu was somewhat different from Yao Wenyan's, but Yao Wenyan's articles were read by the Chairman, so I couldn't say anything. More than four months after this incident, I myself was put under isolation and interrogated.

After I was released from prison, I heard from a colleague who had participated in the Tao Zhu task force that after I was imprisoned, people from the Tao Zhu task force had reported that I was harboring Tao Zhu. But in fact, because of the lack of materials, there was no definite conclusion about Tao Zhu at that time, so it was not possible to talk about harbouring or not harbouring. When Deng Xiaoping and his team investigated me after they came to power, they did not say that I was harbouring Tao Zhu. At that time, Tao Zhu was already a positive figure and I was regarded as a counter-revolutionary, so they could not say that I was harbouring Tao Zhu.

## **5. Changes in the Central Cultural Revolution Group**

With Tao Zhu, Wang Renzhong and Liu Zhijian being knocked down one after another, the Central Cultural Revolution Group naturally changed. Mu Xin and Yin Da had actually left the Central Cultural Revolution in early 1967. Because they had carried out Liu Shaoqi's bourgeois reactionary line in the Guangming Daily and the Institute of History respectively, they suppressed the masses there very hard. Although they were both members of the Central Cultural Revolution Group, the masses underneath opposed them severely. Chen Boda and I both went to work to try to bail them out, but the masses were still very vocal and they could not be bailed out. This made it impossible for them to continue working in the Central Cultural Revolution Group. But the Central Cultural Revolution Group told the masses that they could criticise them, but they were not allowed to fight.

This left only eight members of the Central Cultural Revolution Group, then known as the Three Old Men, the Three Middlemen and the Two Youths.

The "three old men" were Kang Sheng, Chen Boda and Jiang Qing.

Jiang Qing was very respectful of Kang Sheng, she always called him "Kang Lao" and we also called him "Kang Lao". The President usually called him Kang Sheng, but sometimes he also jokingly called him "Kang Lao". Jiang Qing did not think much of Chen Boda.

The "Three Centres" were Zhang Chunqiao, Guan Feng and Wang Li.

Guan Feng was more qualified than Wang Li. Zhang Chunqiao was the deputy head of the group.

Two young people, were Qi Benyu and Yao Wenyuan. The Chairman said that we were "Yao in the south and Qi in the north".

In the past, when they were in the Central Cultural Revolution Group, although there were often opinions and arguments within the group, Tao still defended the Group externally. Therefore, his presence actually eased a lot of conflicts between the Central Cultural Revolution Group and other central departments. After Tao's downfall, the conflicts between the Central Cultural Revolution Group and some old cadres intensified further, and the first to bear the brunt were Wang, Guan and Qi.

## Chapter 19: The January Revolution in Shanghai and the storm for power

1. The "January Revolution" in Shanghai
2. Chairman Mao's proposal to seize power from the capitalist-roads
3. The Establishment of the Shanghai Revolutionary Committee

### 1. The "January Revolution" in Shanghai

Two days after attending Chairman Mao's modest family dinner, the Kangping Road Incident occurred in Shanghai. The Shanghai Municipal Committee was not happy with Zhang Chunqiao's handling of the Anting Incident, but as Chairman Mao had already made it clear that he supported him, they could not openly oppose him. At that time, after the establishment of the General Department of Workers, workers who supported the Shanghai Municipal Committee set up the Shanghai Workers' Red Guard. Cao Diqui and others also supported the Red Guards in their hearts, so that they could counteract the already recognised Shanghai Workers' General Department. But by this time Chairman Mao and the Central Committee had already taken the position that they would support the workers' rebels, and Cao Diqui was forced to declare that he would withdraw the eight demands of the Red Guards, which he had signed on 23 December. The Red Guards felt abandoned by the Shanghai Municipal Committee, and in turn, over ten thousand Red Guardsmen swarmed into the Shanghai Municipal Committee on Kangping Road to overthrow Cao Diqui. At this critical moment, Zhang Chunqiao showed his ability to grasp the political situation by telling the "General Department of Workers" in a timely and decisive manner that the Red Guards should be assembled and driven out of the Kangping Road Municipal Committee. There were some physical confrontations during this incident, but no serious armed struggle took place.

On January 2, 1967, Chairman Mao decided to send Zhang Chunqiao and Yao Wenyuan back to Shanghai as investigators for the Central Committee, and on January 4, the rebels of Shanghai's Wenhui Bao seized the power of Wenhui Bao, followed by the rebels of Jiefang Daily on January 5. Both of them were spontaneous actions by the masses. On the evening of the 5th, when I read Chairman Mao's instructions supporting the two newspapers' seizure of power, I immediately contacted Zhang Chunqiao, who had arrived in Shanghai on January 4, and told him about the Chairman's instructions. I could hear from the telephone that Zhang Chunqiao was a bit surprised.

Chairman Mao supported and fully affirmed the seizure of power by Shanghai's Wenhui Bao and Jiefang Daily, and considered that "this is a great revolution under the dictatorship of the proletariat, a revolution in which one class overthrows another." This event was of great significance.

However, the situation that Zhang Chunqiao faced in Shanghai was serious. On the one hand, a large number of "Red Guard" workers, who felt abandoned by the Shanghai Municipal Committee, left their jobs and went to Beijing to complain, paralysing production in many units and causing disruptions to the Beijing and Shanghai railways; on the other hand, there was a wave of "economism" at this time. Faced with the surge of economic demands, the leaders at all levels in Shanghai were unable to resist, and they issued notes and money to the masses. Some of them did

so with the obvious political intention of exerting pressure on Chairman Mao and the Party Central Committee.

Chairman Mao was very concerned about the situation in Shanghai during that time, and he asked Xu Yefu to come and tell me that any reports from Shanghai should be sent to him immediately. Zhang Chunqiao also contacted me often at that time, but he contacted me mostly by telephone, not by written reports, and it was not easy for him to send telegrams as he had not yet taken over the Shanghai Municipal Committee's secret service. When I found out from him, I immediately reported the situation to Jiang Qing, who then reported it to the Chairman. The Chairman often stayed with Jiang Qing at Diaoyutai during that period, and often called members of the Central Cultural Revolution Group to the small building where she lived for meetings. Chairman Mao was so disgusted with those practices of the Shanghai Municipal Committee that he said at the meeting, "I just don't believe that if Butcher Zhang dies, you have to eat pigs with bristles"<sup>364</sup>.

On the one hand, he relied closely on the workers' rebels, Wang Hongwen of the "General Department of Workers", and asked them to go to the "Red Guard" workers to explain their line and persuade them to support the revolutionary rebels and go back to work. On the other hand, at the end of 1966 he had already supported some cadres of the original Shanghai Municipal Committee's "writing team" to revolt and set up a liaison station of the Shanghai Municipal Committee's organs for revolutionary rebellion, which set fire to the "backyard" of the Shanghai Municipal Committee. At this time, he also supported the establishment of the "Fireline Command for Grasping the Revolution and Promoting Production" by the "General Department of Workers" in conjunction with various rebel factions. This "Fireline Command", which was organised by the workers' and students' organisations on their own initiative and later joined by cadres from the authorities, took on the responsibility of leading the normal operation of production and life in the city. Some members of the former Shanghai Municipal Committee made a faux pas and got themselves "on the sidelines" instead.

## **2. Chairman Mao's proposal to seize power from the capitalist-roaders**

On January 8, 1967, dozens of mass rebel groups in Shanghai, led by the "General Department of Workers", issued an "emergency circular" to the people of the city, calling on the people of the city to resist the demonic wind of "economism", to hold fast to their fighting positions of grasping revolution and promoting production, and to repel the attacks of the bourgeois reactionary line.

Chairman Mao read this "emergency notice" in the newspaper and immediately gave it high praise. He thought it was better written than even the Central Government's documents. He ordered the People's Daily to reproduce the "Emergency Notice" in full and sent a "congratulatory telegram" to the revolutionary rebel groups in Shanghai on 11 January 1967, jointly signed by the CPC Central Committee, the State Council, the Central Military Commission and the Central Cultural Revolution Group. This "congratulatory telegram" was published in the People's Daily on 12 January. It was this "congratulatory telegram" that opened a new stage of the Cultural Revolution, namely, the seizure

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<sup>364</sup> This is a metaphor that without someone or a certain condition, things can still be done well, and that no-one is indispensable. It comes from a story about a rural butcher who often boasted that "Without Butcher Zhang, there would be no pork to eat." One day Butcher Zhang died of a sudden illness. Some foolish people thought: If he is dead, there will be no meat to eat. However, more meat sellers appeared on the street. The meat was good and cheap and without hairs or bristles. Butcher Zhang had monopolised a trade that others could have done as well or better.

of power from the capitalist-roaders within the Party, the establishment of a new revolutionary order and a new system of power.

All the members of the Central Cultural Revolution Group, including Zhang Chunqiao and Yao Wenyuan who went to Shanghai, were unprepared for the seizure of power. Although both the May 16th Circular and the Sixteen Articles spoke of the need to take back the power usurped by the capitalist-roaders, this was understood at the time as an individual adjustment of organisation and personnel. Chen Boda always told us at that time that Chairman Mao still wanted to use those old cadres. He said that after the liberation, even the Guomindang leaders were still used by Chairman Mao, not to mention that the others were all communist cadres. He said that the Chairman always said that it was fine to "burn" old cadres who had made mistakes, but not to "scorch" them. This shows that the Chairman still wants to use them. "We can't see clearly, so don't get involved". He said that the rebels could only play a supervisory role at most, they were not experts and had no management experience. It is still up to the experts to manage the country. So, he always took a wait-and-see attitude to the issue of seizing power. At that time, this idea of Chen Boda had a great influence on us. Jiang Qing never talked to us about the idea of "seizing power". Therefore, the decision to seize power was a major strategic decision made by Chairman Mao after his independent observation and thinking.

### **3. The Establishment of the Shanghai Revolutionary Committee**

Shanghai was the city with the highest concentration of working class people in China, with over two million industrial workers at that time alone. Shanghai workers were highly conscious and listened to Chairman Mao's words. As a result of Chairman Mao's support for the "General Department of Workers" rebels, those workers who had joined the "Red Guards" soon changed their stance and in turn supported and joined the "General Department of Workers". Wang Hongwen and his colleagues also adopted the correct policy approach, welcoming the Red Guard workers back to their units to "grasp revolution and promote production", and stipulating that they should not be discriminated against. As a result, the workers' rebellion in Shanghai soon took control of the situation.

The process of "seizing power" in Shanghai went smoothly. From the establishment of the "Shanghai People's Commune" to the renaming of the "Shanghai Municipal Revolutionary Committee", the power of the former Shanghai Municipal Committee and the Municipal People's Committee was taken over in just over a month. It can be said that the whole process of "seizing power" in Shanghai was carried out under Chairman Mao's personal supervision and guidance.

The struggle was complex, and in late January 1967, the Red Guards organised a "shelling of Zhang Chunqiao" in Shanghai. At the time, Chairman Mao explicitly supported Zhang Chunqiao's efforts to take control of the ongoing struggle for power in Shanghai. According to the Chairman's instructions, the Central Cultural Revolution Group, in the name of Chen Boda, took a timely stand and sent an "emergency telegram", which quickly put the matter to rest.

The victory of the January Revolution in Shanghai soon led to a bottom-up revolutionary movement to seize power throughout the country, with Shandong, Shanxi, Heilongjiang and Guizhou being the first to respond, followed by the establishment of "revolutionary committees" in all provinces and cities throughout the country. The workers' rebellion rose rapidly throughout the country. The Cultural Revolution entered a new phase.

At the same time, as the "seizure of power" campaign unfolded, the contradictions within the Party sharpened. Some people who had reluctantly supported the overthrow of Liu Shaoqi saw that the Cultural Revolution had damaged their power, status, reputation and financial interests, and from

this time onwards they began to stand in opposition to the Cultural Revolution and the Central Cultural Revolution Group. The struggle within the Party also entered a new phase.

## Chapter 20: Chen Yi, Tan Zhenlin and others make a fuss over Huarentang and criticise the "February Countercurrent"

1. The Beijing West Hotel Incident
2. Chen Yi, Tan Zhenlin and others make a fuss at Huarentang and criticise the "February Countercurrent"

### 1. The Beijing West Hotel Incident

During the "January Revolution" in Shanghai, when Jiang Qing was talking about the evaluation of Chen Pixian at a meeting, she said to the Chairman in a joking manner, "This time, I want to revolt against the Chairman". Tan Zhenlin then rebuked Jiang Qing on the side, saying, "You still want to revolt against the Chairman? The Chairman is the Chairman of the whole Party, you are being audacious. At that time, the Chairman only laughed at this and did not bother with Tan Zhenlin.

However, when they saw that the Chairman had really criticized Chen Boda and Jiang Qing for the matter of Tao Zhu, some people became excited, thinking that Chairman Mao was going to "correct" the "mistakes" of the Central Cultural Revolution Group.

In January 1967, the Central Military Commission held an enlarged meeting of the Standing Committee at the Beijing West Hotel, and the Central Cultural Revolution Group also attended this meeting. I took most of that time off to write an article on "Patriotism or National Betrayal" at home and did not go to the meeting. Jiang Qing also went to the meeting only occasionally. Later, I heard Guan Feng come back and tell me that when Chen Boda criticized Xiao Hua for his poor leadership of the army's Cultural Revolution movement, Ye Jianying and Nie Rongzhen jumped up, accusing Chen Boda of trying to mess up the army as well. At this point, Xu Qianqian<sup>365</sup> came out to speak, saying that Xiao Hua had done some things wrong. But Ye Jianying didn't buy it and slapped the table at Xu Qianqian to rebut Chen Boda. After this incident, Ye Jianying went to Lin Biao to complain again. He cited the cadets of the army academy rebels and criticized the "sins" of the army cadres, especially the incident of Xiao Hua's fight. Xiao Hua was a former member of Lin Biao's army, and Lin Biao wanted to protect Xiao Hua. In fact, Xiao Hua was a supporter of the rebels in the army, so the Central Cultural Revolution Group was also in favour of protecting Xiao Hua. After Ye Jianying complained, Lin Biao called Jiang Qing to Maojiawan<sup>366</sup> and threw a tantrum, overturning a small

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<sup>365</sup> Xu Xiangqian (1901-1990), joined the Communist Party of China in March 1927. He had a number of important positions in the Workers and Peasants Red Army and organised and commanded a series of battles to smash the third "encirclement and suppression" of the Guomindang army against the Hubei, Henan, Anhui and Soviet areas. During the War of Resistance Against Japan he served as a commander in the Eighth Route Army and in October 1949, he served as Chief of Staff of the Chinese People's Liberation Army. From 1966 to 1987, he served as Vice Chairman of the Central Military Commission of the Communist Party of China. From 1978 to 1980, he served as Vice Premier of the State Council and Minister of National Defense.

<sup>366</sup> Beijing Maojiawan No. 1 House is Lin Biao's former residence. It is located in the south-east of Ping'anli in Beijing's Xicheng District, north-west of Zhongnanhai, in two alleys near the root of the imperial city, the south lane is called Qianmaojiawan and the north lane is called Houmaojiawan. It was the former residence of Mao Ji, a Ming dynasty university scholar, which gave the hutong its name "Maojiawan". After 1980, the building was converted into the home of the Central Documentary Research Office and Archives of the Communist Party of China. The Central Literature Publishing House is now located there.

coffee table. Jiang Qing argued again and again, but Lin Biao just wouldn't listen. Later on, Lin Biao wanted to go to Chairman Mao with Jiang Qing for a review, but it was only after Ye Qun knelt down and cried and begged that Lin Biao was persuaded not to. When Jiang Qing came back, she told me that "he was a sick man and I was not afraid of him. I only let him go because I was concerned about the overall situation". In fact, such bumps and bruises were common among some central leaders at the time, and it was not rare for them to make such a big fuss. The story soon got out and was soon deliberately exaggerated by some people. The most malicious of these was that Lin Biao asked someone to pull Jiang Qing down and shoot him on the spot! This kind of rumour has historical roots. Afterwards Ye Qun came to Jiang Qing many times, and sometimes I was present, and Ye Qun said that Lin had always been very wary of Ye Jianying. She said that even though Ye Jianying was active against He Long and Luo Ruiqing, General Lin still did not think highly of him, saying that he was a man who could not fight and would just make trouble out of nothing. Lin Biao also cared for Ye Qun and told her to be careful of what she said in front of Ye Jianying in the future. Jiang Qing also told me that she had fallen for one of Ye Jianying's tricks when it came to Xiao Hua. So as far as I can remember, Lin Biao was not a two-faced person like some people later said. He would do something to you face to face if he had any different opinions. It was just that he was very protective of his own men.

Later, at this meeting of the Central Military Commission, an "Eight Orders of the Central Military Commission" was drawn up and issued on 28 January 1967. Chairman Mao approved this order. This eight-article order stressed the importance of supporting the army, and also strictly restricted the actions of the army rebels. On the whole, however, it had a certain effect in stabilising the army and preventing chaos in the army.

## **2. Chen Yi, Tan Zhenlin and others make a fuss at Huarentang and criticise the "February Countercurrent"**

Chairman Mao's criticism of Chen Boda and Jiang Qing, and the quarrel that occurred between Lin Biao and Jiang Qing, created a misconception among some people. They thought that the time had come to attack the Central Cultural Revolution Group.

The January Revolution in Shanghai became a trigger for Chen Yi, Tan Zhenlin, Ye Jianying and others to make a fuss over Huarentang<sup>367</sup>. Chen Pixian was a key figure in this. Chen Pixian was a little red devil<sup>368</sup> and had been working in the New Fourth Army, Chen Yi and Tan Zhenlin were his old superiors. Many generals in East China, including Xu Shiyou and Ye Fei, were Chen Pi Xian's old comrades. These men of the New Fourth Army were not yet the same as the Eighth Route Army. As they were not as powerful as the Eighth Route Army and were often under siege by the Guomindang, they often supported each other in order to concentrate their forces against the enemy, so the ministries bonded very tightly.

After the founding of the country, Chen Pixian was a figure that Ke Lao (Ke Qingshi) valued. Originally, Chen Yi and Tan Zhenlin both worked in the East China Bureau, and they were quite close

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<sup>367</sup> The Huaren Hall or Huarentang is a building inside Zhongnanhai, the Chinese government's leadership compound in Beijing. It has been the site of several major events in Chinese history. Huaren Hall is the main meeting place of the Politburo of the Communist party of China and an alternate meeting place of the Standing Committee.

<sup>368</sup> The "hong xiao gui" or "little red devils" were a group of young people, children many of them, who took part in the Long March doing support work for the Red Army soldiers.

to Ke Lao, and they all listened to him. Ke Lao had high prestige in the Party at that time and Chairman Mao also liked him. Ke Lao just did not have a good relationship with Liu Shaoqi.

Chen Pixian was supportive of Jiang Qing in his criticism of Hai Rui Dismissed from Office. At the beginning of the Cultural Revolution, both Jiang Qing and the Premier personally talked to him and worked with him, hoping that he would stand up for the masses in the Cultural Revolution and support the revolutionary rebellion. However, in reality, due to his position, he still stubbornly sided with the bourgeoisie's reactionary line. His attitude towards the Cultural Revolution was the same as that of Chen Yi and Tan Zhenlin. Zhang Chunqiao told me that before he died, Ke told him to ask Chen Pixian for more advice and reports in future, so he always treated Chen Pixian with respect. However, when Zhang Chunqiao was dealing with the Anting Incident, he signed the workers' rebellion without asking Chen Pixian for permission, which put him in opposition to him. At that time, the Shanghai rebels received a report that Chen Pixian had been taken prisoner by the Guomindang during the Ten Years' Civil War, and that he was only a teenager and small, so he was taken in by the Guomindang governor as his adopted son, and was allegedly told to identify the Communist leaders.

The January Revolution in Shanghai was actually directed at Chen Pixian and Cao Diqu, the main leaders of the former Shanghai Municipal Committee. With the support and call of Chairman Mao, the rebel factions in all provinces, cities and central ministries and commissions followed suit and started the struggle to seize power. The struggle for power expanded the impact on the leading cadres and broadened the scope of the attacks. The political power of these leaders and cadres was also very great. In my opinion, one of the main issues that the Chairman considered when he launched the Cultural Revolution was how to keep the people's power in the hands of the people, how to prevent the people's servants from becoming the people's masters, and how not to allow some people to regard power as their own because they had been in office for a long time and turn it into a tool for the privileged class to make personal gains. However, on this point, it can be said that there were simply too many people who opposed him then. Because this, after all, involved the personal interests of many leading cadres and cliques within the party, government and military, they of course had to fight tooth and nail. They simply hated the Central Cultural Revolution Group to the bone for supporting the mass rebellion to seize power. The first to bear the brunt were naturally Jiang Qing and Zhang Chunqiao. This was the background to the incident that happened on 16 February when Chen Yi, Tan Zhenlin and others made a big fuss over Huarentang.

In the afternoon of 16 February 1967, at a meeting of the Central Committee chaired by Premier Zhou at Huaren Hall in Zhongnanhai, it was Chen Yi, Tan Zhenlin, Li Xiannian, Ye Jianying and others who came out to make a fuss and strongly express their discontent with the situation. Wang Li attended this meeting, while I was home on leave because I was intensifying my work on "Patriotism or National Betrayal". Wang Li later told me that the meeting was chaired by the Premier and was supposed to discuss grasping revolution and promoting production", but before the meeting got to the topic, Tan Zhenlin suddenly turned on Zhang Chunqiao, asking him why he was still fighting against Chen Pixian in Shanghai and not allowing him to enter Beijing (at that time, most of the first secretaries of the provinces were protected by the Central Government in Beijing so as not to expose them to mass criticism). Tan Zhenlin didn't wait for Chunqiao to finish his speech before he slapped the table and said furiously, "What masses, what masses, don't use this to put us off, apart from the masses, do you want the Party leadership? You will use the masses to bring down the old cadres one by one. The old cadres have been revolutionary for decades, but now they have been separated from their wives. A few high school students, shouting "I am a hero and a heroine", have turned it into a reactionary lineage theory. Kuai Dafu is nothing! He made a "hundred ugly pictures"

to vilify our Party. The Cultural Revolution was the most brutal campaign in the history of the Party to destroy revolutionary cadres. Jiang Qing insisted on making me a counter-revolutionary, and this is what she told me to my face." When Tan Zhenlin said this, Xie Fuzhi, who was at the meeting, came out to speak and said in front of Tan Zhenlin, "Boss Tan, you must also be truthful! I heard Jiang Qing say several times in the meeting that Mr. Tan was a supporter of Chairman Mao's line and that Mr. Tan should be protected! I never heard her say that you were a counter-revolutionary." The first time I heard this, Tan Zhenlin was even more fired up, saying "I don't want her to bail me out, I'm working for the party and I don't want her to bail me out!" The more he said, the more agitated he became. Suddenly, picking up his briefcase and his fur coat, he stood up from his seat and shouted: "I quit, let them do it! But I'm going to fight them to the end! I'll expel myself from the Party, I'll go to jail, I'll chop off my head, I'll fight them too!" At this point the Premier spoke up, slapping the table with a thick document in his hand and shouting at Tan Zhenlin, who, startled, flopped down and sat down. At this point, Chen Yi, who was sitting next to him, said, "You can't leave, you have to fight them here!" Chen Yi added, "When these guys (meaning Kang Sheng, Chen Boda, Jiang Qing and others) come to power, they are revisionists coming to power, fight them!" Chen Yi continued, "When the Yan'an Rectification was underway, those of us, including the Premier and me, were all subjected to rectification. At that time, Liu Shaoqi, Deng Xiaoping, Peng Zhen, Bo Yibo and others were the most aggressive in supporting Chairman Mao, and they were the most popular. What was the result? Today's history proves who really opposed Chairman Mao? Isn't it just Liu Shaoqi, Deng Xiaoping and Peng Zhen, who were the most supportive of Chairman Mao in the first place? Future history will also prove who was really against Chairman Mao. Stalin gave the class to Khrushchev, and the result was revisionism in power." After Chen Yi's speech, Li Xiannian interjected that from the thirteen editorials of Red Flag in 1966, calling on the masses to fight on two lines, the old cadres were all beaten down! After Li Xiannian's speech, the Premier asked Kang Sheng and Chen Boda on the spot, "Thirteen issues of the editorial that were so influential, how did you not show us?" Kang and Chen did not answer.

After the meeting, Zhang Chunqiao, Wang Li and Yao Wenyuan compiled a copy of the minutes and reported the meeting to Jiang Qing first. Jiang Qing felt that the problem was quite big and immediately sought to report to the Chairman that night. When the Chairman listened to their report, he didn't pay much attention to it at first, and when he heard Tan Zhenlin lose his temper and pick up his coat to leave, he just smiled. But when it came to Chen Yi's dissatisfaction with the Yan'an rectification, the Chairman got serious, especially when Chen Yi talked about the Premier and his being rectified in Yan'an, the Chairman was very upset, but that night, the Chairman did not take a position but approved the minutes of the Huairan Hall meeting collated by Zhang, Wang and Yao: "Retire Comrade Chen Boda."

The day after the Huarentang meeting, Tan Zhenlin wrote another letter to Lin Biao, cursing Jiang Qing as Wu Zetian<sup>369</sup> and inciting Lin Biao to join them in opposing the Central Cultural Revolution

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<sup>369</sup> Wu Zetian (624–705) was the de facto ruler of the Tang dynasty, first through her husband the Emperor Gaozong and then through her sons the Emperors Zhongzong and Ruizong, from 665 to 690. She subsequently became empress regnant of the Wu Zhou dynasty of China, ruling from 690 to 705. She was the only legitimate female sovereign in the history of China. Under her 40-year reign, China grew larger, corruption in the court was reduced, its culture and economy were revitalized, and it was recognized as one of the great powers of the world. However, her consolidation of power in part relied on a system of spies. She used informants to choose people to eliminate, a process which peaked in 697, with the wholesale demotion, exile, or killing of various aristocratic families and scholars, furthermore prohibiting their sons from holding office. Wu Zetian eliminated many of her real, potential, or perceived rivals to power by means including execution, suicide by command, and more-or-less directly killing people, demotion, and exile.

Group. This letter, which we did not see then, was only seen after the Cultural Revolution in the biography of Mao Zedong published and edited by the Central Documentary Publishing, and reads as follows

Yesterday's rendezvous was the third time I had fought back, the first time on the telephone the day before yesterday, and the second time when I wrote a letter early yesterday morning. I had to do so because I had reached the point where I could not bear it any longer.

They not only disobeyed the Chairman's instructions, but also said in front of him, "I want to revolt against you". What position do they put the Chairman in? They are really more vicious than Wu Zetian.

They did not do any class analysis at all and their tactics were unprecedented in the Party. The political life of a person was killed with a single word, called "punching out", Tao Zhu, Liu Zhijian, Tang Pingzhi and so on, a series of people's political life was cut short in this way. Only Tao Zhu was criticised for his mistakes, others have not been criticized, and, criticism of Tao Zhu was for a very short time, they simply do not give people the opportunity to change. The old cadres, senior cadres above the provincial level, except those in the army and those living in Zhongnanhai, were almost all subjected to struggle, to wearing high hats, put in the jet plane position, having their bodies broken, having their wives scattered and losing their families, as was the case with comrades Tan Qilong and Jiang Hua. We were scandalised to the point of no return. After Beijing's 100 scandalous pictures<sup>370</sup> came out, Shanghai and Xi'an followed suit. The real revisionists and counter-revolutionaries were protected instead. They were interested in beating up old cadres, and if you had the slightest fault, they grabbed you and had to beat you to death.

I thought long and hard about it, and finally made up my mind and prepared to die. But I would never commit suicide, nor would I commit treason, nor would I ever allow them to act so brutally again. The Premier has already been screwed by them enough. The Premier is broad-minded and can think ahead, so he will endure and wait. No, no, no, no way. I am determined to make this rebellion, I am ready to sacrifice, to fight on, to fight on.

Lin Biao, of course, read the letter and he forwarded it to the Chairman with a letter criticising Tan Zhenlin for his confusion and depravity. The Chairman read it and approved, "It has been read, Comrade Enlai read it and returned to Comrade Lin Biao."

Immediately after the meeting at Huarentang, in the early hours of the 17th, Premier Zhou and Li Xiannian met with representatives of the rebel organizations in the financial and trade system in the small auditorium of Zhongnanhai. Premier Zhou ordered on the spot the arrest of Du Xiangguang<sup>371</sup>, Vice Minister of the Ministry of Finance, who supported the Ministry of Finance's rebel group and its seizure of power; he made a speech criticizing the rebel faction's lack of policy towards old cadres and its brutal struggle, and cited the death of Coal Minister Zhang Lin as an example.

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<sup>370</sup> The one hundred scandalous pictures refers to "One Hundred Clowns", a collection of satirical cartoons caricaturing leading capitalist-roaders. It was very popular and widely circulated.

<sup>371</sup> Du Xiangguang (1916—1993) joined the Chinese Communist Party in 1936. After the founding of the People's Republic of China, he served successively as a member of the Chahar Provincial People's Government and Director of the Department of Finance, Director of the Finance Department of the Second and First Ministry of Machinery Industry, Director of the Third Ministry of Machinery Industry, and Director and Deputy Minister of the Industrial Transportation Finance Department of the Ministry of Finance. Zhou Enlai ordered his arrest on February 17, 1967 for mistakes he made in factional struggles in the Ministry.

On the 18th, Premier Zhou and Li Xiannian received all the cadres above the level of directorate and bureau of the various ministries and bureaus of the finance and trade system, and delivered a speech.

The immediate consequence of Premier Zhou's treatment and attitude was the rapid collapse of the rebel group in the Ministry of Finance, the seizure of power in the Ministry and the accusations and criticisms against the head of the rebel group and Du Xiangguang and others. All this was quickly reflected to the Central Cultural Revolution. Jiang Qing saw the report and said to us: "This involves Premier Zhou, so don't talk nonsense, I will report to the Chairman."

Chairman Mao should have heard Jiang Qing's report and seen Tan Zhenlin's letter to Lin Biao. In the early morning of 19 February 1967, Chairman Mao chaired a meeting of the Central Political Bureau, which was attended by Zhou Enlai, Ye Qun (on behalf of Lin Biao), Chen Boda, Kang Sheng, Li Fuchun, Chen Yi, Ye Jianying, Nie Rongzhen, Xu Qianqiang, Tan Zhenlin, Xie Fuzhi, Li Xiannian and others.

At this meeting, Chairman Mao severely criticised Chen Yi and Tan Zhenlin and was furious. According to Kang Sheng, he had rarely seen Chairman Mao so indignant. The Chairman said:

The Central Cultural Revolution Group implements the spirit of the 11th Plenary Session. Errors are one, two or three percent, and ninety-seven percent are correct. Whoever opposes the Central Cultural Revolution, I will insist on opposing! You want to deny the Cultural Revolution, you can't do it! Comrade Ye Qun, tell Lin Biao that his position is not secure either, and that some people want to take away his power. If you say that Jiang Qing and Chen Boda are no good, then let Chen Yi be the head of the Central Cultural Revolution Group and Tan Zhenlin be the deputy head. Arrest and shoot Chen Boda and Jiang Qing! Let Kang Sheng be sent to the army! I'll step down too. You should invite Wang Ming back as chairman! If that's not enough, why don't you invite the United States and the Soviet Union to join you? If Chen Yi wants to overturn the Yan'an Rectification, the whole Party won't agree! You, Tan Zhenlin, are also an old Party member, why are you speaking from the bourgeois line?

Zhou Enlai consoled the Chairman and asked him not to be angry. The Chairman also proposed to convene a meeting of the Politburo to discuss the Huarentang incident, so as to clarify right and wrong. If the matter could not be resolved, a congress would be convened to mobilise the whole Party to discuss it.

The Central Politburo agreed to the Chairman's proposal, and from 25 February to 18 March 1967, the Central Politburo held seven consecutive meetings to criticise Chen Yi and Tan Zhenlin, and members of the Central Cultural Revolution Group were present at this meeting. During the criticism meetings, the incident at the Huaren Hall was called the "February Countercurrent".

On 28 February 1967 Chen Boda sent the Chairman a copy of the "Express" from the small station in Tianjin opposing the Cultural Revolution movement, and the Chairman approved: "This phenomenon of counter-revolutionary resurgence from top to bottom deserves attention."

After the Lin Biao escape on September 13, 1971, the "February Countercurrent" was re-evaluated. The Chronology of Mao Zedong, published by the Literature Research Office of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China, records a speech by Chairman Mao on 14 November 1971: "After the talk began, Ye Jianying arrived at the meeting and Mao Zedong said, "Don't talk about this 'February Countercurrent' any more. What is the nature of the 'February Countercurrent'? They were dealing with Lin Biao, Chen Boda, Wang Li, Guan Feng and Qi Benyu. 'Wang,

Guan and Qi' wanted to overthrow everything, including the Premier and the senior marshals. The old marshals were angry and complained. They were at a party meeting, in public, making a big fuss about Huarentang!" This passage, however, is not found in Mao Zedong's Collected Works or Mao Zedong's Manuscripts Since the Founding of the State, and was conveyed by Ye Jianying. Whether his transmission is accurate or not is yet to be checked. Even if it is true, I believe that the Chairman said this after the Lin Biao incident in order to ease the conflicts within the Party. Chen Yi, Tan Zhenlin and Ye Jianying did not oppose Lin Biao at all. From Tan Zhenlin's letter to Lin Biao, he still wanted to bring Lin Biao and them together to oppose Jiang Qing, so how could he say that they were against Lin Biao? And when did "Wang, Guan and Qi" say to whom they wanted to "bring down everything", even the Premier and the old Marshals? The immediate cause of the "February Countercurrent" was Chairman Mao's personal support and leadership of the "January Revolution" in Shanghai. Chairman Mao himself knew that!

In fact, Chairman Mao was always going to protect Tan Zhenlin and the others. Jiang Qing asked me to go to the masses to do work. At that time, I also overcame all kinds of obstacles and went to the departments of agriculture and forestry to speak to the rebels and to speak for Tan Zhenlin. In my speech, I particularly emphasized Tan Zhenlin's opposition to the "household contract responsibility system" in 1962. Even Tan Zhenlin himself approved of my speech.

In early 1967, the departments of finance and trade also proposed to overthrow Li Xiannian. The Premier told me that Li Xiannian could not be overthrown. On January 15, I met with the head of the rebel faction of the Central Academy of Finance and Economics and told them that Li Xiannian was a person whom Chairman Mao wanted to unite and could not be overthrown. The Premier said he told the Red Guards that they could criticise Chen Yun, a man who had always been right-leaning. He was the most active in advocating the "household contract responsibility system" during the difficult period. He was actually Deng Zihui's backstage hand. He was a small farmer, and he actually put forward the idea of the "household contract responsibility system" earlier than Liu Shaoqi. In early 1967, Wu Bo, Yao Yilin and others from the State Council's Finance and Trade Department were the first to write big-character posters and materials criticising Chen Yun. Chen Yun's secretary, Zhou Taihe, and some other deputy ministers took out all their work notes at the time and handed them over to the rebels in the Finance and Trade Department to collate Chen Yun's materials and organise criticism. So, it was the Premier who first raised the criticism of Chen Yun within the Party during the Cultural Revolution movement, from the decision to the specific arrangements.

After criticizing the "February Countercurrent", the Premier also wanted to protect Li Xiannian. I told the Premier, let Li Xiannian first make a high profile review, and we will go to the students to work for him. The rebel faction of the Finance College, according to the materials provided by the Central Organization Department and written by Zheng Weisan and Chen Shaomin, said that Li Xiannian also supported a "46" decision when he broke out of the Central Plains, saying that if he was scattered and captured by the enemy, the soldiers could surrender as prisoners and the party members could also surrender in order to preserve the revolutionary force. The students considered this decision to be an act of betrayal, just as Liu Shaoqi had instructed Bo Yibo and others to post "anti-Communist notices" to surrender themselves from prison. Chairman Mao disagreed with the students' view of Li Xiannian and defended him. The Premier, of course, also defended Li Xiannian. In order to gain the understanding of the students, Li Xiannian wrote a review, admitting his mistake about the bourgeois reactionary line and the "February Countercurrent", and asked his secretary Jiang to send it to me so that I could revise it for him. When his secretary sent it, the paste on the envelope was not even dry yet. But after the Cultural Revolution, Li Xiannian said, that boy Qi Benyu, arrogant as hell, even forced me to do a review, but I pushed back against him with a single sentence. Li

Xiannian's secretary's wife was called Chen Huijun, and she and my wife were good friends. She later told people about these incidents. I think Li Xiannian was very untruthful in this regard.

## Chapter 21: The Tragic Case of the Qinghai Military Region's Shooting and Suppression of the Revolutionary Masses

1. The Strange Way the Central Military Commission's "Eight Orders" Were Communicated
2. The "2.23" Massacre in Qinghai

### 1. The Strange Way the Central Military Commission's "Eight Orders" Were Communicated

In fact, the "February Countercurrent" was by no means an isolated incident such as the "Great Trouble at Huarentang". It was closely linked to the use of the army to suppress the rebels in many places.

The Eight Orders of the Central Military Commission approved by Chairman Mao were intended to stabilise the army. But some people used it as an "imperial sword" to suppress the rebels. Originally, Chairman Mao had rewritten the fifth article of the "Eight Articles of the Military Commission" to read: "In the future, the rightist onslaught should be resisted, while the leftist onslaught should be welcomed". When it was issued, Chairman Mao changed it to read: "With regard to attacks on the leading organs of the military, they should be treated separately. In the past, if a counter-revolutionary onslaught was made, it had to be pursued, but if a leftist onslaught was made, it could be left alone. In future, no onslaughts will be allowed."

I heard reports at the time that when the Eight Orders were communicated, they were deliberately made very secretive and only allowed to be read, not recorded. Moreover, when they were read, they hid the heads and exposed the tails<sup>372</sup>. However, I never found any evidence of this, so I could not report it to the Chairman. It was not until a few years ago that I read a memoir written by a man in Jiangxi province about how the leaders of the Jiangxi Military Region were called by Ye Jianying to the Beijing West Hotel to listen to the transmission of the "Eight Orders", which was exactly the same as what I heard back then.

What followed was the arrest of a large number of rebel leaders in many places by the army. In some places there were also incidents of the army shooting at the masses. In some places, such as Sichuan, the Chengdu Military Region began a province-wide "crackdown on counter-revolution" on 17 February, which was openly called the "February crackdown". Even in Shanghai, the birthplace of the January Revolution, the army was involved in arresting the leaders of the rebellion in various districts and counties. In Hunan province, after Chen Boda's erroneous "February 4" instruction, there was the "Xiangjiang Wind and Thunder" incident in which the Hunan military suppressed a rebel group.

However, the most horrifying incident was the "2.23 tragedy" in Xining, Qinghai, when Zhao Yongfu's faction of the provincial military district sent troops to surround and shoot down the revolutionary masses at the Qinghai Daily.

### 2. The "223" Massacre in Qinghai

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<sup>372</sup> To expose the tail and hide the head is a Chinese idiom describing evasive speech, not telling all the truth.

On 23 February 1967, in Xining, the capital of Qinghai Province, the army opened fire on the rebellious masses. In this incident, 347 people were shot dead on the spot by the army, the youngest of whom was only 14 years old and a secondary school student. Immediately after the tragedy, the Qinghai Military Region declared the "August 18" rebel group in Qinghai Province a counter-revolutionary organisation. A total of 13,414 people were arrested, 5,968 people had their homes raided and 4,279 people were put into forced labour. According to incomplete statistics, 17,293 people were severely beaten.

Our Cultural Revolution Group began with a report from the Central Military Commission from Zhao Yongfu<sup>373</sup>, the deputy commander of the Qinghai military region, who was the mastermind of the incident. In his report, he said that the rebels in Qinghai had organised the "August 18" attack on the military and that the troops had been forced to fight back.

But soon, letters of complaint from the masses flew to us like snowflakes. Some Red Guards from Beijing who had escaped from Qinghai, and parents of students who had been killed in the incident, came to the Central Cultural Revolution Group to complain and petition. Some of the letters were written in the blood of the deceased, while some parents cried out that their children had died after going to Qinghai.

I felt that the problem was serious and went to Guan Feng to discuss it. Guan Feng also learned about the tragedy from the letter from the Red Guards. We both analysed that Zhao Yongfu, the deputy commander of the Qinghai Military Region, was in charge of this tragedy, but how did Zhao Yongfu have the audacity to shoot at the masses? Guan Feng said: Zhao Yongfu himself claimed that they had been praised by Vice President Lin for shooting at the rebels. If it was really General Lin who made the statement, then Chairman Mao would have known about it because it was such a big deal that General Lin must have reported to the Chairman; but if it was Marshal Ye who made the statement, then General Lin would not necessarily know about it, and neither would the Chairman. Perhaps he would have gone to report to the Premier. It was too big for us in the Cultural Revolution Group to solve, so we had to ask for Shangfang's sword<sup>374</sup>. So, we decided to write a report to the Chairman. I drafted the report, and Guan Feng added a few sentences, which were simple, to the effect that "Many people died in Xining, Qinghai, and it is understood that it was the PLA who shot at the bare-handed students, which seems inappropriate, for fear of causing a chain reaction. We would like to investigate whether this is possible, and would like to seek the Chairman's approval". The report was originally signed by Guan Feng and me, but I felt that we alone were not strong enough, so I approached Chen Boda, Zhang Chunqiao and Yao Wenyuan, informed them of the situation and asked them to sign the report together as well. After the report was printed, it was handed over to Jiang Qing, who forwarded it to the Chairman.

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<sup>373</sup> Zhao Yongfu, (1915-1987), joined the Eighth Route Army in December 1937 and joined the Communist Party of China in December 1938. Served as platoon commander, company commander, deputy battalion commander, regiment commander, deputy division commander, and tank base commander. Participated in the battles of Huaiyang and Jinzhou. In May 1966, he served as deputy commander of the Qinghai Military Region. In 1967, he was imprisoned for the "2.23" incident in Qinghai. After he was released, he served as a consultant for the armoured forces of the Beijing Military Region.

<sup>374</sup> The Sword of Shangfang refers to the sword used by the ancient Chinese emperors. Shangfang made swords that could only be used by the royal family, so this kind of sword was given imperial power and privileges from the very beginning. The idiom quoted by Qi Benyu is a metaphor for the power granted by superiors.

On March 11, Chairman Mao approved our report: "It can be investigated. If the students shot first, there is not much of a problem. If not, then it is worth looking into."

The key to this instruction from the Chairman was to investigate whether the students had guns; if the students had guns and they had shot the army first, it would be a different story.

In accordance with Chairman Mao's instructions, we held four investigation meetings. The first was on the evening of 13 March, when Guan Feng and I asked the Red Guards who had fled to Beijing about the situation. The Red Guards who were investigated were those who were present at the Qinghai Daily and they gave a very specific account of what had happened. The second time was on the evening of 21 March, attended by Chen Boda, Kang Sheng, Wang Li, Guan Feng, me and Xiao Hua, and the targets of the investigation were still the Red Guards who had escaped from Qinghai. The focus of this investigation meeting was mainly on the question of whether the students had guns or not and whether they had fired. The results of the two investigations were that the students did not have guns at all, let alone shot at the troops. Guan Feng and I gave a detailed report on the investigation to Premier and Jiang Qing. They listened very carefully.

The third investigation was conducted on the evening of 23 March, and was chaired by the Premier himself, with the participation of Jiang Qing. The targets of the investigation were: representatives of the Qinghai "8-18", the liaison station of the three departments of the capital in Qinghai, the "Eastern Red" of the local academy, the "Red Flag Battle Group" of Beihang, and the "Red Flag Rebel Group" of Red Guards from outside who had gone to Xining. Before the investigation meeting was over, the Premier pushed over to me the report he had written to the Chairman, which said, "It seems that there is something wrong with the shooting, so I will report the details later." It was signed below: Zhou Enlai. After the investigation meeting, the Premier left Kang Sheng, Jiang Qing, Ye Qun and the members of the Cultural Revolution Group to discuss how to report to the Chairman and Lin Biao. In fact, the Premier had already double-checked that Zhao Yongfu had organised a search for the guns of the "August 18" group. Surprisingly, not even a single gun was found. The Premier sighed and said, "The Boxers still had a few bird guns, but these poor babies are worse off than the Boxers, so why shoot at them?"

After these three investigations, it could be determined that the workers and students were unarmed and had no guns at all, so the question of who shot first was clear. The workers and students did not even have guns, so how could they shoot? The Premier said that the workers and students had no guns at all, and Zhao Yongfu had searched for days and nights without finding a single gun. The workers and students had not killed anyone, and it was Zhao Yongfu who shot and killed. He then lied about military intelligence and forged a reply from General Lin to deceive everyone. Kang Sheng interjected that Zhao Yongfu had detained commander Liu Xianquan in Qinghai on his own and mobilized field units to shoot and kill people without permission. This is usurping the party and the army, he is an ambitious man! Then Kang Sheng talked about Zhao Yongfu's participation in the Guomindang army. It was unbelievable for everyone to hear this. At this point Ye Qun said, "Generalissimo Lin and our Lin Office have never received any phone calls from Zhao Yongfu, nor have they returned any calls at all. Oh Premier, you must make it clear to the Chairman." The Premier agreed and said he would report to the Chairman in the afternoon.

The fourth investigation was conducted on the night of 24 March from 1.30 pm until the early hours of 25 am. Jiang Qing and Ye Qun came to participate, as did Ye Jianying and Yang Chengwu, and the moderator was still the Premier. In addition to those who had attended three times, Liu Xianquan,

Zhang Jianglin, Yang Zhilin, Gao Keiting, Zhao Yongfu, Wang Zhao, Zhang Xiaochuan and Zhang Hong also came from Qinghai. This time, the Premier asked Zhao Yongfu one question after another in front of everyone. Zhao Yongfu began by stonewalling from side to side, blinking his words in an attempt to cover up for himself and others. But when pressed by the Premier, he soon stammered and sweated profusely, and ended up with a lot of inconsistencies and loopholes.

When asked about it, Zhao Yongfu said that he had consulted Vice President Lin on the matter, who said, "You did the right thing! Well done!". Ye Qun stood up and said, "Those words were never spoken by Vice Chairman Lin. Lin Biao called Marshal Ye and questioned him, and Marshal Ye himself admitted that Zhao Yongfu had telephoned him." But when the Premier questioned Zhao Yongfu, Ye Jianying, who was also present, sat there without uttering a word. At this point, the Premier announced on the spot: arrest Zhao Yongfu. The PLA went up and tore off Zhao Yongfu's lapel pin and cap badge and took him into custody. Ye Jianying had been attending the Central Committee's meetings, but after this incident, the Premier stopped allowing him to attend them.

However, after the death of the Chairman and Premier, Ye Jianying supported Hua Guofeng in arresting Jiang Qing, and immediately afterwards he overturned the "Qinghai 2.23 tragedy" by personally ordering the release of Zhao Yongfu. Some people said that this was an ironclad case decided by Chairman Mao and Premier Zhou themselves, how could it be overturned? But by this time, no one could control him. During the execution, the commander of the Lanzhou Military Region, Xian Henghan, demanded a written document from the Central Military Commission before he would carry out the order. Ye Jianying was furious and later set up the "Sin ( Xian Henghan ) and Liu ( Liu Xianquan ) anti-Party group" and removed both Xian Henghan and Liu Xianquan. But I still think that, even today, whatever your attitude towards the Cultural Revolution and whatever reasons you may have for the massacre of "2.23" in Qinghai, it is a serious crime for the army to shoot at the unarmed masses and kill so many people, and history will never forgive its main culprit, Zhao Yongfu. Some people who sang about the protection of human rights after the Cultural Revolution were in fact only trying to protect their own human rights, but not the lives and human rights of the civilian population.

## Chapter 22: The Army and the Cultural Revolution

1. The Rebels in the Army
2. My encounters with the old marshals during the Cultural Revolution
3. My dealings with Su Yu, Xie Fuji, Xu Shiyou, Han Xianchu, Yang Chengwu and Wu Faxian during the Cultural Revolution.

### 1. The Rebels in the Army

Although Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping were political commissars of the New Fourth Army and the Second Field respectively, they rarely commanded battles and did not have deep roots in the army. Therefore, the army supported the criticism of Liu and Deng at the 11th Plenary Session of the 8th Central Committee. At that time, the main leaders of the army, including some veteran marshals and generals, were very active and had a good relationship with the Central Cultural Revolution Group. When the Central Cultural Revolution Group wanted to set up the Express Group, Wu Faxian transferred some excellent cadres from the Air Force to us. At that time, the Central Cultural Revolution Group did not have many cars, and sometimes we had to ride bicycles when we went out to do our work. When Qiu Huizuo found out about this, he transferred a few cars from the General Logistics Department to us. One of the drivers told me, "I have been appointed by our chief to drive for you". This driver was so good that once he drove me to the airport, and on the way, he used his skilful skills to avoid a car accident that seemed simply unavoidable.

But from the time the criticism of the capitalist and anti-capitalist line was carried out in the army organs and colleges, the contradictions between the army and the Central Cultural Revolution Group began to sharpen. The contradictions within the army were already very complicated. At that time, some leaders in the army were engaging in privileges, even more so than at the local level. As the army was managed to obey orders and listen to commands, some cadres were also very domineering. These situations were reported to the Central Cultural Revolution Group from the very beginning of the movement. The people who came to report the situation were not the soldiers and the masses at the bottom, but mostly the antagonists from the same level in the army. Almost every level of leadership had its own antagonists, even a few old masters. This situation is often linked to the long-established "hilltopism" in the army, which makes the situation even more complicated.

According to the "Sixteen Articles", the Cultural Revolution of the army was conducted under the unified leadership of the army-wide Cultural Revolution Group. The soldiers in the companies were all in possession of weapons, and if they also rose up to "rebel", it would easily turn into a "mutiny". However, the students of the military academy proposed that they were also students at school, so they also wanted to take part in the Cultural Revolution movement, to meet Chairman Mao in Beijing, and to make a big movement to rebel against the revisionists. This was later approved by the Central Committee and the Central Military Commission. But Chairman Mao did not approve of them setting up the Red Guards, because they were already guards themselves.

There is military discipline in the army, and some of the cadets who rose up in rebellion in the first place were subjected to "military discipline" for violating the rule that the sub-military units should not engage in the "Big Four" freedoms. They thought that this was also an implementation of the

"bourgeois reactionary line". So, in October 1966, students from military schools surrounded the Ministry of National Defence. Originally this was to be dealt with by the army-wide Cultural Revolution Group. However, Liu Zhijian had already been accused by Chen Yading and his group of having carried out the "bourgeois reactionary line" in the General Administration, so he was opposed by the rebellious students. Xie Bengzhong was too honest, and no one would listen to him when he spoke to them. At this time, Ye Qun came to Jiang Qing and asked the Central Cultural Revolution Group to send someone to speak and persuade the students to go back. The students immediately withdrew from the siege and retreated.

In fact, there is a big difference between the troop rebels and the local rebels. The local rebels opposed Liu Shaoqi, Deng Xiaoping and the leaders of the Party committees at all levels who carried out Liu's and Deng's capitalist-roader and bourgeois reactionary lines; whereas the army rebels opposed their commanders and political commissars, who were mostly opposed to Liu and Deng and supported Chairman Mao. People like Wu Faxian and Qiu Huizuo were people whom Chairman Mao and Lin Biao trusted greatly. Later, those who came out to protect these chiefs formed the "Proletarian Revolutionary Faction of the Three Armies", known as the "Old Three Armies", while the rebels in the army organs and institutions who criticised and opposed their leadership were known as the "New Three Armies". According to the understanding at that time, the "Old Three Armies" were generally regarded as conservative organisations and the "New Three Armies" as rebel organisations. In theory, Chairman Mao supported the rebellion of the masses, and we in the Central Cultural Revolution Group should have supported the rebel groups, but the actual situation was much more complicated, and I generally did not intervene in the affairs of the army.

There was a girl called Liu Suyuan in the Air Force Cultural Troupe who became a conservative because she supported Wu Faxian. She was beaten up by the rebels, and the rebels wanted to exclude her from the troupe. Although she was small, she was very clever. She used to come to dances held in Zhongnanhai and danced with Chairman Mao. It may be that the Chairman had told her that if she learned anything about what was going on down there, she could come and talk to him directly. Around April 1967, she asked to see the Chairman through his secretary Xu Yefu. She said that she had something very important to report to the Chairman, and the Chairman told Xu Yefu to inform her to come. When Liu Suyuan met the Chairman, she cried and cried, telling him how the "rebels" were trying to break her and how they wanted to bring down Wu Faxian, and so on. She also said that Wu Faxian had to seek instructions and reports from the "rebel faction" for all his actions. "When I came to the Chairman, I also had to ask them for instructions". On hearing this, the Chairman said, "How has Wu Faxian become a capitalist-roader? If he had mistakes and shortcomings, he could be criticised and even bombarded, but he could not be overthrown." The Chairman approached Ye Qun and asked her what was going on, how come the heads of the three armies were now under the rebels' control? How could the "rebels" have so much power? The Chairman also asked Ye Qun to find out who was right and who was wrong, but the Chairman said that no matter who was right and who was wrong, the troops should be allowed to work normally. Wu Faxian was the commander and he had his own authority. He did not need to ask the "rebels" for permission to go in and out, but could only ask General Lin and me for permission.

Wu Faxian was a man who was later described as a "straw man commander", but that was a big mistake. He was a southerner and had a clear tongue. He used to tell jokes to Jiang Qing, who was very happy to see him. In his memoirs, Wu Faxian wrote that he and Jiang Qing were at odds, but that was an exaggeration, and he did not write about the other side of the story, which was his ingratiation with Jiang Qing, and in some cases, it was pure fabrication.

When Chairman Mao said this, the old Third Army faction was happy. Of course, the New Third Army was still powerful at that time, with many commanders and political commissars behind it, and on 25 May 1967, the 25th anniversary of Chairman Mao's "Speech at the Yan'an Forum on Literature and Art", the army's literary and art units wanted to hold a commemorative performance. This led to a dispute between the two factions over the venue of the performance, which was in fact a dispute over the dominance of the Cultural Revolution movement in the army. According to the wishes of the Premier and the Central Cultural Revolution, the "New Three Armies" and the "Old Three Armies" were to perform together on this day. However, the "New Three Armies" did not want the "Old Three Armies" to participate in the performance. So, the "Old Three Armies" had to perform alone at the Beijing Exhibition Hall. But when the "Old Three Armies" wanted to perform, the "New Three Armies" organised people to storm them. The Premier said to them, "You must unite and perform together, or I won't go to the show. But the "New Three Armies" still refused. At this time, Ye Qun came to Jiang Qing for help again, and Jiang Qing asked me and Guan Feng to go. Before leaving, she took special care of us. "After you go, don't talk about it one-sidedly. You must emphasize unity and cooperation, and that they can't fight by force. Tell them that if they use force again, the entire army will be arrested during the Cultural Revolution." So Guan Feng and I went to see a rehearsal of "The Old Three Armies". The performance of the "Old Three Armies" was quite good, they sang the lyrics of the Long March group song written by Xiao Hua. As soon as I entered that environment, I was infected and felt that the performance of the "Old Three Armies" was very good and that it was wrong for the "New Three Armies" not to let them perform. After the performance, the "Old Three Armies" applauded and asked us to go up and speak, but Guan Feng was reluctant to do so. He told me that he didn't understand the situation at all, but that he would go with me and I could talk because I understood the situation a bit. In fact, Guan Feng had told me before that army things were very complicated, and not to go to speak, that we couldn't figure it out, and shouldn't get caught up in it, that if we got caught up in it, we couldn't get out of it. Now that he had pushed it so far, then I had to speak. I spoke exactly as Premier and Jiang Qing wanted, asking them (the new and old armies) to unite, to unite as revolutionary comrades and to put on a joint performance. However, when they published it in the tabloids later, they only said that Qi Benyu supported the performance of the "Old Three Armies", but my words about unity and joint performance were not included.

The "New Three Armies" were very stubborn, they just didn't agree to the joint performance, and they made it clear that if the "Old Three Armies" wanted to perform alone, then they would go and storm them, so that they couldn't perform. Xiao Hua actually supported the army rebels and the "New Three Armies". He was the director of the General Administration, and he had a say in the performance. But after such a situation came out, he was caught in the middle of the two factions and could not do anything. He wanted the "Old Three Armies" to cancel the performance. But when Lin Biao found out about it, he asked Ye Qun to tell the "Old Three Armies" that the show should go on and not be cancelled. Xiao Hua and Lin Biao had a good relationship and Lin Biao was also the deputy commander. With Lin Biao's support, the "Old Three Armies" performed on 13 May as planned. As a result, the "New Three Armies" went to storm the performance. At the performance, there was an armed fight between the two sides, and people were injured on both sides. The "Old Three Armies" were prepared to be attacked by the "New Three Armies". When this incident came out, the conflict between the two factions within the army became open and intensified.

The Premier criticised both sides on 14 May 1967, but the "Old Three Armies" were unhappy with the Premier's 50 strokes each. At this time, Lin Biao openly supported the "Old Three Armies". On the day of the official performance on 23 May, both Lin Biao and Ye Qun went to see it and sent

troops to defend it. When Lin Biao was so determined to support the "Old Three Armies", Jiang Qing had no choice but to change her attitude and align herself with Lin Biao, asking the Central Cultural Revolution Group to follow suit and support the "Old Three Armies". Many leaders of the Central Committee, including the Premier, attended the performance, and many people from the Central Cultural Revolution also attended, but Jiang Qing did not attend. This was a sign of the Central Government's support for the "Old Three Armies". After that, the "Old Three Armies" not only performed regularly themselves, but also excluded the "New Three Armies" from participating in the performance. From then on, many members of the New Third Army began to be disciplined and their rebel groups collapsed. Since then, Lin Biao had stabilised the various headquarters in Beijing and the "Old Three Armies" had become an important force in the Cultural Revolution movement.

The PLA's General Logistics Department had the largest number of army colleges and universities, so the largest concentration of students rebelled there. The earliest rebellion was the "Red Rebel Column" of the Second Military Medical University in Shanghai, in which Tao Zhu's daughter was also a member. I remember that once, on the Tiananmen Tower, someone complained to Tao Zhu in person, saying what is your daughter doing. Tao Zhu only smiled and said there was nothing he could do. The first thing you can do is to go to Zeng Zhi, and she will listen to her. The "Red Column" of the Second Military University took the lead in storming and occupying the compound of the General Logistics Department and wanted to arrest Qiu Huizuo<sup>375</sup>. In fact, both Chairman Mao and the Premier had a very good impression of Qiu Huizuo. At the beginning of the Cultural Revolution, the Chairman wrote the "May 7 Instructions" based on the report of the General Secretariat. Qiu Huizuo was indeed very capable, and the Premier was right when he said that he was the best Minister of General Logistics. He was also one of Lin Biao's top generals. However, he was usually very strict with his subordinates and his style was rather rough. So many people had a problem with him. In addition, he and Xiao Hua were known as "flower generals" at that time, so when the Cultural Revolution movement came, the people underneath him rose up to fight against him. The rebels made a lot of material about him. At first, he hid in the military headquarters in Xishan, and after Xu Qianqiang became the head of the army's Cultural Revolution group, he asked him to come down to meet the masses. Marshal Xu said, "How can a general of the PLA be afraid of the?" In fact, it is was not wrong for Marshal Xu to do so. The problem was that once the rebellious masses heard how domineering Qiu Huizuo usually was and how he screwed the female soldiers, they became angry and beat him up. Qiu Huizuo wrote a note to Lin Biao, asking him to save him. Lin Biao asked Ye Qun to take the note written by Qiu Huizuo and come to Jiang Qing. When Ye Qun came, I was there. Ye Qun said that Qiu Huizuo was a very good comrade, but one thing was not good about him, he was a "flowery lord"<sup>376</sup>. Jiang Qing immediately asked Chen Boda to write a warrant for Ye Qun, who took the warrant and rescued Qiu Huizuo. However, Qiu Huizuo later put all his hatred on the Central Cultural Revolution Group and Jiang Qing. In their view, the Central Cultural Revolution Group was

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<sup>375</sup> Qiu Huizuo (1914-2002) joined the local armed forces in Xingguo County and was soon incorporated into the 25th Regiment of the 9th Division of the Third Army of the Chinese Workers and Peasants Red Army as a messenger and propaganda officer. In November 1930, he joined the Chinese Communist Youth League. In April 1932, he became a member of the Communist Party of China. Was awarded the rank of lieutenant general in 1955. In July 1968, he served as deputy chief of staff and head of the General Logistics Department. During the Cultural Revolution, he participated in Lin Biao's conspiracy to usurp the supreme power of the party and the country. He was expelled from the party in 1973 and removed all positions inside and outside the party. On January 25, 1981, he was sentenced to 16 years in prison and deprived of political rights for 5 years.

<sup>376</sup> This is a translation of a four-character Chinese idiom which means officials and local tyrants who are gorgeously dressed, not doing business, and only focusing on eating, drinking, and having fun.

the general headquarters of the rebels, and those who beat him up were all under the orders of Jiang Qing. In fact, this was not the case. To be honest, at that time, we could not even avoid the military Cultural Revolution. After I was criticised by the Chairman for my speech at the 11th Plenary Session of the 8th Central Committee, I was always very cautious about the army and never wanted to say much. After the Cultural Revolution, Ye Jianying, Deng Xiaoping and the others falsely accused Jiang Qing of colluding with Lin Biao to mess up and bring down the army. If Jiang Qing really had the heart and ability to do so, the Cultural Revolution would not have developed and ended the way it did.

In fact, the situation of the troops at that time was very complicated and it could never be said clearly whether one supported the rebels or the conservatives. In fact, there were some big figures behind both factions who were fighting there. Xiao Hua originally supported the rebel faction, but later, after seeing Lin Biao's attitude, he went back to support the conservative faction. So it caused both factions to have a strong opinion of him. In the end, even Ye Qun scolded Xiao Hua. The Chairman had to come out and say that he would personally bail Xiao Hua out. Nie Rongzhen took Xiao Hua to his own home in order to let him escape the criticism he was receiving from the masses. But Xiao Hua raped the waitress in Marshal Nie's house and Marshal Nie was so angry that threw his luggage out the door. This matter was said by Marshal Nie himself at a meeting. Therefore, the Chairman said that Xiao Hua was really a son of heaven who could not be supported - a Liu Adou. However, on one occasion Ye Qun came to say that during the criticism of Xiao Hua, the crowd told Xiao Hua to crawl on the ground. And Xiao Hua, fearing a beating, literally crawled on the ground. When Chairman Mao found out about this, he was exceptionally shocked. He said, "If you have made mistakes, just correct them. How can you crawl on the ground? You can't crawl on the ground even if you are beaten to death! How can you command the army in future?" For this reason, the Chairman personally ordered that no one would be allowed to make the general crawl on the ground in future. Anyone who did so was fighting with force and had to be dealt with.

## **2. My encounters with the old marshals during the Cultural Revolution**

At that time, Lin Biao was a great hero in my mind. Not only had he fought well in battles in the past, but I had heard him speak several times since the founding of the country, and they were all crucial words at critical moments in the development of history. You see, he usually seemed to ignore things, but when he had to step in to take charge, it was often earth-shattering.

The report he gave at the Politburo meeting on 18 May 1966 was compiled with my help. Lin Biao's secretary, Zhang Yunsheng, wrote in his memoirs that Lin Biao felt satisfied after reading it. He told Zhang Yunsheng that in future, he would take anything important they wrote there to Qi Benyu. Ye Qun also told me many times that General Lin appreciated your talent and asked you to come and visit his home sometime. But I accepted the lesson that Tian Jiaying had made a mistake and could not go. On one occasion, I told the Chairman that Ye Qun had invited me to her home several times, and I did not want to go, but I was afraid she would misunderstand. At that time, the Chairman was reading something, and while he was reading it, he said to me, "We are not going, we are not going". So, I never once went to Maojiawan. For this reason, Ye Qun was still very critical of me.

Lin Biao had published two inscriptions in the newspaper, and after they were published, I returned the originals to Ye Qun. But Ye Qun said that General Lin had specifically explained that the originals should be left to Qi Benyu. Because I had studied the calligraphy and handwriting of the heads of the Central Government (as required for my work), I was able to distinguish the approvals of the heads.

Once, Ye Qun took a document approved by Lin Biao for me to organise and circulate, and as soon as I saw it, I said, "This is not written by Generalissimo Lin". Ye Qun said, "You are really good. The writing was indeed written by Generalissimo Lin's secretary, but it was approved by Generalissimo Lin. "After the September 13 Incident, I saw a photocopy of the handwriting he gave to Lin Liguó<sup>377</sup> in a central government document. It was probably written by Lin Liguó and the others in imitation of Lin Biao's handwriting.

It was a particularly hot summer in Beijing in 1967. Before the Chairman went to Wuhan, he lived in the Great Hall of the People. One day Ye Qun came to see me and Wang Li and Guan Feng, saying that General Lin wanted to see us. She then took us with her to Lin Biao's office in the Great Hall. Lin Biao was very happy to see us. He said that to make the Cultural Revolution work, we should try to minimise the negative things and not to fight by force, especially not by using guns to fight by force. He said, "You should not take things too easily. There are many, many people in the Party and in the military who oppose the Cultural Revolution. The difficulties you may encounter in the future are great and enormous. You must fully reckon on this. Now that the Chairman is alive and well, we are leaning on a big tree to take advantage of the coolness. When the Chairman is no longer here, our difficulties will come, and then we will have to rely on ourselves, and no one will be able to help us. We have to be prepared so that we can be free from problems." He asked us for some information and told us to come to him often. Guan Feng kept a special record of this conversation. I reported this talk to Jiang Qing, who said, "Lin is right! Later, Jiang Qing reported to the Chairman, and the Chairman replied that Lin Biao was still able to think about the problem. After the September 13 Incident, people said that Lin Biao was involved in Lin Liguó's "Project 571", but I never believed it. That "Project 571" was clearly the result of children playing games. Lin Biao was a military commander who could think, knew strategy and tactics, and had commanded thousands of troops. Could such a poor military plan be the work of an outstanding military commander?

Ye Qun had also told us that Lin Biao had his own set of ideas about how to get things right in China. She said that Lin Biao did not advocate a quick move towards communism. He believed that it would take a long time. He advocated first making the small peasant economy into a big peasant economy. He said that a future communist society would definitely be realised, but it would be something completely new, and we could not imagine what it would really look like now. Ye Qun said that Lin Biao thought very deeply.

However, I also discovered at that time that Lin Biao's "hilltopism" was actually quite strong. He seldom bothered about other people in the army who were under attack. However, he would not agree to anyone who wanted to mess with his men from the "Fourth Field Army".

I think, among all the old marshals, Xu Xiangqian was the most understanding and supportive of the Cultural Revolution launched by Chairman Mao. Originally, in our eyes, we thought he was the one who followed Zhang Guotao in making mistakes. But at the Politburo meeting where the May 16 Circular was discussed, Xu Xiangqian made a statement. He said that Chairman Mao's decision to launch the Cultural Revolution was of great significance. In our socialist country, we are afraid of revisionism in the central government, like the Soviet Union, which would be a problem. He also said that he had read the articles written by the junior generals and thought they were very well written. It is now time for us to learn from the junior generals. He added that to carry out the Cultural

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<sup>377</sup> The son of Lin Biao and Ye Qun, he organised the conspiratorial "Project 571" aiming to assassinate Mao Zedong and died in the plane crash in Mongolia with his parents.

Revolution was to rely on these junior generals, not just on the elderly. Old comrades have complicated relationships and a heavy historical burden. So, we have to rely more on the young people. I was amazed to hear what he had to say. I didn't expect an old marshal, who usually had little contact with the outside world, to have such a deep knowledge of the Cultural Revolution. I reported to Jiang Qing. Jiang Qing also found it surprising. Later, after Liu Zhijian was knocked down, it was Chairman Mao himself who nominated Xu Xiangqian to be the head of the army-wide Cultural Revolution Group. I always felt later that this decision of the Chairman was actually very meaningful. But unfortunately, we did not realize this very well at that time and did not support Xu Xiangqian very well. Xu Xiangqian also had opinions about the Central Cultural Revolution Group during the "February Countercurrent". However, he mainly complained that the Central Cultural Revolution Group did not support the work of the entire military Cultural Revolution Group enough. This was different from the attitude of Chen Yi and Ye Jianying who opposed the Central Cultural Revolution Group. After the "February Countercurrent", Xu Xiangqian asked the Chairman to resign from his post as the head of the Army-wide Cultural Revolution Group. The Chairman did not approve. But before that, the Chairman included him in the group of Chen Yi, Tan Zhenlin and Ye Jianying, so that they were criticized together, and Xu Xiangqian did not plead his case, but readily accepted. Ah! The way of yin and yang is extremely mysterious.

I did not have much contact with Nie Rongzhen, but I always had the feeling that the Chairman had some critical opinion of him. I don't know what the reason was. I only heard from Ye Zilong that in 1946, the Chairman told Nie Rongzhen to concentrate his forces and lay out a dangerous position to hit Fu Zuoyi hard, but he failed to carry out the Chairman's intention and was surprised to lose the battle. I also heard that in May 1948, Guomindang planes bombed the Chairman's residence in Fuping, Chengnanzhuang, and later found out that the cook who was on the ground guiding the Guomindang planes to their targets was a relative of Nie Rongzhen's wife. When Jiang Qing talked to me about this, she was still very angry, saying that the woman (referring to Nie Rongzhen's wife) had almost harmed the Chairman.

I didn't have much contact with He Long either, but I admired him for his two kitchen cleavers<sup>378</sup> that led to the uprising and the opening up of the revolutionary base. I remember once on the Tiananmen Rostrum he saw me and told me that someone was trying to assassinate me and Guan Feng by creating a car accident. He told us to be careful and both Guan Feng and I were very grateful to him. Later, when the Chairman wanted to receive him once, Ye Qun came over and said that He Long always carried a pistol on him and asked the Chairman to be careful. So, when He Long came, the guard soldier politely told He Long that there were now regulations and asked him to take out the pistol he was carrying and give it to them for safekeeping, and return it to him when he left. He Long then handed the pistol to the guard soldier with a smile, and I felt that he respected the Chairman. Later on, I heard Lin Biao say that he was a big bandit and a gangster, so I had a bad impression of him. Later on, I heard that he had negotiated with the Guomindang to surrender, but

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<sup>378</sup> The story of He Long and the two kitchen cleavers refers to the storming of a Salt Tax Bureau in Hunan Province on the night of 16 March 1916. The Salt Tax Bureau was equipped with a 12-man salt police force who each had a gun. He Long led 20 volunteers to attack the gate of the bureau. Between them they only had two cleavers. They attacked and killed one policeman and the rest surrendered with their guns. With the guns, He Long set up the Sun Zhongshan Protection Army, followed Sun Yat-sen and embarked on the road to revolution. Mao Zedong gave this example to encourage the insurgents during the "Sanwan rectification" of September 29 to October 3, 1927, saying: "He Long started with two kitchen cleavers, and now he is the army commander and has raised an army. Now we have more than two cleavers, we already have two battalions of soldiers, are we still afraid of not being able to succeed?"

the Premier had denied this to the Chairman. But by then I already saw him as a member of Liu and Deng's command.

Before the March 22 incident in Qinghai, I had often met Ye Jianying at the meetings of the Central Committee. I always found his attitude towards the Cultural Revolution strange. At the beginning, he was very enthusiastic. After Luo Ruijing left, he took over as secretary-general of the Central Military Commission and was also the head of the "Capital Working Group". He was very active in the criticism of Peng, Luo, Lu and Yang and in the overthrow of Liu and Deng. However, he was always very antagonistic to the Central Cultural Revolution Group. Later I heard Zhu Chengzhao<sup>379</sup> tell someone that Ye Jianying once told him that we were not afraid of chaos or mass movements, but we were afraid of not having the right to lead the movement. After the Lin Biao incident, Ye Jianying kept describing himself as being against Lin Biao. In fact, at that time he tried in every possible way to get close to Lin Biao. It was just that Lin Biao was very wary of him.

### **3. My dealings with Su Yu, Xie Fuji, Xu Shiyou, Han Xianchu, Yang Chengwu and Wu Faxian during the Cultural Revolution.**

Among the marshals and generals of the army, apart from Lin Biao, the one I admire most is Su Yu. Before the Cultural Revolution, I had a seal made (printed) to show my admiration for him: "A former soldier under Marshal Su". Before the liberation of Shanghai, I helped comrades Fang Bokang and Dai Juemin to join Su Yu's army, and under the leadership of the underground party, I participated in military intelligence investigations, and the investigation materials were forwarded by the underground party to Su Yu's command in the Third Field. Later on, the Chairman asked Su Yu to attend a meeting of the Central Committee. I personally arranged a seat for him and poured tea for him whenever he came, but the Premier always asked him to deal with various disputes at the military academy and did not inform him much about attending the Central Committee meeting.

Xie Fuji and I were in regular contact at work. My first contact with him at work was to deal with the Tian Jiaying matter, and the Premier asked me to go to him. After I had gone to the Ministry of Public Security to talk to him about my work, he invited me to his home for dinner. When I arrived at his home, I couldn't help but feel saddened by the fact that such an old general with a distinguished war record had a home that was even more sparsely furnished than mine, which could be described as a home with four walls. He said that I was an honoured guest and that I should be treated well, but the food served was no different from that served in ordinary people's homes, except that a few extra dishes had been added, which was a far cry from the family banquets of Peng Zhen and others. I had a deep respect for him from the bottom of my heart.

Xie Fuzhi was the Minister of Public Security for a long time and was in control of the knife handle. But he was the most reluctant to engage in injustice, often laying out some difficult issues for me to help analyse. Once he talked to me about Yu Hualong, a famous minister of the Qing dynasty, who

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<sup>379</sup> Zhu Chengzhao was the first leader of the "Oriental Red Commune" in the early days of the Geology Institute, the first leader of the "Three Departments of the Capital", and a famous leader of the Red Guards in the early days of the rebellion in Beijing's universities and colleges. However, after the first half of 1967, he became confused and hesitant and lost his leadership role. He tried to flee to Hong Kong with Ye Jianying's daughter Ye Xiangzhen but the pair were intercepted by Zhou Enlai. He was imprisoned and in 1975 was sent to a labor reform farm in Hubei province as a counter-revolutionary. The capitalist-roaders reversed his case in June 1980. In the early 1990s he went into capitalist business in Shanghai and organised a private construction company, responsible for piling foundations. He is believed to have died in 2000.

had been writing papers at night and felt that the pen in his hand was a thousand pounds heavy. One click of the red pen and his head would be separated. Xie Fuzhi said that his pen was much heavier than Yu Hualong's, and that he did not know how many people's fates were at stake. Therefore, he was always very cautious and did not dare to be the least bit sloppy. In comparison, Luo Ruiqing was a little more subjective than him, and Luo Duanqing had a rather frosty relationship with many of the deputy ministers of the Ministry of Public Security. Of course even Xie Fuzhi could not avoid 100% of unjust cases, because some things were decided to be done by the Central Government, then he had no choice but to carry them out. Kang Sheng also confessed to us once that he had also handled unjust cases, executing some loyal party members, only to find out later that there was a mistake. He had to give generous pensions to the families to make up for it. Those were all things that happened under the harsh conditions of war.

Once I met Xu Shiyou on the Tiananmen Tower and when he saw me, he called me "Marshal Qi". When I heard this, I told him that he should not call me that. I talked to him about the Eastern and Western Regiments of the "Three Fields" during the Liberation War. He said, "Oh, you know about that too". I said, "I was a small member of the underground party in Shanghai at that time, and we were always concerned about what was happening on the front line. You were also a liberator from my hometown!" He asked me where I was from and I said, "Weihai". He was very happy to hear that and said that he had been to Weihai and that many heroes had come out of there.

Later, when he was attacked by the rebels, he told his wife Tian Pu to come to Beijing to find me. Tian Pu said that Xu Shiyou had told him to come to Jiang Qing, saying that if he could not see Jiang Qing, he would come to me, and no one else would do. When I found out, I went to ask the Chairman for instructions. I said, "Tian Pu is here and says she wants to see me. The Chairman said, "You should first ask someone to call her and ask her what's up". So I asked to have my secretary call her. My secretary told her that Comrade Benyu was in a meeting now and was very busy, so if there was anything, please ask her to say it over the phone and he would be responsible for relaying it. So Tian Pu said on the phone that there were now many people who wanted to mess with Xu Shiyou, and it was not the mass rebels underneath who were messing with him. Rather, it was a certain deputy political commissar or a certain deputy commander who wanted to mess with him. I reported all that the secretary had told me to the Chairman. When the Chairman went to Shanghai later, he had to summon Xu Shiyou to see him. But at that time Xu Shiyou was hiding in Dabie Mountain. The Chairman deliberately sent Zhang Chunqiao to invite him to Shanghai. But at first, Xu Shiyou didn't believe him, fearing that Zhang Chunqiao had tricked him into going down the mountain. Later, Zhang Chunqiao told me that he used his own stay as a hostage to him as a guarantee to make him believe. I said, "You are the deputy head of the Central Cultural Revolution, how degrading it is for you to say that". Zhang Chunqiao said, "Of course I said it very politely. He said he had a lot to do here and couldn't run". I said, "Well, I'll stay here and take care of things for you. I will call you at any time to discuss important matters, and you will go to see the Chairman alone." When I said that, he was convinced. So he came down the hill with me. Later he met the Chairman and the Chairman bailed him out. He was very happy and said he would get a leopard and give it to me." The Chairman made Zhang Chunqiao also the First Political Commissar of the Nanjing Military Region. Xu Shiyou was very happy. The Chairman had sent the person he trusted most around him to be his political commissar, so who else could oppose him.

Han Xianchu, commander of the Fujian Military Region, came to Beijing to solve the Fujian problem. Jiang Qing asked me to go to the Beijing-West Hotel to see him and hear what he had to say. When I arrived at the Beijing-West Hotel, they already knew I was going and several people, all generals,

were there to welcome me. Those people were incredibly clever. You say one sentence, he can understand you ten times. I told them that the leaders had asked me to come and see everyone and ask them what problems they wanted to solve. They immediately said, "Thank you, Comrade Jiang Qing, for taking care of us." They didn't mention either Chen Bodha or the Premier, so don't you think that's strange? But if you just listen to what they say, it's all the fault of the rebels and they are all aggrieved. In fact, I knew a lot about the situation and how they treated the rebels, whom they regarded as deviants.

Yang Chengwu was an army cadre who was very closely associated with the Cultural Revolution Group during the Cultural Revolution, so he and I had a lot of interaction. At that time, I always had a good impression of him; he was an old revolutionary, but he was always particularly polite when he came across me. He was the Acting Generalissimo and had very great power, and all the movements of the army were issued through him. Once he told me about Ye Jianying, and he said that Ye had never fought in a war and had always been a staff officer and intelligence worker, so he had few people in the army who listened to him. The troops were usually polite and courteous when they met, but they still listened to their old head at the critical moment.

Yang Chengwu's article, "The Absolute Authority of the Big Tree-Special Tree Mao Zedong's Thought"<sup>380</sup> was written by several experts from his army and was revised by Chen Boda for him. Yang Chengwu showed great eagerness to have the article published, and he came to me several times. He was very happy when the article was later published.

After the "February Backlash", Wu Faxian often came to attend the meetings of the Central Cultural Revolution. At first, he and Yang Chengwu had a good relationship. But later, for reasons unknown, he and Yang Chengwu had some disagreements. I saw material from the army that reflected his proud style and told him to pay attention to it. He said it was the result of collusion from the Air Force. I was reluctant to go deeper than that and get to the point. I remember that there was a period after October 1967 when Yang Chengwu did not come to the Cultural Revolution meetings for a long time because he was ill. Once, Wu Faxian came to the Central Cultural Revolution Office and asked me to go with him to visit Yang Chengwu at his home. I wanted to visit him because he had put in a good word for me in front of the Chairman during the last Wang and Guan issue. But again, my position restricted me from visiting just anyone in the army. Wu Faxian, however, made sure to stall me from going, forcefully pulling me into his car and having my car follow behind, so I went with him. When I arrived at the Yang residence and informed the secretary, Yang Chengwu heard that I had come to see him and enthusiastically called someone out to greet me. Perhaps he thought that Jiang Qing had asked me to visit him. In fact, Jiang Qing did not say that she wanted me to visit him at all. But when he heard that Wu Faxian had gone with me, he was a bit upset. He told

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<sup>380</sup> The expression "Big tree, special tree" is a Chinese idiom that refers to something written in letters of gold. On December 17, 1967, Mao wrote to Lin Biao and Zhou Enlai criticising the use of this phrase in Yang Chengwu's article, saying "The reference to absolute authority is inappropriate. There is no single absolute authority, all authority is relative, everything absolute exists only in something relative, just as absolute truth is the sum of countless relative truths, and absolute truth exists only in all relative truths." He added, quoting the phrase, "It is also inappropriate to say that there is a 'big tree and a special tree'. Authority or prestige can only be established naturally from the practice of struggle, not artificially.

his wife to accompany me to visit him in the upstairs bedroom of his house, while letting Wu Faxian sit with a bunch of visitors in the parlour. These were too many people, senior generals from the former North China Military Region. At this point, I understood Wu Faxian's intention as to why he had to drag me there. If he had gone alone, chances were that Yang Chengwu would have shown him a closed door.

This was the first time I felt that among the top brass of the army, despite appearing to be cordial on the surface, some people were actually very much at odds with each other. This was even the case among those on the top of the mountain. Yang Chengwu, who was also part of the First Army, was a trusted general of Lin Biao, but later got into trouble with another of Lin Biao's generals, Wu Fa Xian, who said that Yang Chengwu wanted to take away his power as Air Force Commander, when in fact the position of the Acting Chief was far greater than that of the Air Division, and there should be no basis in fact for saying that Yang Chengwu wanted to take away the power of the Air Division. The fact that the incident involving Yang, Yu and Fu was later revealed shows that Wu Fa Xian's side, including Lin Biao, Ye Qun and Lin Liguo, were trying to take over Yang Chengwu's power as Acting Chief.

## **Chapter 23: Before and after the publication of the article "Patriotism or National Betrayal?"**

1. An old story about the film "The Inside Story of the Qing Court"
  2. How the article was written
  3. Chairman Mao's revision and approval of the article
  4. The repercussions of the article after its publication
  5. The Bulletin of Hu Qiaomu and Tan Zhenlin and others
- Appendix: "Patriotism or National Betrayal? -- A Review of the Reactionary Film "The Inside Story of the Qing Court"
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  8. Chen Boda's document on the criticism of "Liu, Deng and Tao" added that their families should accompany them in the fight

### **1. An old story about the film "The Inside Story of the Qing Court"**

The film *The Secret History of the Qing Palace* was produced in 1948 by a Hong Kong film company and focuses on the struggles within the court of Emperor Guangxu, Consort Zhen and Empress Cixi during the Hundred Days Reform during the end of the Qing Dynasty. The film gives credit to Emperor Guangxu, who supported the Reformation, and takes an explicitly negative view of Cixi. Through the mouth of Concubine Zhen, the film speaks of the need for Guangxu to rely on the foreigners and to seize power from Cixi. At the same time, the film is full of hatred towards the Boxer Rebellion, with many slanderous and untrue depictions. The film was first shown in Hong Kong and then in Beijing and Shanghai in March 1950.

I saw this film as soon as it was released in Beijing. I was very young at the time and could not see the traitorous errors of the film, I just thought it played the Guangxu Emperor as the saviour of the people and glorified him to the hilt. I didn't think it was worth glorifying Guangxu as the saviour of the people, when in fact he hadn't done much in history to warrant such glorification. And one thing I didn't like was that the film vilified the Boxers who fought against imperialist aggression. My hometown of Shandong is one of the birthplaces of the Boxer Rebellion, and I have been told since I was a child in my grandmother's village that the Boxers were good people who fought against the bullying of the Chinese by the foreigners, but in the film, they are portrayed as superstitious, ignorant, ugly and ridiculous hooligans. These were the feelings I had before I knew about the Chairman's speech. When I heard the Chairman's commentary, I did not understand it at first, but it was only after Hu Qiaomu's secretary, Shang Kai, explained it to me that I understood that Consort Zhen told Guangxu to rely on imperialist forces to wrest power from Cixi through internal and external cooperation with the foreigners. This was an act of national betrayal.

However, at the beginning, I was not aware of the disagreement between the Chairman and Liu Shaoqi over the evaluation of the film *The Inside Story of the Qing Court*. Initially, the Chairman said that *The Inside Story of the Qing Court* was a sell-out, not publicly, but to Hu Qiaomu after hearing his words that "Comrade Shaoqi said that *The Inside Story of the Qing Court* was patriotic", and to

Jiang Qing. At that time, several of the Chairman's secretaries, including Chen Boda and Tian Jiaying, knew that the Chairman disapproved of the film. I first learned of this from Tian Jiaying.

At that time, I was helping Tian Jiaying with the proofreading of Mao Zedong's Selected Works. Once, a person from the Academic Department called Tian Jiaying. Afterwards Tian Jiaying said to me that this person was called Li Shu, who was the head of the Institute of Modern History in the Academic Department. There was an article criticising the film *The Inside Story of the Qing Court*, which Miss (Tian Jiaying's private name for Jiang Qing) had asked Li Shu to find someone to write. Li Shu assigned a specialist called Rong Mengyuan to write it, but Li Shu said the article was not good enough. Jiang Qing said, "Then you should improve it". The article was difficult to change, so Li Shu called Tian Jiaying to ask him what to do. Tian Jiaying said to him, "Then print it out and show it to Jiang Qing before you do". I could see that Tian Jiaying was not very active in this matter, because it was not his job, he had a lot of work on his hands.

Li Shu also told me later that the criticism of *The Inside Story of the Qing Court* was set up by Jiang Qing at that time. In my analysis, it was unlikely that Jiang Qing had set it up directly with him. Jiang Qing was the director of the Film Bureau at the time, so if she had arranged it, she would have had to go through the Central Propaganda Department. So, she either arranged it through Hu Qiaomu, who was the executive vice minister of the Ministry of Propaganda, or she arranged it through the Ministry of Propaganda and the Film Bureau.

I heard about it again after the criticism of the film *The Life of Wu Xun*<sup>381</sup>, which was first shown in 1951 when Miao Chuhuang<sup>382</sup>, an expert in Party history, had just received some money to invite me and Pang Xianzhi to see it. That was before the criticism of *The Life of Wu Xun*. After watching it, the three of us had a discussion on the way back to the office, and I said that making a beggar into a hero was very uncomfortable! I didn't like the film very much. Miao Chuhuang said, "You are a bit fussy". The three of us argued on the road, but Pang Xianzhi supported Miao Chuhuang. Soon afterwards, the Chairman said he wanted to criticise the film, and Miao Chuhuang said to me, "Oh, you are still prescient, you are right". It was on this occasion that Miao Chuhuang told me what he had heard from the history bureau, that the Chairman was going to criticise not only *The Life of Wu Xun*, but also *The Inside Story of the Qing Court*. He said it was even bigger than the criticism of *The Life of Wu Xun*! However, *The Inside Story of the Qing Court* was never criticised.

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<sup>381</sup> This is a biographical film based on the life and deeds of Wu Xun in the late Qing Dynasty. Wu Xun was a beggar who raised funds to educate himself and prosper. After the film's release, according to incomplete statistics from *People's Daily*, newspapers in Beijing, Shanghai, and Tianjin published more than 40 articles praising Wu Xun and the film "Wu Xun Biography" within four months. On May 20, 1951, the "People's Daily" published an editorial written by Mao Zedong "Pay Serious Attention to Discussion of the film *The life of Wu Xun*", thus initiating the first nationwide literary and artistic ideological debate in the history of contemporary Chinese literature and art. (See *Mao Zedong Selected Works Vol 5*). Mao Zedong believed that the film promoted reactionary ideas against historical materialism and must be severely criticized.

<sup>382</sup> Miao Chuhuang (1923-2000) was a teacher who went in 1948 to the Education Research Office of the Propaganda Department of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China to conduct educational research, and was invited by Tian Jiaying to participate in the annotation of Mao Zedong's works. He joined the Communist Party of China in 1949. From 1950 to 1966, successively engaged in party history research on the publication committee of "Selected Works of Mao Zedong", the Party History Reference Room of the Propaganda Department of the CPC Central Committee, the History Group of the Political Research Office of the CPC Central Committee, and the Party History Group of the Central Marxist-Leninist Research Institute. After 1973, he served as the director of the teaching and research section of the Hebei Provincial Party School.

At that time, Miao Chuhuang was working on the annotations of the Selected Works of Mao Zedong. A considerable part of the commentaries in Selected Works of Mao Zedong was drafted by Miao Chuhuang, some of them were revised by Chen Boda, some by Hu Qiaomu and Tian Jiaying. Others were written by experts in various fields, such as the history section, mostly by Fan Wenlan. Some people said that they were all drafted by Tian Jiaying. Tian Jiaying corrected this misinformation at the time, saying that it was not true and that he had only written a small part of it.

In 1954, when the Chairman supported the "nobody" Li Xifan in his criticism of Yu Pingbo's Study of the Dream of the Red Chamber and Hu Shih's idealistic ideas, he once again raised the issue of criticizing The Inside Story of the Qing Court. The Chairman wrote: "The Inside Story of the Qing Court, which has been described by certain people as a film of patriotism but is in fact one of national betrayal, has never been criticized since it was shown all over the country."<sup>383</sup>

After this, the Chairman had once again said, "The Secret History of the Qing Palace has not been criticised for five years, and if it is not criticised again, the debt is growing." But the film remained long overdue for criticism.

In November 1965 Yao Wenyuan published an article entitled "Review of the New Historical Drama (Hai Rui's Removal from Office)", and on 21 December of the same year when the Chairman spoke with Chen Boda, Tian Jiaying, Hu Jiao, Guan Feng and Ai Siqi and others in Hangzhou about historical and philosophical issues, he once again raised criticism of The Inside Story of the Qing Court, saying, "Some people say that the *Inside Story of the Qing Court* is patriotic, but I think it is treasonable — out-and-out treason."<sup>384</sup>

It was from this time that I figured out that the criticism about the film The Inside Story of the Qing Court was an important disagreement between Chairman Mao and Liu Shaoqi. What the Chairman wanted to criticize was that there were some people in the Party who always had the ideological tendency to rely on foreign powers, on the support of imperialism, to achieve their political goals.

As I said above, Hu Qiaomu's secretary, Shang Kai, an old journalist, has always been very good to me. As the matter involved Hu Qiaomu, I went to ask Shang Kai about it. He told me what had happened: when the Chairman had seen "The Inside Story of the Qing Court", he asked Hu Qiaomu if he had seen it. Hu Qiaomu said he had. At that time, he did not know what the Chairman meant, so he told him that Comrade Shaoqi had also watched it, saying that it was patriotic. At that time, the Chairman said, "What patriotism, it's treason!" Later, the Chairman called for a critique of the film. Hu Qiaomu then felt bad about it. "Both were top party leaders, one chairman and one vice-chairman, so of course the criticism could be done without naming the chairman, but how could I explain to others that I was criticising the vice-chairman's views? People would say that I was undermining the unity of the Party Central Committee!"

Hu Qiaomu was then the executive vice-minister of the Central Propaganda Department and was responsible for reviewing the People's Daily. He was concerned about the unity between the Chairman and Vice-Chairman, so he quietly put the matter off and did not criticize it. But on the other hand, Hu Qiaomu did have a better relationship with Liu Shaoqi, whom he had known since the "19 January Movement" and who was his leader. Later, when he took part in the drafting of the

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<sup>383</sup> See Mao Zedong, Selected Works, Vol 5 *Letter Concerning the Study of the Dream of the Red Chamber*.

<sup>384</sup> See Mao Zedong, Selected Works, Vol 9, *Speech at Hangzhou*

Resolution on Certain Historical Issues in Yan'an, he listed Liu Shaoqi as a representative of the correct line in the White Zone (of course, this was also approved by the Chairman). So, Hu Qiaomu's reluctance to criticise *The Inside Story of the Qing Court* also had something to do with the fact that he had such a special relationship with Liu Shaoqi.

The Chairman said that *The Inside Story of the Qing Court* was a sell-out, and he was particularly offended by a few words spoken by Consort Zhen in the film. Consort Zhen said to Guangxu, "Now foreigners are for you as emperor and against her (Empress Dowager Cixi), don't follow her, foreigners will fight their way into Beijing and will let you clean up this mess, foreigners support you, they can help you take back the power." Chairman Mao thought this would not work, whatever internal disputes we Chinese had, we could not rely on foreigners. Chairman Mao's patriotism was very strong.

From September 18 to 20, 1966 (when there was no open criticism of Liu and Deng's capitalist and anti-democratic line), the Central Cultural Revolution Group held a survey symposium at the Red Building on the North Beach to prepare for the criticism of Liu and Deng's line. When we discussed it after the meeting, we put the criticism of capitalism on the agenda as well.

## **2. How the article was written**

On 26 December 1966, at his birthday family dinner, the Chairman asked us to carry out a great criticism and told all of us in the Cultural Revolution Group to write articles. The Chairman said to me that you should also write. At that time I was already thinking about the criticism of the film *The Inside Story of the Qing Court*, and I had transferred a copy of *The Inside Story of the Qing Court* from the Film Archive and watched it twice. I then told the Chairman that I was already preparing a critique of the film *The Inside Story of the Qing Court* and wanted to make clear the question of whether the film was patriotism or treachery. I said that the Chairman had spoken for so many years and so many times, but so far there was still no article that made the Chairman's ideas clear in a systematic way. Chairman Mao listened and said it was good and very supportive. I also said that I was not very familiar with the history of the Boxer Rebellion. Chairman Mao said, "You write it first, and when you have done so, bring it to me and I will tell you what I think".

In January 1967, Yao Wenyuan wrote "Comment on the counter-revolutionary two-faced factionalist Zhou Yang", and one paragraph of his article mentioned the issue of "The Inside Story of the Qing Court", but I think he still failed to clarify the question of "whether it is patriotism or national betrayal". In order to criticise *The Inside Story of the Qing Court*, one has to make a point. In order to understand the essence of the issue, it is necessary to study this thing.

At that time, I called Mu Xin and told him that I wanted to write an article on *The Secret History of the Qing Palace*, but I couldn't remember the dialogues in the movie, so I asked him to help me find the movie script of *The Inside Story of the Qing Court*. Mu Xin said, "That's fine, I'll get it for you right away". In less than two days, he got the script from the film library and had the driver bring it to me. After I got the script, I said, "This is someone's archive, don't lose it, you have to return it to them". At that time, there was no photocopying machine, so I asked him to find someone to typeset the script and ask them to print more copies so that I would not be the only one to read it, but to send it to the members of the Central Cultural Revolution Group. Mu Xin was very willing to take on this task, and he later published the script in full and exclusively in *Guangming Daily*.

After I got the script, I read it over and over again, and the more I read it, the clearer it became that the Chairman was right, the film was indeed a sell-out. The Chairman said that although Cixi was a very reactionary person, she was better than Guangxu in terms of her national position. Over the years, the Chairman has said many times that *The Secret History of the Qing Palace* is a sell-out, and I, like many others, was not sure exactly what was going on; after reading the script, I understood.

The idea of relying on foreigners to overthrow the Empress Dowager Cixi, as written in the script, reflected a trend of thinking in society at that time. The Chairman was very perceptive and said that this would turn into outright national betrayal. It is also very wrong for the script to vilify such a mass struggle against imperialism as the Boxer Rebellion into the superstitious activities of a group of rogue bandits and charlatans. Most of the Boxer Rebellion fighters were brave pioneers against imperialism.

On the basis of this, and with the help of my secretary Cheng Lijia and others, I spent two to three months writing *Patriotism or National Betrayal? --A Review of the Reactionary Film 'The Secret History of the Qing Palace'*.

### **3. Chairman Mao's revision and approval of the article**

On the 20th of March 1967, I sent the draft I had written to the Chairman. Because it was the Chairman who asked me to write it and then hand it to him to read, the Chairman read it, corrected it and then returned it to me directly. For this incident Chen Boda even criticised me, saying how I had given it directly to the Chairman without discussing it with the Cultural Revolution Group. The Premier and Wang Li and Guan Feng also had a problem with me.

The Chairman was more than satisfied with what I had written and said that I had written it well, but there was a mistake in it and the name of a minister was misspelled. I checked and found that there was no mistake in the script of *The Secret History of the Qing Palace*, but I had written it wrongly. The Chairman also wrote large paragraphs in several places, for example, refuting that the Boxer Rebellion was a mad mob and praising patriotic young women for their "Red Lanterns" movement, and so on. In response to the film's claim that the Boxer Rebellion was a superstition, a mob and a riot, the Chairman also refuted: " Was it the Yi Ho Tuan organized by the Chinese people that went to the imperialist countries in Europe and America and to Japan to stage rebellion and "commit murder and arson"? Or was it the imperialist countries that came to invade China, this land of ours, to oppress and exploit the Chinese people and so aroused the masses of the Chinese people to resist imperialism and its lackeys and corrupt officials in China? This is a major question of right and wrong which must be debated and cleared up." The Chairman wrote this passage so well that it hit the nail on the head. The Chairman is really a master of his craft. In a few words, he has made clear the complex matter of the Boxer Rebellion against imperialism and lifted the momentum of the article.

After the end of the Cultural Revolution, some people wrote articles to criticize my essay, but after writing so many articles, they couldn't really achieve anything. If you say I am a big poisonous weed, then you can criticise me properly. But how can you criticise the views of the Chairman?

Then the Chairman asked me to take my revised draft to the Cultural Revolution Group for discussion. The people on the panel read the Chairman's rewrites and made some comments. Then I grabbed the time to rework it, printed it out and took it to the Chairman again. The Chairman read it

again and then explained that Qi Benyu's article was usable and asked the Premier to chair the Cultural Revolution Group to discuss the changes and then officially publish it.

The afternoon after the Chairman's instruction, the Central Cultural Revolution Group met to discuss the revision of the article "Patriotism or National Betrayal", with all members of the Group in attendance and the meeting chaired by the Premier. At the meeting, the article was first read out paragraph by paragraph, and a paragraph was read and discussed. I started reading and when I got tired of reading, Wang Li went on to read, and Wang Li read clearly and forcefully. In the past, when articles were discussed, it was usually Wang Li who took down everyone's comments and then revised them, but for this article, the Premier himself took notes on the draft paper while chairing the meeting, discussing every word and even whether a punctuation was appropriate. It was only on the morning of the third day that the revised manuscript was taken back for rewriting and printing after discussion. It was then brought back for discussion and revision in the afternoon of the same day. There were several discussions before and after, and once from two o'clock in the afternoon, Chen Boda and Jiang Qing came and kept revising until dinner.

After the final draft, it was first presented to the Chairman. The Chairman explained that it would first be handed over to the Central People's Broadcasting Station for nationwide broadcast, and then to Red Flag magazine, People's Daily and Xinhua News Agency in several copies. At this point Wang Li asked the Premier how the article should be signed, whether it should be in the Red Flag magazine, or as a commentator in the People's Daily or the PLA Daily, or in several names at the same time. The Premier said that the article was the first to criticise Liu Shaoqi without naming him, and that it would be better to sign it as an individual, so he would use Qi Benyu's name.

I thought this was too big a deal! This was the first time that I had publicly criticised "the biggest capitalist-roader faction in power in the Party", and the process of forming the article was so unusual that I felt it was inappropriate to publish it under my own name. So I said, "This article is about a big issue, and it has been revised by the Chairman and all of us collectively, so should we not use the name of an editorial or commentator?" But the Premier said that precisely because this article would attract the attention of the whole country as well as the whole world, and in accordance with the usual international practice, an editorial or commentator's article represented the official, whereas an individual op-ed, no matter how you put it, was still a personal article, and there was a difference. It was not good to raise the issue of Liu Shaoqi as an official document all of a sudden. It was better to present it as a personal article. After the Premier said so, Chen Boda and Jiang Qing did not say anything, and Kang Sheng nodded his head in the affirmative. It was then decided that the article would be published under Qi Benyu's personal signature. When the article drafted by Guan Feng criticising Liu Shaoqi's "black cultivation"<sup>385</sup> was published, it was published under the name of "Commentator of Red Flag".

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<sup>385</sup> "On the Cultivation of Communist Party Members", referred to as "Self-Cultivation", is a famous speech made by Liu Shaoqi at the Yan'an Marxist-Leninist College in July 1939. The content of the speech was to the effect that the party members should cultivate in themselves the requirements of party spirit. After the founding of the People's Republic of China, it was republished in 1962. In the Cultural Revolution, "On the Cultivation of Communists" was called "Black Cultivation" and was criticized along with the Theory of the Black Six which permeated the same publication. The six theories were: "the theory of the extinction of the class struggle", "the theory of the docile tools", "the theory of the backwardness of the masses", "the theory of joining the Party as an official", "the theory of peace within the Party" and "the theory of the dissolution of public and private sectors". Of the six, the two central "theories" were the "theory of the extinction of the class struggle" and the "theory of docile tools". According to the editorial "Absorbing Fresh Blood of the

The Premier also personally arranged for the famous announcers from the Central People's Broadcasting Station, Xia Qing and Ge Lan, to read it aloud. During the production of the broadcast, the head of Xinhua News Agency suggested to me that some sentences were too long to be read aloud with any momentum, and asked me to change them to be shorter.

On 31 March, the Central People's Broadcasting Station broadcast the full text of "Patriotism or National Betrayal?" The next day, the article was published in full on the front page of the People's Daily, and Xinhua News Agency also issued a circular, which was also published in all major newspapers across the country.

In a conversation with foreign guests during May, Chairman Mao saw the publication of this article as a sign that the Cultural Revolution had reached an important stage in its development. He said.

"The Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, in terms of policy and strategy, can be roughly divided into four stages: from the publication of Yao Wenyuan's article to the Eleventh Plenary Session of the Eighth Central Committee. This can be regarded as the first stage, mainly the launching stage. By the January storm, this can be counted as the second stage, which is mainly the phase of reversing the direction. From the January Storm to the seizure of power to the Great Union and the Three-in-One Alliances, this can be regarded as the third stage. Since the publication of Qi Benyu's "Patriotism or National Betrayal" and "The Key to Cultivation is Betraying the Proletariat", this can be regarded as the fourth stage. The third and fourth stages are all about the seizure of power. The fourth stage is the ideological seizure of revisionist power and the seizure of bourgeois power, so it is a struggle between two classes, two roads and two lines, a crucial stage of the decisive battle, a theme, a proper subject."

#### 4. The repercussions of the article after its publication

From the 2nd of April onwards, the masses everywhere began to take to the streets to demonstrate their indignation against the capitalist-roaders, for several days in a row and on an increasingly large scale, all of which were organized by the masses spontaneously, without any deployment by the Central Cultural Revolution Group. By the time I was to be isolated and examined at the beginning of 1968, according to the recollections of Chen Boda and others, Kang Sheng also suggested whether it was a good idea to reconsider this, as Qi Benyu's article "Patriotism or National Betrayal" was very influential.

Years later, when I ran into Zhu Yongjia<sup>386</sup>, he said to me that we were a bit passive when your article came out. I asked, "Passive about what?" He said, Zhang Chunqiao took your article and put it in

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Proletariat - An Important Issue in the Work of Party Rectification" in the fourth issue of Red Flag magazine in 1968, "The former denies the dictatorship of the proletariat and seeks to stifle the proletarian revolution of the Party and cause the proletarian revolutionary Party to metamorphose and degenerate. The latter denies the necessity of continuing the revolution under the dictatorship of the proletariat and seeks to stifle the proletarian revolution of the Communist Party members, causing them to degenerate and deteriorate."

<sup>386</sup> Zhu Yongjia (1931-), a male historian and former member of the Standing Committee of the Shanghai Municipal Committee, was born in 1931 and studied at the Department of History of Fudan University under the tutelage of Tan Qichang and Zhou Yubing. He later engaged in teaching and research on the history of the Qin and Han dynasties, the Three Kingdoms and Ming history. He is the author of *The Inside Story of Mao Zedong's Rereading of Ancient Texts in Later Years* and *On Cao Cao*, among others. In the 1960s, Zhu Yongjia

front of us, saying, "Can you write such an article?" So, after that, Zhu Yongjia and the others tried their best to write critical articles, and they wrote three things at once. After reading them, the Chairman said, "You should not just work on quantity, but on quality. If you write one article well and people digest it, it will be better than several articles".

The Chairman once told Jiang Qing that he had proposed to criticise the Secret History of the Qing Palace for many years, but no one had written an article on it. Jiang Qing originally offered to give me a Zeiss camera that she had used. I said I didn't know how to use it. Jiang Qing said, "What do you want then?" I said I really liked the writing of the Chairman, even if it was just a few words. As soon as Jiang Qing spoke to the Chairman, he gave me a copy of "Reply to Comrade Guo Moruo"<sup>387</sup> that he had written in the past, and Jiang Qing asked Wang Dongxing to give it to me in front of all the people in the Central Cultural Revolution Group. The Chairman's words were written on letterhead, and on one sheet of paper you could not write more than a few words, so it formed a thick pile. That night, when I returned, I didn't drink, but I felt as if I had. I held Chairman Mao's handwritten book and read it over and over, word by word. From April 1967 to January 1968, I don't know how many times I read it. Each time I finished reading it, I locked it up again in a small safe. I had asked Guo Lao (Guo Moruo) to give me one of his words as well. I put them together. As soon as I was arrested, that little safe of mine was raided by them. There was a lot of stuff in that little safe. There were letters from Chairman Mao to me, such as the Chairman's instructions on a letter from Li Zaihan in Guizhou Province, the Chairman's instructions on the Qinghai incident, the Chairman's instructions on my review, and so on. A few of those instructions were included in Mao Zedong's Manuscripts Since the Founding of the People's Republic, but some of them were not published.

During the "trial" of Jiang Qing, Deng Xiaoping and his men came to Qincheng prison to interrogate me. The people who came told me that your article "Patriotism or Traitorism" had set off a wave of opposition to Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping in the country. This matter is your responsibility, you can't talk about Chairman Mao or Premier Zhou. I said that was fine, it was the same whether I spoke about it or not. They also said that the Tianjin speech of Liu Shaoqi quoted by me in that article was a fake, a false accusation against Liu Shaoqi, saying that Liu Shaoqi was the leader of the Central Committee, how could he say such things? I gave them a firm rebuttal on this point, saying that the materials I quoted in my article were all materials copied from the archives kept by the Tianliu Archives, could this be forged? If you can prove that these archives are false, you can come back to me! They talked to me again about the need to look after the big picture, and I said that it was the big picture of China whether to follow the socialist road or the capitalist road. Later, when capitalism had been restored in many areas of China, their imperial theorists said that Liu Shaoqi's Tianjin speech was true and that it had "developed" Marxism-Leninism.

## 5. The Bulletin of Hu Qiaomu and Tan Zhenlin and others

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became an important figure in Shanghai's political scene as a member of the Writing Group of the Shanghai Municipal Party Committee, which was used exclusively by Zhang Chunqiao, Yao Wenyuan and the then official Shanghai government, and was relied upon by Zhang and Yao as their inner circle. In 1983, Zhu Yongjia was sentenced to 14 years in prison for "counter-revolutionary crimes" and other offences. Prior to that, he had been held in isolation for six years in Shanghai's Tilanqiao Prison. In 1988, at the age of 57, Zhu Yongjia was released early on medical parole. After his release from prison, he wrote four to five million words of books and received substantial fees for them.

<sup>387</sup> Written on January 9, 1963, this is a famous poem by Mao Zedong pouring scorn on the pretensions of revisionists and imperialists. It can easily be found by an internet search, although the spelling may be the Wade-Giles system's "Kuo Mo-jo".

“Patriotism or National Betrayal?” --After the publication of the article, Liu Shaoqi also read it. I heard that Liu Shaoqi was furious after reading the article, his blood pressure rose, he couldn't sleep, and he vigorously cried foul, saying that Qi Benyu's article "contained many falsehoods, when did I say that the film was patriotic, when did I talk about the Red buyers?" For this reason, Hu Qiaomu wrote a special report to the Central Committee, saying that he remembered clearly that Liu Shaoqi did say at that time that The Inside Story of the Qing Court was patriotic. It was only that he had concerns about criticising Liu Shaoqi at the time, so he did not carry out the Chairman's instructions, for which he made a self-criticism to Chairman Mao. I have read this material written by Hu Qiaomu with my own eyes.

As for Liu Shaoqi's remark after the victory in the war against Japan that "we can also work for the Americans as red buyers", Liu Shaoqi also denied it, and Wang Guangmei also said that he did not. Not only did they deny it, but they also said that they both resented it. At this point, Tan Zhenlin came forward. Tan Zhenlin had just been criticised by the chairman for the "February Countercurrent" incident and was being examined by the side. At that time, he wrote a letter to Chairman Mao, saying that he could testify that Liu Shaoqi and he were both leaders of the New Fourth Army at that time, and Liu Shaoqi was the political commissar. What Liu Shaoqi said to them was that we could also be red buyers for the Americans in the future. Tan Zhenlin wrote this material in very large letters, and I have read it. Chairman Mao, after reading Tan Zhenlin's denunciation, said, "Boss Tan is still a revolutionary! Why do you keep criticising him? He is patriotic. He can join the Cultural Revolution Group”.

We asked Chen Yi about this at the time, and Chen Yi said that he had also heard Liu Shaoqi say this, as it had been said by Liu Shaoqi when the Chairman returned from the Chongqing negotiations and discussed relations with the United States. The Premier was present when Chen Yi said this.

In 1994, I met some professors from Fudan University and talked about this past incident. A few young professors laughed at this, saying that you had argued about the Red Buyers back then? Nowadays, there are so many Red Buyers in the streets, and so many big people are making money for the Americans as Red Buyers!

#### **Appendix:**

Patriotism or National Betrayal? - On the Reactionary Film "Inside Story of the Qing Court"

*Translator's Note: Rather than re-translate the text of this lengthy article, I have used the English translation published by the Foreign Languages Press, Beijing, 1967. It does, however use the older Wade-Giles romanisation of the Chinese language (eg Ching and Mao Tse-tung) instead of the standard pinyin romanisation now in use (eg Qing and Mao Zedong).*

“At no time since it was shown all over the country has the film ‘Inside Story of the Ching Court’ — described as patriotic though in fact a film of national betrayal — yet been criticized and repudiated.”

— Chairman Mao Tse-tung: “Letter on the Question of Studies on ‘The Dream of the Red Chamber’”

When that new day dawned over the east of the world in October 1949, the China that had been weighed down by calamities rose to its feet like a giant.

Guided by Mao Tse-tung's thought, the Chinese people, after countless bitter struggles, finally threw off the three big mountains of imperialism, feudalism, and bureaucrat-capitalism and liberated the whole country.

The storm of the great people's revolution was washing away the filth from the land of China. But the reactionary ruling classes, unreconciled to their doom, continued to mount frenzied, large-scale counterattacks in every field. The class struggle was very acute. On the cultural and ideological fronts it was especially complicated, and the reactionary films, plays, operas, songs, books, and journals that flooded the world of culture were important propaganda weapons in the big counterattacks carried out by the reactionary ruling classes against the revolutionary people. One of the most prominent examples was the reactionary film *Inside Story of the Ching Court*, which in 1950 was still being widely shown in Peking, Shanghai, and other cities.

What should be the attitude of the victorious Chinese people in face of these large-scale counterattacks by reactionary culture? Should they carry out a proletarian cultural revolution, or compromise, or surrender to the reactionary culture rampant in society? Every revolutionary comrade faced a new choice and test.

Around this reactionary film, the proletarian revolutionaries headed by Chairman Mao waged a serious struggle against a handful of Party people in authority taking the capitalist road. It was the first important struggle on the cultural and ideological fronts in liberated China.

Chairman Mao sternly pointed out: "The *Inside Story of the Ching Court* is a film of national betrayal and should be criticized and repudiated." He also said: "Somebody called it patriotic; I consider it national betrayal, national betrayal through and through." But the counterrevolutionary revisionists Lu Ting-yi and Chou Yang and a certain Hu, a standing vice director of the Propaganda Department of the Party's Central Committee at that time, and others, as well as the top Party person in authority taking the capitalist road who was supporting them from behind, stubbornly clung to their bourgeois reactionary stand and openly opposed Chairman Mao's directive. They asserted that this reactionary film was "patriotic" and refused to criticize and repudiate it.

Comrade Chiang Ching, then a member of a committee for guiding the work of the cinema under the Ministry of Culture, upheld the proletarian revolutionary line of Chairman Mao and at a number of meetings proposed that the film *Inside Story of the Ching Court* should be firmly criticized and repudiated. However, Lu Ting-yi, Chou Yang, Hu, and others vigorously opposed this proposal and did their best to advertise the "patriotic progressiveness" of this reactionary film. When Comrade Chiang Ching wanted to act according to Chairman Mao's directive, they threw at her the reactionary talk of their boss behind the scenes, the top Party person in authority taking the capitalist road, and said: "Comrade so-and-so holds that it is a patriotic film." Firmly upholding the truth, Comrade Chiang Ching stood her ground and in no uncertain terms refuting their reactionary and ludicrous statements insisted that the film should be criticized and repudiated. They had to give way, but perfunctorily appointed an historian of reactionary views to write a short fake criticism which was really aimed at shielding the film. They considered even such an article "too sharp," and held up publication, thus smothering a major struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie on the cultural and ideological fronts.

In 1951, Chairman Mao personally led the struggle on the cultural and ideological fronts to criticize the reactionary film *The Life of Wu Hsun*. (1) In 1954, he initiated another major nationwide struggle, namely, the criticism of Yu Ping-po's *Studies on "The Dream of the Red Chamber"* (2) and the reactionary ideas of Hu Shih. On October 16 of the same year, Chairman Mao wrote a letter to the comrades in the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the Party and other comrades concerned, sternly criticizing certain "important people" in the Party who suppressed attacks by newborn forces against the bourgeoisie and were its willing captives. In his letter, Chairman Mao again raised the question of the reactionary film *Inside Story of the Ching Court*. Referring to the article written by two young men criticizing *Studies on "The Dream of the Red Chamber,"* Chairman Mao pointed out:

This is the first serious attack in thirty years and more on the erroneous views of the so-called authoritative writer in the field of the studies of *The Dream of the Red Chamber*. The authors are two Youth League members. First they wrote to the *Wen I Pao* [Literary Gazette], to ask whether it was all right to criticize Yu Ping-po, but they received no reply. Ignored by the *Wen I Pao*, they wrote to teachers at their alma mater—Shantung University—and got their support. Their article refuting *A Short Study of "The Dream of the Red Chamber"* was carried in the university journal *Wenshizhe /Literature, History and Philosophy/*. Then the problem came back again to Peking. Some people wanted this article to be reprinted in the *Renmin Ribao*, to arouse discussion and criticism. This was not done because certain people opposed it, giving various reasons (mainly that it was "an article written by unimportant people" and "the Party paper is not a platform for free debates"). As a compromise, the article was allowed to be reprinted in the *Wen I Pao*. Later, the "Literary Legacy" page of the *Kuang Ming Jih Pao* carried an article by the two young men refuting Yu Ping-po's book, *Studies on "The Dream of the Red Chamber."* It seems likely that the struggle is about to start against the bourgeois idealism of the school of Hu Shih which has been poisoning young people in the field of classical literature for the last thirty years and more. This struggle has been sparked by two "unimportant people," while the "important people," usually taking no notice of it or even obstructing it, advocate a united front on idealism with bourgeois writers and make themselves willing captives of the bourgeoisie. It was almost the same when the films *Inside Story of the Ching Court* and *The Life of Wu Hsun* were shown. At no time since it was shown all over the country has the film *Inside Story of the Ching Court*—described as patriotic though in fact a film of national betrayal—yet been criticized and repudiated. *The Life of Wu Hsun* has been criticized, but the lessons have not yet been drawn; now comes the bizarre situation when Yu Ping-po's idealism is tolerated and vigorous critical essays by some "unimportant people" are obstructed. This warrants our attention.

Yet class struggle is independent of man's will. Even after Chairman Mao put the question forward so sharply, the handful of counterrevolutionary revisionists headed by Lu Ting-yi and the top Party person in authority taking the capitalist road who supported them from behind, still continued to cling to the bourgeois reactionary stand and stubbornly opposed Chairman Mao's instructions. Twelve years have elapsed since 1954, but the *Inside Story of the Ching Court*, which is a reactionary, out-and-out traitorous film, remains uncriticized.

The unprecedented Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution has once again brought this question up.

Debts have to be paid sooner or later. In the present movement of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, this reactionary and completely traitorous film, which has remained uncriticized since

the liberation, must be subjected to thorough criticism and repudiation by the revolutionary masses. The handful of counterrevolutionary revisionists who opposed Chairman Mao's directive and the top Party person in authority taking the capitalist road who supported them from behind, must also be thoroughly criticized and repudiated by the revolutionary masses during this movement. Accounts must be settled with them in full for their crimes of flagrantly opposing Chairman Mao's proletarian revolutionary line and of recklessly opposing the Party and Mao Tse-tung's thought. The revolutionary masses must overthrow this handful of counterrevolutionary revisionists, remove the top Party person in authority taking the capitalist road from his position, and make him stand aside.

The reactionary film *Inside Story of the Ching Court* is a film with a so-called historical theme. It deals with the Reform Movement of 1898 and the struggle of the Yi Ho Tuan [Boxer] movement in the last years of the Ching Dynasty. It openly takes the stand of imperialism, feudalism, and the reactionary bourgeoisie, freely distorts historical facts, and prettifies imperialism, feudalism, and bourgeois reformism. While eulogizing the royalists, it slanders the revolutionary mass movement and the heroic struggle of the people against imperialism and feudalism and advocates national capitulation and class capitulation.

This reactionary film was made by the Yunghua Film Company, a reactionary film studio whose first film was *The Soul of a Nation*. This conjured up the phantom soul of Wen Tien-hsiang to revive the soul of the dying Chiang Kai-shek regime. The *Inside Story of the Ching Court* was its second production. The scenario writer Yao Ke is a reactionary scribbler who holds stubbornly to the counterrevolutionary stand. He once edited the reactionary monthly *Tien Hsia*, opposed the Chinese revolution, and actively served British-American imperialism and the comprador-bourgeoisie. Later he went over to the Kuomintang reactionaries and wrote a series of vulgar, reactionary plays. He was a small running dog of the reactionary ruling classes. On the eve of China's liberation, he escaped to Hongkong. There is nothing strange in a reactionary anti-communist, antipopular, literary man writing such a reactionary scenario as *Inside Story of the Ching Court*. But it is indeed strange that the director and certain vice directors of the Propaganda Department of the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party who donned the cloak of "Communists" and "proletarian revolutionaries," and the top Party person in authority taking the capitalist road who supported them from behind, should show such favour to this extremely reactionary, thoroughly traitorous film, extol it as "patriotic," and actively serve as spokesmen for imperialism, feudalism, and the reactionary bourgeoisie. Doesn't this call for deep thought?

On the question of the attitude to be adopted toward this reactionary, thoroughly traitorous film, what are the major differences in principle between the proletarian revolutionaries headed by Chairman Mao on the one hand and the handful of counterrevolutionary revisionists and the top Party person in authority taking the capitalist road who supported them from behind, on the other hand? To sum up briefly, there are three differences: namely, what should be one's attitude toward imperialist aggression; toward the Yi Ho Tuan revolutionary mass movement; and toward bourgeois reformism?

### **What should be one's attitude toward imperialist aggression?**

The contradiction between imperialism and the Chinese people is a principal contradiction in modern Chinese society. Imperialism is the first and most ferocious enemy of the Chinese people. What attitude should one take toward imperialist aggression is a question of first importance for the revolution.

The reactionary film *Inside Story of the Ching Court*, praised as “patriotic” by a handful of counterrevolutionary revisionists and the top Party person in authority taking the capitalist road who supported them from behind, is, on the question of imperialist aggression, a perfect reflection of an utterly shameful and servile attitude of fear and worship of imperialism and pro-imperialism [sic].

It reveals a mortal fear of the imperialist aggression committed by the so-called “eight-power allied expedition” organized by Britain, the United States, Germany, Russia, Japan, France, Italy, and Austria. It assiduously spreads fear of imperialism, crying that “since the Sino-Japanese War of 1894, China has suffered financial losses, her armed forces are poorly equipped and weak, . . . and she is far inferior to the enemy in strength,” that “it must not start hostilities with any foreign country.” Hsu Ching-cheng, a high-ranking mandarin, is so scared of imperialism that he wails aloud.

Chairman Mao teaches us that, before the wild beasts of imperialism, revolutionary people must not show the slightest timidity. But in the eyes of the scenarist and those who praised the film, there is no alternative but to surrender helplessly to imperialist aggression—all this is naked national capitulation, the philosophy of traitors.

Moreover, the film painstakingly advocates worship of imperialism and pro-imperialism; it goes all out to spread illusions about imperialism and openly peddles the theory of national betrayal. Through the mouth of the emperor’s concubine Chen Fei, (3) an agent of imperialism in the film, the scenarist openly welcomes the imperialist aggression against China. Chen Fei puts it bluntly: “The foreign powers will certainly not blame Your Majesty”; “I am sure that the foreign powers will not harm Your Majesty, but on the contrary will help Your Majesty restore the throne and regenerate the imperial regime.” Sun Chia-nai, a high-ranking mandarin, also asserts: “The envoys of both the Eastern and Western Powers are sympathetic toward Your Majesty.” A comparison of this with the counterrevolutionary propaganda of the imperialists who committed aggression against China at the time, shows clearly that the film advocates just what the imperialists advocated. To deceive its people, tsarist Russia, for example, alleged that it was “not fighting against China,” “but merely putting down a riot, suppressing rebels, and helping China’s legitimate government to restore order.” In *The War in China*, his first article on China written as early as 1900, Lenin mercilessly refuted such counterrevolutionary arguments put forward by the aggressors.

What in fact is that “patriotism” in *Inside Story of the Ching Court* so extolled by the handful of counterrevolutionary revisionists and the top Party person in authority taking the capitalist road who supported them from behind? The “patriotism” they praised turns out to be the so-called “patriotism” of the Emperor Kuang Hsu and his ilk who did not hesitate to rely on imperialism to restore and consolidate their rule over the people, as is described in the film. After the Chinese people had overthrown the reactionary rule of imperialism and feudalism, they still continued to urge the people to learn the “patriotism” of becoming traitors in order to restore and consolidate the exploiting classes’ rule over the people. Such is their vicious intention!

Chairman Mao teaches us: “The specific content of patriotism is determined by historical conditions. There is the ‘patriotism’ of the Japanese aggressors and of Hitler, and there is our patriotism. Communists must resolutely oppose the ‘patriotism’ of the Japanese aggressors and of Hitler.” (4) Likewise, we must resolutely oppose the so-called “patriotism” (namely, an out-and-out theory of

national betrayal) advocated by a handful of counterrevolutionary revisionists and the top Party person in authority taking the capitalist road.

The traitorous argument about welcoming imperialism to help China “regenerate the imperial regime” advocated by the film is of the same stock as the gangster logic of U.S. imperialism. Singing the same tune as those imperialists did when they carried out aggression against China, ex-U.S. Secretary of State Acheson in his 1949 White Paper talked at length about U.S. “concern” for China and described aggression as “friendship.” In “Cast Away Illusions, Prepare for Struggle,” “‘Friendship’ or Aggression?” and other articles, Chairman Mao had already sternly rebutted such counterrevolutionary gangster logic. He pointed out that it is “the logic of the U.S. mandarins” to describe aggression as “friendship.” Yet a handful of counterrevolutionary revisionists and the top Party person in authority taking the capitalist road who supported them from behind, yielded to imperialist pressure and were mortally afraid of imperialism. They vainly hoped to arrange a compromise with imperialism, and get “understanding” and “help” from it. They were deeply dissatisfied with Chairman Mao’s great call “cast away illusions, prepare for struggle.” That they energetically boosted this reactionary, out-and-out traitorous film *Inside Story of the Ching Court* was in fact in open opposition to Chairman Mao’s criticism and repudiation of Acheson’s White Paper. This was an unbridled attack on Mao Tse-tung’s thought.

Obviously, the reason why this reactionary film company and reactionary scribbler made such a film on the eve of China’s liberation, a film that advocates imperialist “help” in “regenerating the imperial regime,” was that they wanted to use their film to arouse public opinion for their own reactionary purposes and openly advocate reliance on U.S. imperialism to suppress the revolutionary movement of the Chinese people, a stratagem they proposed to the Kuomintang reactionaries who were on their last legs. The film entirely takes the stand of imperialism and the Kuomintang reactionaries. It represents an attempt to help prop up the toppling reactionary regime to meet the needs of U.S. imperialist aggression against China and to serve U.S. imperialism and its lackeys. The handful of counterrevolutionary revisionists who paid lip-service to “opposing imperialism,” and the top Party person in authority taking the capitalist road who supported them from behind, eulogized such a reactionary, out-and-out traitorous film and called it “patriotic.” Doesn’t this expose their true features as sham anti-imperialists and genuine capitulationists? What country do they love? What they love is a country belonging to the imperialists, a country belonging to the landlords and the bourgeoisie, but not our great motherland under the dictatorship of the proletariat. The “patriotism” they eulogize is nothing but a theory of national betrayal which all the revolutionary people of our country want to trample underfoot.

One thing in particular needs to be pointed out. It is by no means accidental that the top Party person in authority taking the capitalist road should have praised a reactionary, out-and-out traitorous film as “patriotic.” As early as the first days of the victory of the War of Resistance Against Japan, he was frightened when faced with aggression by U.S. imperialism and its lackeys. Despairing of the future of the Chinese revolution, he actively promoted within the Party a line of national capitulation and class capitulation in what he described as a “new stage of peace and democracy.” Chairman Mao called on us to cast away illusions, to give the enemy tit for tat and fight for every inch of land, whereas this person energetically spread illusions about peace with U.S. imperialism and its lackeys and impudently wrote articles in newspapers in which he expressed gratitude for U.S. imperialist “help” to China and begged for “peace” from U.S. imperialism in an attempt to benumb the fighting will of the people. He even deceived the people by saying that “the main form of struggle in the Chinese revolution has become peaceful and parliamentary. It is legal mass struggle

and parliamentary struggle,” “there should be a change in the whole of the Party’s work,” and “all political issues should be settled peacefully.” Chairman Mao said that as our enemies were sharpening their swords, we must sharpen ours too. Yet this person wanted the people to hand over the weapons in their hands. Energetically advertising the theory of national betrayal, he took the enemy as his father and wanted to be a willing servant of U.S. imperialism. He said: “Since the U.S. is bound to find compradors in China, we, too, may act as its compradors, red compradors!” Compradors are compradors. They are running dogs of the imperialists. What’s this about “red compradors”? It is a pure lie. With such a mean and shameless slave mentality, long ago eager to be imperialist compradors, they found the reactionary, out-and-out traitorous film *Inside Story of the Ching Court* extremely well suited to their taste. This was because the theory advocated by Chen Fei, the imperialist agent in the film, that imperialism might help China “regenerate the imperial regime” exactly reflected their traitorous mentality of eagerly wanting to become compradors of imperialism!

“Hearts which have a common beat are linked.” This is a line of verse the Emperor Kuang Hsu reads out in the film while looking dejectedly at a lake. This is an apt description of the fact that the handful of counterrevolutionary revisionists and the top Party person in authority taking the capitalist road shared the feelings of Kuang Hsu, his concubine, and their ilk. On the question of serving as imperialist agents, the handful of counterrevolutionary revisionists and the top Party person in authority taking the capitalist road who supported them from behind echoed the views of the landlords and the bourgeoisie of over 60 years ago. This is the ideological and class root of their praise for the “patriotism” of this reactionary, out-and-out traitorous film.

### **What should be one’s attitude toward the Yi Ho Tuan revolutionary mass movement?**

Chairman Mao says: “In the final analysis, the innumerable truths of Marxism may be expressed in one sentence: ‘rebellion is justified.’” (5) What should be one’s attitude toward the revolutionary movement of all-out rebellion against imperialism and feudalism launched by the revolutionary masses of the Yi Ho Tuan? Should one support it or oppose it? Should one praise it or hate it? This is a touchstone distinguishing genuine revolutionaries from fake, revolutionaries from counterrevolutionaries.

The Yi Ho Tuan movement which shook our vast land was a great anti-imperialist, anti-feudal revolutionary mass movement in modern Chinese history. It was a great movement typifying the initiative of the Chinese people in history. At that time, the Yi Ho Tuan carried on revolutionary activities everywhere, in town and countryside, throughout most of the northern part of China. They set up more than 800 meeting places in the city of Peking itself, the political centre where the enemy exercised the tightest rule. Youths who had joined the Yi Ho Tuan drilled regularly every day under the palace walls behind Ching Shan.

At a crucial moment when our country was in process of being partitioned amongst the imperialists, the Yi Ho Tuan heroes stepped forth bravely, raised aloft the great revolutionary banner of patriotic struggle against imperialism, and carried on a heroic struggle against the imperialist robbers and their lackeys. They splashed the street corners with slogans of every description which gave expression to the firm resolve of the Chinese people to fight the imperialists:

Restore to us our land and rights! We’ll fight our way

Through seas of fire and over mountains of knives!

What does it matter if the Emperor has surrendered?

We'll not rest till the last foreign invader is dead.

They held the imperialists in contempt; they strictly banned imported goods. The street bearing the name "Legation Street" they renamed "Block the Aliens Street" and the Yu Ho Bridge: "Stop the Aliens Bridge." Demonstrating in the streets, the Yi Ho Tuan heroes often shouted the slogan "Kill the foreign devils!" in unison with the inhabitants, making the imperialists shudder. Some foreigners were so frightened that they put themselves into coffins and hired professional mourners to carry them out of the city.

In June 1900, Yi Ho Tuan revolutionary activities reached a climax. Day and night, in groups of 30, 40, or 50, the Yi Ho Tuan detachments from Peking's outlying districts marched on the city. Scores arrived each day. The guards at the city gates stood at attention to salute them and shouted to the crowds to make way. Long columns of the revolutionary people in red turbans, red sashes, and shoes trimmed in red, armed with swords and spears, marched with great dignity in grand parades through the streets of Peking city. And the blacksmiths outside Chienmen worked through the night before their blazing furnaces making swords and spears for the Yi Ho Tuan.

Faced with the frenzied repression of the imperialist aggressor forces, the revolutionary masses of the Yi Ho Tuan pitted their primitive swords and spears heroically against the invaders armed with modern rifles and guns. They demonstrated the Chinese people's militant, revolutionary spirit of fearlessness. In the famous battle at the railway town of Langfang to halt the enemy's advance on Peking, the Yi Ho Tuan "blockaded in the train and heavily challenged with spears" an allied force of more than 1,500 men led by British Admiral Seymour. The enemy suffered casualties amounting to nearly 50 percent of his strength, and beat a panicky retreat to Tientsin. Later Seymour recalled his fright that had the "Boxers" been armed with western weapons, the allied force he led would have been annihilated. In the battle to defend Tientsin, the Yi Ho Tuan fought the aggressors' army hand-to-hand. At the railway station, in one engagement alone they killed or wounded more than 500 men of an, opposing Russian aggressor force of 2,000. The imperialists were forced to admit that there had not been anything like the way the Chinese fought the western soldiers in the bitter battle at Tientsin which went on tenaciously for over a month. In the battle at Yangchun, the American imperialist aggressor army was mercilessly trounced by the Yi Ho Tuan fighters. From then on, the imperialist aggressor armies shuddered at the very bugle note of the Yi Ho Tuan. They wailed: "Those long brass trumpets that can make one's blood curdle horribly. . . ."

Young people formed a most active and lively force during the Yi Ho Tuan movement. They performed immortal deeds in this great revolutionary movement. The Hung Teng Chao (Red Lanterns) that shook China and the world was an organization of young women from many places in northern China. They formed themselves into a well-disciplined force, did military exercises, and defended their homeland. They were dressed in red, wore red caps, carried red lanterns and red spears. They fought at the front and ferreted out spies in the rear. Playing an active part in the Yi Ho Tuan ranks and resolutely opposing imperialism and its lackeys, they displayed the heroic, anti-imperialist, anti-feudal revolutionary spirit of China's young women.

“The Hung Teng Chao (Red Lanterns), and the Yi Ho Tuan are like real brothers and sisters. They are united as one, and as one they fight the foreign officials.” This ditty expressed the resolute determination of the Hung Teng Chao to fight the imperialists.

Tales of the heroic deeds of the Hung Teng Chao have circulated widely among the masses of the people ever since. One saying was: “Those Hung Teng girls stare death fearlessly in the face when they charge the enemy positions. Their only worry is that they may lag behind in the fighting.” Another comment was: “Since the reigns of Taokuang and Hsienfeng all the battles at sea and on the land in coastal China against the alien invaders ended in defeat” but “now these girls are giving the foreigners such a trouncing that their victories have struck terror into the hearts of those foreign countries, and stirred the spirits of the Chinese people.”

The heroic struggle of the Yi Ho Tuan is the glory and pride of the Chinese people and one of the foundation stones of the great victory of the Chinese people fifty years later. It gave the aggressors a taste of the iron fists of the Chinese people and smashed the imperialists’ pipe dream of “partitioning” China. Waldersee, commander of the invading imperialist army, reported to the German kaiser: “Your Majesty may entertain the idea of partitioning China, but let it not be forgotten . . . there is still immense vitality in them. The Chinese have not lost all their bellicosity, which may be seen in the recent ‘Boxer Movement.’ Whether Europe or America or Japan, he said, no country is intellectually or militarily equipped for the job of ruling over this one-quarter of mankind. It is therefore an ill-advised policy to try dismemberment.

Real Marxists have always enthusiastically praised revolutionary mass movements of such a tremendous scale. In his great works, Chairman Mao highly appraises the Yi Ho Tuan movement and extols its heroic deeds again and again. He regards the Yi Ho Tuan movement as an important stage in the development of China’s bourgeois democratic revolution. Chairman Mao has pointed out: The Yi Ho Tuan war was a just war against the oppressors. Like other revolutionary wars of the Chinese people in the last hundred years, it “testifies to the Chinese people’s indomitable spirit infighting imperialism and its lackeys.” (6) It shows that “we Chinese have the spirit to fight the enemy to the last drop of our blood, the determination to recover our lost territory by our own efforts, and the ability to stand on our own feet in the family of nations.” (7) “Thanks to the Chinese people’s unrelenting and heroic struggle during the last hundred years, imperialism has not been able to subjugate China, nor will it ever be able to do so.” (8)

But the reactionary and thoroughly traitorous film *Inside Story of the Ching Court*, praised by a handful of counterrevolutionary revisionists and the top Party person in authority taking the capitalist road supporting them from behind, expresses a deep-rooted class hatred for the anti-imperialist revolutionary mass movement of the Yi Ho Tuan, and does its best to defame and slander it. The film portrays the revolutionary action of the Yi Ho Tuan against imperialism as a sort of barbarous turmoil. It tries its utmost to smear the Yi Ho Tuan, maliciously attacking it as “mad,” “mobs” who “committed murder and arson,” and as “ignorant people” who engaged in “witchcraft.”

These malicious slanders uttered against the Yi Ho Tuan by the film and those who praised it are completely in tune with the views of the imperialists. At that time Dean Acheson, a chieftain of U.S. imperialism, cursed the Yi Ho Tuan movement in his White Paper as “the anti-foreign disturbances in China” and “the Boxer Rebellion.” The hired intellectuals of U.S. imperialism in China were also unbridled in their attacks against the Yi Ho Tuan movement as an “offspring of ignorant superstition

and hysterics of the mob,” as a “perpetrator of senseless acts,” and as “Boxers” who committed murder and arson.

Was it the Yi Ho Tuan organized by the Chinese people that went to the imperialist countries in Europe and America and to Japan to stage rebellion and “commit murder and arson”? Or was it the imperialist countries that came to invade China, this land of ours, to oppress and exploit the Chinese people and so aroused the masses of the Chinese people to resist imperialism and its lackeys and corrupt officials in China? This is a major question of right and wrong which must be debated and cleared up.

The real bandits who massacred people and committed arson were none other than the imperialists and their lackeys. According to the admissions of Alfred von Waldersee, head of the invading imperialist troops, these troops, after occupying Peking, burnt, massacred, plundered, raped, destroyed cultural treasures, and committed all manner of crimes. Following their occupation of Peking, the imperialist troops were granted special permission to loot openly for three days. This was followed by robbery on an individual basis. They plundered everywhere, from the imperial court and mansions of the princes to the homes of ordinary people. “The windows facing the lakeside were widely opened; court officials were alarmed to see a line of camels coming.” The historical relics stored in the Summer Palace, a treasure house of the feudal emperors, were carried away by the aggressors to Tientsin by camels, and this took many a month. Many relics preserved for centuries in China, including the Yung Lo Encyclopedia, were burnt or stolen by the imperialists. Waldersee also confessed that there were many cases of rape, brutality, willful murder, and senseless arson in the course of plunder. As for the massacre and suppression of the Yi Ho Tuan by the imperialists’ lackeys, it was even more brutal and callous.

With deep indignation, Lenin condemned the crimes of massacre and arson committed by the imperialist aggressors. He wrote:

The European governments (the Russian Government among the very first) have already started to partition China. . . . They began to rob China as ghouls rob corpses, and when the seeming corpse attempted to resist, they flung themselves upon it like savage beasts, burning down whole villages, shooting, bayoneting and drowning in the Amur River [Heilungkiang River] unarmed inhabitants, their wives, and their children. And all these Christian exploits are accompanied by howls against the Chinese barbarians who dared to raise their hands against the civilized Europeans. (9)

But the film and those who praised it have turned things upside down and assisted the evil doers, portraying the imperialist aggressors who committed murder, arson, robbery, and rape as envoys of civilization while slandering as “barbarous rioters” the heroic and indomitable Yi Ho Tuan who resolutely resisted imperialist aggression. This is the genuine philosophy of quislings and traitors.

The patriotic, anti-imperialist struggle of the Yi Ho Tuan was closely linked with the anti-feudal struggle. The battle cries of the Yi Ho Tuan were: “Kill the foreigners and wipe out corrupt officials.” A ditty of the time runs as follows: “Slay the foreigners and kill the beastly mandarins; great hopes will shine before the common people when the foreigners and mandarins are gone.” “First kill the foreign devils and then beat up the corrupt officials.” Such were their simple and forthright anti-imperialist and anti-feudal revolutionary slogans. They deeply hated the feudal ruling class. In 1900 when the Yi Ho Tuan controlled Peking, most of the offices of the mandarins of the Ching Dynasty in the capital and the mansions of princes, dukes, and aristocrats were watched over by members of

the Yi Ho Tuan. The Yi Ho Tuan on many occasions caught officials who were notorious for their crimes, especially those subservient to imperialism, and forced them to kowtow and repent at the altar set up by the Yi Ho Tuan. Those who had committed the most heinous crimes were put to death.

Yet the film slanders the Yi Ho Tuan as a tool of the feudal rulers. The film portrayed Chao Shu-chiao, a high-ranking mandarin of the Ching Dynasty, as one who had said: "The Empress Tzu Hsi [the Empress Dowager] is begged to issue an order to organize the Yi Ho Tuan into an imperial army." The empress gladly accepted this suggestion. In this way the Yi Ho Tuan was made out to be partisans of the Empress Tzu Hsi. This is an utterly vicious slander.

For a short period, the rulers of the Ching Dynasty adopted the policy of deceiving and softening up the Yi Ho Tuan. For a time, this policy had some effect and some members of the Yi Ho Tuan were misled into an erroneous understanding of the rulers of the Ching Dynasty. Some detachments of the Yi Ho Tuan put forward the slogan "Support the Ching Dynasty and wipe out the foreigners." This reflects, on the one hand, the complicated nature of the class contradictions at that time and, on the other hand, the fact that people's understanding of imperialism and its lackeys at that time remained at the stage of perceptual knowledge.

Chairman Mao has taught us that man's knowledge develops from the lower to the higher stage and from perceptual knowledge to rational knowledge. "Similarly with the Chinese people's knowledge of imperialism. The first stage was one of superficial, perceptual knowledge, as shown in the indiscriminate anti-foreign struggles of the movement of the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom, the Yi Ho Tuan movement, and so on. It was only in the second stage that the Chinese people reached the stage of rational knowledge, saw the internal and external contradictions of imperialism, and saw the essential truth that imperialism had allied itself with China's comprador and feudal classes to oppress and exploit the great masses of the Chinese people. This knowledge began about the time of the May 4th Movement of 1919." (10) Therefore it is absolutely impermissible to slander the Yi Ho Tuan movement as a tool of the feudal rulers only because it failed to see clearly the nature of imperialism and feudalism. As stated above, along with their anti-imperialist activities, the Yi Ho Tuan never for a moment ceased their activities against the Ching Dynasty. Even after the appearance of the slogan "Support the Ching Dynasty and wipe out the foreigners," Chu Hung-teng [Red Lantern Chu], leader of the Yi Ho Tuan, worked out a plan for an attack on Peking and persevered in the anti-feudal struggle.

It was solely to meet the needs of imperialism and the feudal landlord class that the reactionary film the Inside Story of the Ching Court so unscrupulously slandered and attacked the anti-imperialist, anti-feudal struggle of the Yi Ho Tuan movement. Their slanders and attacks against the revolutionary masses of the Yi Ho Tuan movement reflect the bitter hatred of the class enemy for the peasants—the main force of the Chinese revolution—and the bitter hatred of the class enemy for the new democratic revolutionary movement led by our Party. The handful of counterrevolutionary revisionists and the top Party person in authority taking the capitalist road who was supporting them from behind were singing the same tune as imperialism and feudalism when they applauded this reactionary, thoroughly traitorous film which opposes the Chinese revolution and insults the revolutionary masses. When they did this they were simply serving as mouthpieces for the counterrevolutionary propaganda of imperialism and feudalism. This has completely exposed their counterrevolutionary class stand which is that of the landlords and bourgeoisie.

The fact that the top Party person in authority taking the capitalist road so bitterly hates the revolutionary mass movements in history helps us to understand better why, in the current Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, he put forward, in collaboration with another top Party person in authority taking the capitalist road, a bourgeois reactionary line in a vain attempt to extinguish the revolutionary flames set alight by Chairman Mao himself, why he confused right and wrong and turned things upside down, organized converging attacks against revolutionaries, suppressed the masses and carried out a white terror, and why he tried in a hundred and one ways to boost the arrogance of the bourgeoisie and crush the spirit of the proletariat.

What should be one's attitude toward bourgeois reformism?

One's attitude toward bourgeois reformism is, in reality, a question of one's attitude toward the socialist road and the capitalist road.

With regard to this fundamental question which concerns the future of the Chinese revolution, differences of principle have long existed between the proletarian revolutionaries headed by Chairman Mao and the Party people in authority taking the capitalist road. These differences of principle became even more acute after China was liberated. The question of what attitude should one take toward the reactionary film *The Inside Story of the Ching Court* was a point at which these differences came to a head. This was the first fight at close quarters in the struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie and between the socialist road and the capitalist road on the cultural and ideological fronts. In this fight, in their evaluations of the film, the proletarian revolutionaries headed by Chairman Mao, on the one hand, and the handful of Party people in authority taking the capitalist road, on the other, gave completely different answers to the question of which direction should China take.

A handful of counterrevolutionary revisionists and the top Party person in authority taking the capitalist road, who was supporting them from behind, did their best to boost this reactionary film which opposes revolution and sings the praises of reformism. They aimed to get help from the dead souls of bourgeois reformism and using the latter's names, robes, and slogans to spread capitalism in China.

The Reform Movement of 1898 which the film glorifies was a reformist movement of the Chinese bourgeoisie. This movement was launched by certain members of the feudal ruling class and a number of bourgeois reformers who were starting to break away from the feudal ruling class. They launched this movement under the threat of a revolutionary storm and the disaster of national subjugation and in the interests of the landlords and the bourgeoisie. This was an attempt to lead China onto the road of capitalism through reformist modernization and constitutional reform from above.

Under the historical conditions of the time, the 1898 Reform Movement was, to some extent, a blow against the ideological domination of the feudal ruling class and it played a certain enlightening role in the process of ideological emancipation. We have always taken note of this point. However, such recognition means making a critical assessment of historical personages and incidents from the viewpoint of historical materialism. It does not in any way mean an unprincipled glorifying of the 1898 Reform Movement and its representative participants. The representative persons of the 1898 Reform Movement were themselves rulers who exploited and oppressed the working people. Their

reformist goal did not and could never serve the interests of the people's revolution; they aimed at consolidating their rule and exploiting the people even more effectively.

What they wanted to change was not the essence but only some minor aspects of the old order. The illusion they cherished was simply the gradual transformation by devious means of the landlord economy into a semi-landlord and semi-capitalist economy (actually a semi-feudal and semi-colonial economy). This was an attempt to head off the people's revolutionary movement and suppress the revolution in unapparent ways. Even at that time, therefore, reformism could never be the way out for the Chinese people.

At the end of the nineteenth century, there already existed two roads of social reform in China: one was the bourgeois reformist road which meant the attempt to get to capitalism by means of constitutional reform and modernization from above. In the historical conditions of China at that time, this could not be other than a false, impassable, and reactionary road because China lacked the historical conditions for reformist modernization such as existed in western Europe and Japan. China was then being gradually reduced to a semi-feudal and semi-colonial state under imperialist aggression. Yet Kang Yu-wei and Liang Chi-chao, leaders of the Chinese bourgeois reformists, placed their hopes for constitutional reform and modernization precisely on imperialism. They cherished the illusion that they could go over completely to the side of imperialism and rely on its strength to realize their aims of constitutional reform and modernization. The result of that could only be to bring a wolf into the house and accelerate the process of reducing China to a semi-colonial, semi-feudal state, in which the development of capitalism in China would be absolutely out of the question. The other road of social reform was for the broad masses to rise up and make revolution by armed struggle. Both the Taiping Revolution and the Yi Ho Tuan movement took this road. These revolutions did not achieve final victory because they lacked proletarian leadership. However, they dealt heavy blows at imperialism and feudalism and promoted China's historical advance.

"I raise my sword to laugh at the sky." A most tragic and moving episode of the 1898 Reform Movement was the death of Tan Szu-tung, a courageous and enlightening thinker. His death announced the premature end of this movement and the bankruptcy of the bourgeois reformist road. Half a century later, however, the reactionary film *Inside Story of the Ching Court* again advocated bourgeois reformism, which had long ago gone bankrupt. This film does its utmost to spread the nonsensical idea that "if China is to become rich and strong, there must be constitutional reform and modernization!" Through the mouth of the Emperor Kuang Hsu, the film gives high praise to constitutional reform and modernization, extravagantly lauding reformism in such words as "Meiji reforms," "the imperial decree on constitutional reform," and "if China continues to reform in this way, in less than 30 years it will become the richest and most powerful state in the world!" This is a crazy call for a bourgeois republic, for western bourgeois civilization and for the bourgeois reformist road, which will never be tolerated by the revolutionary people!

The film lauds to the skies the representative persons of bourgeois reformism, the Emperor Kuang Hsu in particular. It says that the emperor "wearied his brain and suffered much vexation. . . in the interests of the state and the people," and pictures him as saying "as long as Quotations from Chairman Mao Tse-tung Eng. ed., Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1966, p. 118.the affairs of state are going well. . . personal health is of little account."

Especially vicious is the way that the film, while singing the praises of emperors, kings, ministers, and generals and prettifying bourgeois reformism, tries by every means to smear the working people and

vilify the masses as a “mob.” Toward the end of the film, the scenarist, through distorted and slanderous images of peasants and village women, extravagantly glorifies the Emperor Kuang Hsu, praising him as a “good emperor,” “helping us, the people,” and saying that “we all think of His Majesty!” The villagers “offer” eggs and other refreshments to the Emperor Kuang Hsu. On his departure, the film shows “the people kneeling along the roadside to see him off.” The film gives currency to the slander that “the masses are most obedient and most easily satisfied.” Are the masses of people really such easygoing, obedient, base, and ugly mobs? It is absolutely impermissible to smear the working people! Chairman Mao teaches us: “The people, and the people alone, are the motive force in the making of world history.” (11) That the handful of counterrevolutionary revisionists and the top Party person in authority taking the capitalist road, who supports them from behind, have done so much to sing the praises of this reactionary film which glorifies emperors and kings, ministers and generals, smears the working people, and preaches bourgeois reformism only serves to expose their true colours of all-out opposition to Marxism-Leninism, Mao Tse-tung’s thought.

The Chinese people won revolutionary victory through protracted armed struggle under the leadership of Chairman Mao, and on the eve of the founding of the People’s Republic of China, Chairman Mao himself summed up the revolutionary struggles of the past 100 years, criticizing and repudiating the bourgeois reformist road and proclaiming that “western bourgeois civilization, bourgeois democracy, and the plan for a bourgeois republic have all gone bankrupt in the eyes of the Chinese people.” What angers people especially is the fact that after all this the handful of counterrevolutionary revisionists and the top Party person in authority taking the capitalist road should have described this reactionary, out-and-out traitorous film, which sings the praises of bourgeois reformism and advocates the capitalist road, as a “patriotic” film and put it on show in a big way in every part of China without criticism and repudiation. If this can be tolerated, what cannot be tolerated?

In his article, “On the People’s Democratic Dictatorship,” Chairman Mao states: “From the time of China’s defeat in the Opium War of 1840, Chinese progressives went through untold hardships in their quest for truth from the Western countries.” Chinese who then sought progress maintained that “only modernization could save China, only learning from foreign countries could modernize China.” “The Japanese had been successful in learning from the West, and the Chinese also wished to learn from the Japanese.” But, “imperialist aggression shattered the fond dreams of the Chinese about learning from the West. It was very odd—why were the teachers always committing aggression against their pupil? The Chinese learned a good deal from the West, but they could not make it work and were never able to realize their ideals.” “The salvos of the October Revolution brought us Marxism-Leninism.” “Under the leadership of the Communist Party of China, the Chinese people, after driving out Japanese imperialism, waged the People’s War of Liberation for three years and have basically won victory.” “Bourgeois democracy has given way to people’s democracy under the leadership of the working class and the bourgeois republic to the people’s republic. This has made it possible to achieve socialism and communism through the people’s republic, to abolish classes, and enter a world of Great Harmony. Kang Yu-wei wrote Ta Tung Shu, or the Book of Great Harmony, but he did not and could not find the way to achieve Great Harmony. There are bourgeois republics in foreign lands, but China cannot have a bourgeois republic because she is a country suffering under imperialist oppression. The only way is through a people’s republic led by the working class.” (12)

A handful of counterrevolutionary revisionists and the top Party person in authority taking the capitalist road disregarded the historical facts as well as the warnings given by Chairman Mao. They continued to use the reactionary and out-and-out traitorous film, *Inside Story of the Ching Court*, to prettify western bourgeois civilization, prettify bourgeois democracy, prettify the bourgeois republic, and advocate bourgeois reformism and the capitalist road. This amounts to flagrantly opposing Mao Tse-tung's thought and vainly attempting a restoration of capitalism in China. They put all their efforts into extolling the reactionary film, *Inside Story of the Ching Court*, precisely because this film, which opposes revolution and eulogizes reform, serves to beat the gongs and clear the way for them to stage a capitalist restoration. What they did was in effect to use people of former times to sing the praises of capitalism and the road of bourgeois reformism, to use this film to mislead the masses and prettify bourgeois reformism, their ultimate purpose being to overthrow the people's regime, undermine our dictatorship of the proletariat, and place the fruits of the victory of the revolution in the hands of the bourgeoisie.

The serious struggle that developed around the reactionary film, *Inside Story of the Ching Court*, is by no means merely a question of one film, but a struggle between the two classes, the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, a struggle between Marxism-Leninism, Mao Tse-tung's thought on the one hand, and bourgeois reformist and revisionist ideas on the other, a struggle between an attempt at capitalist restoration and the efforts of the proletariat opposed to capitalist restoration. In the final analysis, it is a struggle to determine who will win, capitalism or socialism.

Under the leadership of their great leader Chairman Mao, the Chinese people fought hard, bloody battles, advanced wave upon wave, and finally carried the struggle against imperialism and feudalism to victory. With the whole country liberated, where should liberated China go? To whom should the fruits of victory belong? Which class was entitled to pick the peaches that had grown, watered by the blood and lives of thousands upon thousands of revolutionary martyrs? Such major questions were the focus of the struggle waged between various classes in Chinese society not only at that time; they remain so even today.

The bourgeoisie wanted to snatch the fruits of victory from out of the hands of the people. They wanted to pick the peaches. They wanted China, just liberated, to take the capitalist road. The top Party person in authority taking the capitalist road was the one to pick the peaches on behalf of the bourgeoisie.

Since liberation, the top Party person in authority taking the capitalist road has gone on dreaming night and day of capitalist restoration, obstinately clinging to his bourgeois world outlook, zealously yearning for bourgeois reformism, and trying his utmost to stop the Chinese revolution halfway, thus giving a big boost to capitalism.

Chairman Mao has said that the founding of the People's Republic of China on October 1, 1949, marked the basic completion of the stage of new democratic revolution and the beginning of the stage of socialist revolution. The top Party person in authority taking the capitalist road, however, harped on a contrary tune, painstakingly preached "consolidation of the new democratic order," and campaigned for the development of capitalism in China.

Before and after the showing throughout the country of the reactionary film, *Inside Story of the Ching Court*, he campaigned everywhere, making many sinister speeches, issuing many sinister directives, energetically praising the so-called "progress" and "glory" of the capitalist system, and

spreading the absurd idea that “exploitation is no crime,” “to rebel is not justified.” Marx said: “Capital comes [into the world] dripping from head to foot, from every pore, with blood and dirt.”<sup>13</sup> But, the top Party person in authority taking the capitalist road had this to say: “In China, there is not too much capitalism, but too little”; “It is necessary to develop capitalist exploitation for such exploitation is progressive”; “Instead of being an evil, capitalist exploitation today is a contribution.” He loudly stated that “the working people do not oppose exploitation, but welcome it”; and that “the more the capitalists, the more the exploitation, the more satisfaction we will have.” He even shamelessly told a number of capitalists that “the agony of the workers is unemployment. What they fear is that no one will exploit them. Therefore, they feel it better to be exploited than not.” “The workers want you to exploit them. If you do not exploit them, they will be miserable.” “The capitalists are also serving the people.” “If you are able to exploit more, you will be benefiting both the state and the people.” “The more you exploit, the greater will be your merit and glory.” “Exploitation by the capitalists has its merits in history and such merits are immortal.” He energetically spread the idea that “exploitation is legal,” saying: “It is legal to make [a] profit, however great it may be. “It is also legal to indulge in beautiful clothes, rouge and powder and wining and dining.” Talking like a clown, he addressed capitalists: “Messrs. capitalists! I beg you to exploit me! If you exploit me, I shall be able to feed myself and my wife and children will be able to live. If you do not exploit me, that will be terrible.”

When the workers did not accept his stinking reactionary theories, he slandered them as “lacking political understanding and having a low level of political consciousness.” Speaking like an accomplice of the capitalists, he maliciously threatened the workers: “If the workers are unruly, it is legal (for the capitalists) to struggle against (them).”

At the same time, he also vigorously advocated the development of capitalist economy in the rural areas, clamouring for “long-term protection of the rich-peasant economy,” advancing the “four freedoms” (freedom of usury, of hiring labour, land sale, and private enterprise). He advocated vigorous efforts to foster the type of peasant “who owns three horses, a plough, and a cart” so as to develop the rich-peasant economy. He talked such nonsense as: “At present, exploitation saves people and it is dogmatic to forbid exploitation. Now there must be exploitation and it should be welcomed. If the refugees from south of the Great Wall who go to northeast China are exploited by the rich peasants there, these refugees will be very grateful for such exploitation.” “Hiring hands is not exploitation; it increases the wealth of society.” He also proposed that there should be “no limitation” on hiring hands to till the land. “It is legal to hire hands to till the land; this benefits the masses too.” He claimed that “those who exploit can also be socialists” and that “there is nothing to be afraid of, should there be 10,000 rich-peasant Party members in northeast China.” He tried to get the capitalist economy to swiftly flood the rural areas.

In singing the praises of the man-eating capitalist system of exploitation, not even the hired scholars of the bourgeoisie and the motley crew of apologists for old and modern revisionism could catch up with this top Party person in authority taking the capitalist road.

Each plant yields its own particular fruit; each class speaks in its own terms. The top Party person in authority taking the capitalist road thinks and loves capitalism and talks capitalism too. The cannibal philosophy that he peddles serves entirely to develop capitalism and safeguard the bloody system of exploitation of man by man. His voice is the voice of vampires and parasites. This thoroughly exposes his filthy, ugly bourgeois soul.

In trying to justify himself, the top Party person in authority taking the capitalist road said that his case was one of “a veteran revolutionary meeting new problems.”

What a “veteran revolutionary meeting new problems”!

Could there be a “veteran revolutionary” so frantically carrying out activities to restore capitalism?

Could there be a “veteran revolutionary” who would so wildly oppose our great leader Chairman Mao and the great thought of Mao Tse-tung?

If he really is a “veteran revolutionary,” then let him explain:

Why is it that, on the eve of the outbreak of the War of Resistance Against Japan, you preached so vigorously the philosophy of survival, a capitulationist philosophy, a traitor’s philosophy, and directed some people to make confessions and surrender to the Kuomintang and betray the Communist Party, openly publish “anti-communist statements” and vow “firmly to oppose communism”?

Why is it that, after the victory of the War of Resistance, you advanced the capitulationist line of “a new stage of peace and democracy”?

Why is it that, after liberation, you did your utmost to oppose the socialist transformation of capitalist industry and commerce, oppose agricultural cooperation, and slash the number of agricultural cooperatives?

Why is it that, after the completion of the transformation of capitalist industry and commerce, agriculture and handicrafts, you painstakingly propagated the dying out of class struggle and actively advocated class collaboration and the liquidation of class struggle?

Why is it that, during the three difficult years, you echoed the ghosts and monsters at home and abroad in viciously attacking the three red banners [the Party’s general line for building socialism, the great leap forward, and the people’s communes], while advocating the revisionist line of “the extension of plots for private use and of free markets, the increase of small enterprises with sole responsibility for their own profits or losses, the fixing of output quotas based on the household,” and “the liquidation of struggle in our relations with imperialism, the reactionaries, and modern revisionism, and reduction of assistance and support to the revolutionary struggle of other peoples”?

Why is it that you republished in 1962 that poisonous weed, that deceitful book on self-cultivation of Communists which does not advocate revolution, class struggle, the seizure of political power, and the dictatorship of the proletariat, which opposes Marxism-Leninism, Mao Tse-tung’s thought, preaches a decadent bourgeois world outlook and the reactionary philosophy of bourgeois idealism?

Why is it that in the socialist education movement you put forward and pushed through the opportunist line which was “Left” in form but Right in essence to sabotage the socialist education movement?

Why is it that in the course of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution you have colluded with another top Party person in authority taking the capitalist road in putting forward and carrying out the bourgeois reactionary line?

There is only one answer: You are not at all a “veteran revolutionary”! You are a sham revolutionary, a counterrevolutionary. You are a Khrushchev lying right beside us!

During the past seventeen years, a handful of counterrevolutionary revisionists, with the support of the top Party person in authority taking the capitalist road, has launched a frenzied, all-round attack on the proletariat, spreading a great deal of poison in the fields of politics, economy, culture, and education.

In this Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, we must follow Chairman Mao’s teachings, organize a mighty cultural army of the proletarian revolution, thoroughly smash the frenzied attacks by this handful of counterrevolutionary revisionists and the top Party person in authority taking the capitalist road, dig out the main root of revisionism in our country, overthrow careerists and conspirators like Khrushchev, prevent such bad elements from usurping the leadership of the Party and the state, and guard against the restoration of capitalism, so as to guarantee that our country will never change its colour!

“With power and to spare we must pursue the tottering foe.” This Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution initiated and led by our great leader Chairman Mao himself is aimed precisely at mobilizing the hundreds of millions of people to pursue relentlessly the handful of counterrevolutionary revisionists and the top Party person in authority taking the capitalist road who supports them from behind, to recapture all the citadels they usurped and ensure that Mao Tse-tung’s thought occupy all positions. It is precisely as Comrade Lin Piao said in speaking about this Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution: “It is a big campaign; it is a general attack on the ideas of the bourgeoisie and all other exploiting classes.” We must respond to the great call of Chairman Mao to hold high the revolutionary banner of criticism and repudiation, plunge bravely into the struggle, thoroughly criticize, repudiate, and eliminate in all fields the noxious influences of the bourgeois reactionary line represented by the top Party person in authority taking the capitalist road, we must vigorously destroy the old ideas of the exploiting classes and establish the complete ascendancy of Mao Tse-tung’s thought.

The road of struggle is tortuous and its development is uneven. There is resistance along the road of advance. We must overcome all difficulties, break down all resistance and carry the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution through to the end; we must not give up halfway.

Unfurl the red banner of the great and invincible thought of Mao Tse-tung all over China; may it shine for ever in splendour!

Long live the victory of the movement of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution led personally by our respected and beloved leader Chairman Mao!

Notes:

1. The Life of Wu Hsun was a most pernicious counterrevolutionary film which fervently praised the landlord class and its lackeys, frenziedly advocated the most shameless slavishness and

capitulationism, and maliciously slandered the peasants' revolutionary struggles. Wu Hsun (1838-1896) was a landlord's toady whom the film turned into a "great man" willing to sacrifice himself to provide poor peasant children with a chance to study.—Tr.

2. Studies on "The Dream of the Red Chamber" is a book which evaluated this classical novel from the bourgeois idealist point of view and used bourgeois methods of textual research.— Tr.

3. Chen Fei (1876-1900), concubine of Emperor Kuang Hsu.

4. "The Role of the Chinese Communist Party in the National War," Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung, Eng. ed., Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1965, Vol. II, p. 196.

5. Mao Tse-tung, Speech at the Meeting of People From Various Walks of Life in Yen-an Celebrating Stalin's 60th Birthday Anniversary.

6. "The Chinese Revolution and the Chinese Communist Party," Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung, Eng. ed., Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1965, Vol. II, p. 314.

7. "On Tactics Against Japanese Imperialism," Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung, Eng. ed., Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1965, Vol. I, p. 170.

8. "The Chinese Revolution and the Chinese Communist Party," Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung, Eng. ed., Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1965, Vol. II, p. 314.

9. V. I. Lenin, Collected Works, Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1960, Vol. IV, p. 374.

10. "On Practice," Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung, Eng. ed., Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1965, Vol. I, p. 301.

11. "On the People's Democratic Dictatorship," Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung, Eng. ed., Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1961, Vol. IV, pp. 412-44.

12. K. Marx, Capital, Eng. ed., Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1954, Vol. I, p. 760.

## 6. About the criticism of Wang Guangmei

In January 1967, some people from Tsinghua University, Kuai Dafu, used the lie that Wang Guangmei's<sup>388</sup> daughter had been involved in a "car accident" to stage an "outwit Wang Guangmei and capture her". The incident was their own doing. When the Premier found out about it, he immediately sent his secretary to take Wang Guangmei back to Zhongnanhai. When the Chairman found out about it later, he said that the Communist Party was all about being open and aboveboard, and that it was forbidden to engage in such deceitful things. We in the Central Cultural Revolution Group had no prior knowledge of this matter. It is likely that they were inspired by Ye Xiangzhen's trick to capture Peng Zhen and wanted to do something amazing. There was indeed a trend at that time, as if whoever criticised someone at a higher level could prove himself revolutionary.

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<sup>388</sup> Wang Guangmei (1921-2006) was the daughter of a senior government minister of the northern Beiyang Government (1912-1928). Her father, Wang Zhichang, was head of the ministry of agriculture and commerce and attended the 1919 Paris Peace Conference and the 1921-22 Washington Naval Conference. As a student, Wang Guangmei achieved prominence as a brilliant mathematician and gained a master's degree in atomic physics. In 1946, she was requested to serve as an interpreter for the CCP in its negotiations with the Guomindang and the USA. She was at Yan'an at this stage, and joined the Party in 1948, marrying Liu Shaoqi. After he became President of China in 1959, she accompanied him on a number of overseas visits. On a visit to Indonesia, she wore a cheongsam (qipao) and a pearl necklace. In mid-1966, she headed a work team sent to Qinghua University which tried to suppress the Red Guards. They later subjected her to a criticism session, dressing her in a cheongsam and a "necklace" of ping-pong balls to ridicule her bourgeois lifestyle. She was put under house arrest, then imprisoned for 12 years in Qingchen Prison. On her release in 1979, she was elected a permanent member of the National People's Political Consultative Conference. She established the Hope Project to raise funds for schools in poorer parts of China.

By the time the article "Patriotism or National Betrayal" appeared in the newspaper, Qinghua University again proposed to hold a 300,000-strong congress to fight Wang Guangmei. Kuai Dafu came to talk to me. I said, "I can't decide on this, you have to consult the Premier". Later, after the Central Committee met and discussed the matter, it agreed to their request. The whole struggle against Wang Guangmei was carried out under the guidance of the Premier, and I assisted him in controlling the overall situation. I was in constant telephone contact with the scene of the criticism, and they had to call the Premier and me every ten minutes or so to report on the situation at the scene, basically saying that everything was fine. At the criticism meeting, they draped Wang Guangmei in a cheongsam and hung a string of ping-pong ball necklaces, all of which were done by people underneath Kuai Dafu, not by someone from above. A girl under Kuai Dafu came to ask the Premier for the clothes, necklaces and other things Wang Guangmei wore when she went abroad, saying she wanted to dress her up like she did when she went abroad. The Premier did not approve of this, and Jiang Qing supported the Premier's opinion and did not approve either. Jiang Qing also made a point of telling me that I should not let the students mess around, otherwise, if something happened, I would not be able to explain to the Chairman.

Wang Guangmei answered questions posed by the Red Guard students at the criticism session. Her answers were all very decent and clever. I didn't ever think that someone who came from a privileged young lady's background could have such a talent. It's just a pity that she used this talent in the wrong way.

Wang Guangmei and I knew each other very early. After I joined the Political Secretary's Office in Zhongnanhai, Wang Guangmei and I were in the same party group. She often came to join in the organisational life with us. At that time, the organisational life was very strict. Sometimes when she did not come, someone would raise an opinion during the meeting and she had to make a self-criticism at the meeting. As I was a member of the Party branch in the secretary's office and the leader of the Party group, she would sometimes come and take the initiative to talk to me about some issues.

Wang Guangmei was a senior graduate of the Physics Department of Furen Catholic University. She taught us what nuclear fission and nuclear fusion were. She was a good speaker. I always felt that she had a keen eye for people and she was good at uniting people. Wang Li was the one who first carried out Chairman Mao's instructions and supported her antagonist, Kuai Dafu, and the resentment she felt towards Wang Li would not be small. However, when Wang Li met her after the Cultural Revolution and apologised to her, she said to him that you were also a victim, so let's not talk about the past. In one sentence, Wang Li was won over.

Wang Guangmei had a track record of having a relatively close relationship with US Marine Corps intelligence officers. At the beginning of the founding of the country, I, Wang Wen, Zhang Weicheng and Shen Dongnian were part of the interrogation team in the secretary's office of Zhongnanhai and were responsible for examining her. At that time, she said that after the end of the war, while she was on good terms with her comrades in the Communist Party, she was also on good terms with two intelligence officers from the United States Marine Corps, but she only had personal dealings and never talked about intelligence work. After discussion, we concluded that she and the US Marine Corps intelligence officers were just friends in general. She herself was influenced by the Communist Party at the time and worked as an interpreter for the Communists during the peace talks and did very well at the time, so she was a progressive-minded young person. Their family was a large one, with some of her siblings joining the Communist Party and some joining the Guomindang. She was

the leftist in the family. However, during the Cultural Revolution, she was again under scrutiny by the Central Government for these things.

But she was not very generous. After I was released from Qincheng, I was told that it was because she suggested to the then Central Government that Kuai Dafu could not stay and live in Beijing that Kuai Dafu was forced to leave Beijing and go south to make a living. However, I was also told that in her later years she told a journalist interviewing her that, looking at the reality of China after the reform **and** opening up, it might have been necessary for Chairman Mao to launch the Cultural Revolution back then. If she really said that, then she was more like a human being than Wang Li and Mu Xin, who were so far to the left back then and who are now sparing no effort to completely deny the Cultural Revolution.

### **7. The siege of Zhongnanhai and the criticism of "Liu, Deng and Tao"**

In October 1966, when the criticism of the bourgeois reactionary line began, rebel groups such as the August 1st Combat Team of the Jiangyong College asked Liu Shaoqi to go to their school to make an inspection. Liu Shaoqi wrote to Chairman Mao for instructions, who disagreed with Liu Shaoqi's visit for inspection and forwarded Liu Shaoqi's letter to the Premier on 6 January 1967, asking him to work with the students.

Soon after, another student organization provided material that Liu Shaoqi had been arrested and defected in his history. The Central Cultural Revolution Group suggested to the Central Committee that a task force be set up to examine Liu Shaoqi. However, Chairman Mao did not agree to set up a task force as he considered the materials insufficient. Later the Premier said, "Whether there are problems or not, there must be an investigation!" So, the investigation into Liu Shaoqi's history was put under the Wang Guangmei Task Force. Only after some problems had been identified and the Chairman consulted did he agree to set up the Liu Shaoqi Task Force.

After April 1967, organizations such as Nankai University in Tianjin and the New 81st Combat Group of the Jiangyong College set up "Seize Liu Liaison Stations" and later joined with other organizations to set up "Seize Liu Firing Line Headquarters" to arrest Liu Shaoqi in Zhongnanhai.

The situation of the students at that time was also very complicated. Those who came to the gates of Zhongnanhai to seize Liu Shaoqi included the anti-Work Group rebels, and there was also a group of students who were originally supporters of Liu Shaoqi (and the Work Group), but now they were trying to act more radical than anyone else, and it was mainly these two groups of students who first came to Zhongnanhai to seize Liu Shaoqi.

At first, there were not many people. Later, when students from other schools heard about it, they all came in droves to support it. The students said, "Chairman Mao has said that we should go to the masses, why don't you, Liu Shaoqi, come to the masses?" But there was a reason why Liu Shaoqi did not come out, because Chairman Mao had instructions that there should be no face-to-face struggle against him, but back-to-back struggles. This was also the opinion of our Central Cultural Revolution Group and the General Office of the Central Committee. If we really let Liu Shaoqi go to the masses, we might get into trouble.

Premier Zhou asked Wang Dongxing to send someone to persuade the students to go back, and assured them that they could ask Liu Shaoqi to write a written self-criticism according to the issues

they raised. But the students still wouldn't leave, so the Premier asked me to step in and deal with them.

In the early hours of July 4, 1967, I went to the "Seize Liu firing line" to persuade the rebels to withdraw from Zhongnanhai, in accordance with the Premier's instructions, and at the same time supported them in their criticism of Liu Shaoqi, promising to get him write a self-criticism, to which the students agreed. On July 8, Liu Shaoqi wrote an inspection, and Wang Dongxing handed it over to the "New August 1st" rebel group of the School of Construction and Engineering. But this time the "Old August 1st" rebel group had fractured, "Old August 1st" were the old rebels, and "New August 1st" had split from them. Liu Shaoqi had only reported to the "New August 1st". If you don't report to the "Old August 1st", that wouldn't work. On the other hand, Liu Shaoqi's self-criticism was accused by them of being a "false confession and true counterattack", which triggered a greater wave of criticism of Liu.

The "old August 1st" issued an "urgent mobilization order" to get Liu Shaoqi out of Zhongnanhai, and went outside the West Gate of Zhongnanhai to install a loudspeaker, to get Liu Shaoqi out of Zhongnanhai. In this way, in addition to the student organisations, people from factories, mines and institutions also came to the West Gate of Zhongnanhai, and later even peasants from the suburbs came. They set up camp on the pavements on both sides of Zhongnanhai's West Gate, in a state somewhat similar to what I saw years later when I went to the United States and saw American workers encircling the White House with a cardboard shelter outside the White House. This was the siege of Zhongnanhai back then.

The Central Cultural Revolution Group was supportive of the criticism of Liu Shaoqi, but none of the Central Cultural Revolution Group was supportive of the siege of Zhongnanhai. At first, we didn't take it too seriously. But we didn't expect it to become such a big deal that Zhongnanhai was really besieged, with tens of thousands of people at the most. Moreover, the loudspeakers were blaring at Zhongnanhai day and night, regardless of the time of day or night. It caused a great disturbance to our Zhongnanhai office. Even the Premier was unable to work because of the noise. I went to speak many times, and so did Chen Boda, and urged them to go back. But they didn't listen. Then there was a hunger strike. This was not easy to handle. If people really died, we would not be able to explain it.

At this time, the Premier chaired a meeting of the Central Cultural Revolution. The Premier said, "The siege of Zhongnanhai has affected the work of the Central Committee. It doesn't matter if I can't work, but if the Chairman is back, how can he sleep well? The Chairman was so sensitive to sleep that he would wake up even if a crow cawed. The Premier asked Xie Fuzhi and me to go and persuade the people to evacuate. At that time, the Beijing Municipal Revolutionary Committee had already been set up, and Xie Fuzhi was the head of the Committee.

So, I went with Xie Fuzhi to receive their representatives. When I met them, I said, "Those of you students who have announced hunger strikes go and eat first, or we won't receive you". They then went and had a bowl of noodles or something. Then I said to them that Chairman Mao did not agree to hand Liu Shaoqi over to the masses for struggle. It is fine for you to meet to criticise him, as long as you reason thoroughly and understand in theory the danger of the capitalist-roaders to China, you don't necessarily have to have a face-to-face struggle with him. But no matter how hard we tried to talk, they refused to agree and insisted that they must see Liu Shaoqi in person and that they must struggle against him.

Later, when I was convicted, those who tried me said that I had instigated the siege of Zhongnanhai and that this was a major crime against me. I asked what factual basis they had. During the Cultural Revolution, when we were investigating the May 16 Incident, we had already brought in those students for questioning. They checked the records of my talks with the students, and all my speeches were to persuade them to go back. They could not produce any evidence to refute me, so they said that there was no need for evidence, and that it was "well known". I said that my opposition to Liu Shaoqi was indeed well known, but how could they say that it was well-known that I had instigated the masses to surround Zhongnanhai, when it was just an unfounded speculation? They could not answer me, so they had to reply with silence.

The Central Cultural Revolution Group met again from 3 to 4 August 1967 to discuss options. The Premier put forward one option, which he said, was to hold a general meeting in Tiananmen Square on August 5, the first anniversary of the publication of Chairman Mao's "Bombard the Headquarters", to denounce Liu Shaoqi, Deng Xiaoping, and the newly defeated Tao Zhu. A criticism meeting was also held in Zhongnanhai with the participation of the masses from the Security Bureau and the Secretariat. The Premier said that the people in Zhongnanhai were disciplined and had a good grasp of the situation, so let them meet to struggle against "Liu, Deng and Tao". No one from outside was allowed to come in. At the same time, the criticism meetings held in Zhongnanhai were broadcast on Tiananmen Square to meet the wishes of the masses. The decision was made and reported to the Chairman by Kang Sheng and the Premier.

The Premier asked Xie Fuzhi and I to go and convey this decision to the masses and persuade them to withdraw from the siege of Zhongnanhai after a general meeting. We brought in two big trucks from the army and set up big loudspeakers on them. Xie Fuzhi and I stood up on the trucks and used the loudspeakers to address the masses who had surrounded Zhongnanhai. We said that August 5 was the first anniversary of the publication of Chairman Mao's "Bombard the Headquarters", and that the Central Cultural Revolution had decided to hold a criticism meeting in Zhongnanhai, as well as a commemorative meeting in Tiananmen Square. The live broadcast of the struggle meeting in Zhongnanhai would be broadcast on Tiananmen Square. After listening to the broadcast, representatives of the Red Guards and workers would speak out in criticism from the Tiananmen Square for further denunciation. This would be a combination of inside and outside to show the power of the people. After the commemorative meeting, all the people withdrew to their original units, dismantled all the tents and huts, and later concentrated on continuing the great criticism in their original units. The students and workers all shouted in support of the Central Committee's decision and cheered long live Chairman Mao.

So Xie Fuzhi and I split up. He went to set up the Tiananmen Conference, and I went to set up the internal criticism meetings in Zhongnanhai. At that time, we called in technicians from the Broadcasting Bureau to study how to connect the meeting in Zhongnanhai to the meeting in Tiananmen. They said that Zhongnanhai and Chang'an Street were already wired, so there was no need to pull wires, just connect them.

I didn't dare to take the criticism sessions inside Zhongnanhai lightly. Don't think that the level of cadres in Zhongnanhai is high, there are also people who are quite intense, and once face-to-face criticism starts, there is a risk of irrational situations occurring. Zhang Linzhi's death is a lesson from the past. I could not afford to take responsibility for the death of Liu Shaoqi, not to mention the fact that he was sick for two days after the struggle session. Therefore, Wang Liang'en (the deputy director of the Central Office) and I specially arranged for special people to control order at the

meeting. I asked Wang Daoming and Jiao Yushan, who were in charge of the Cultural Revolution Office, to come to the venue. Wang Daoming was the secretary of the branch of the Central Cultural Revolution Office, a very capable young man who was an activist in studying Mao's Selected Works. I told him to organise a few strong men to stand next to Liu Shaoqi and the others, and to separate them if they saw anyone approaching. I also discussed with Wang Liang'en about setting up security guards to be ready to go out and stop any martial fighting in case it occurred, and to end the meeting early immediately and have the head of the security bureau send them home. I said at the time that if there was confrontation or conflict at the meeting, or if "Liu, Deng or Tao" said something to provoke us, then there was a risk of mass violence, which would discredit the movement. "At this point, you must send out your guards to stop it immediately. Whether the crowd pushes you or beats you, you must not resist. If they shout 'Defend Chairman Mao!' then you must shout 'Chairman Mao has instructed that we should fight with reason, not with violence', and that is your task". Moreover, it was stipulated that no PLA soldier was allowed to carry a weapon, nor was any member of the crowd allowed to carry sticks. All these arrangements we made are documented by the security regiment at the time. After I had made the arrangements, I immediately reported to the Premier, Chen Boda and Jiang Qing. They all agreed, and the Premier was particularly pleased that Wang Liang'en was in charge of the guards to prevent armed struggle. Wang Liang'en made a long-distance phone call to Wang Dongxing, who was at the Chairman's side, to report on this.

When the criticism sessions were held, I was in the office of the Central Cultural Revolution Group keeping track of the whole situation, and Wang Liang'en, Wang Daoming and others had to call me every ten minutes or so to report on the situation at the scene. And during the whole course of the criticism session, the Premier also sent someone to observe the scene from beginning to end. We also reported to him and Chen Boda, Kang Sheng and Jiang Qing once every ten minutes.

The Zhongnanhai criticism meeting was, in fact, very peaceful, and there were no scenes of armed conflict throughout the meeting. The Central Xinhai Film Studio was on hand to film news footage. At the meeting to criticise Liu Shaoqi, a young female cadre tried to slap Liu Shaoqi on the head with a quotation book, but missed it because of the distance. Immediately a guard came up and stopped it. The entire criticism meeting was a vocal war of words, and Liu Shaoqi did not say anything, knowing that it was useless for him to speak at such times. The people who spoke were all speaking in accordance with the pre-prepared arrangements. Liu Shaoqi was usually rather indifferent to the people below him, so even his secretary and waiter participated in the criticism with great enthusiasm.

When criticising Deng Xiaoping, I set it up for him to sit and participate. This was because the Chairman had said that Liu and Deng should be separated and that Deng should be treated differently from Liu. So Deng Xiaoping was always sitting and listening to the criticism of him.

When it came to the criticism of Tao Zhu, the control was just a little bit worse, Tao Zhu and the masses had a confrontation. At that time, I put the focus of prevention on Liu Shaoqi's side. But although there was a confrontation at Tao Zhu, there was no further violence.

**8. Chen Boda's document on the criticism of "Liu, Deng and Tao" added that their families should accompany them in the fight**

The decision to hold a criticism meeting of Liu, Deng and Tao in Zhongnanhai was discussed at a meeting of the Central Cultural Revolution Group chaired by the Premier. On this decision, the leaders of the Central Committee all signed and circled it. However, Chen Boda added to the document's approval the words for their families to also be involved.

When I read what Chen Boda added to the instructions, I felt in my heart that it was not very good, but I could not oppose it. Liu Shaoqi's wife, Wang Guangmei, was Liu Shaoqi's secretary, and she was pushing a capitalist-roader, bourgeois reactionary line at Qinghua University, suppressing the masses and forcing several students to die, so it was OK for her to be criticised with him. But Deng Xiaoping's wife did not care about Deng Xiaoping's affairs. She and the Chairman were old comrades, having worked together with him when he was in Jinggangshan. She was the same old revolutionary in terms of qualifications as Tao Zhu, and it was not a question of who listens to whom between them. In order to show his party spirit and selfless principles, Tao once suppressed Zeng Zhi's administrative rank to a very low level. When the Chairman found out about it, he said, "Good horses are ridden, good people are bullied", and criticized Tao Zhu, who then brought Zeng Zhi's rank up. So, I gave a special explanation to Wang Daoming and the others. I said that the matter of Tao Zhu has nothing to do with Zeng Zhi, she cannot be criticised, just tell her to sit and listen, and you have to protect her. I also want to make it clear to her that this meeting is being held today for Tao Zhu to come out and answer the questions raised by the masses, and her task is to protect Tao Zhu. In case Tao Zhu is too excited, she can go to comfort him, or nurse him if he suddenly falls ill in any way. But this incident was later used against me in court, saying that the three wives attending the struggle session was something I had made up. I told them that it was added by Chen Boda, not me. They asked Chen Boda about it, and Chen Boda denied it. But there were documents available, and the words on the documents that the families were taking part in the session were in Chen Boda's handwriting, but he refused to admit that he had written them. Later, the Ministry of Public Security hired a handwriting expert and the expert's unanimous conclusion was that the handwriting was written by Chen Boda. Only after the court produced a copy of the document and the expert's certificate did Chen Boda admit that he had written it.

## Chapter 24: The Central Cultural Revolution Group and the Cultural Revolution Rebels

1. The formation of the Cultural Revolution Rebels
2. Support for the Cultural Revolution Rebels by the Central Cultural Revolution Group
3. Problems arising from the support for the Cultural Revolution Rebels

### 1. The formation of the Cultural Revolution Rebels

When the "May 16 Circular" was issued and the big-character poster of Nie Yuanzi and seven others from Peking University was broadcast on the Central People's Broadcasting Station, students from universities and secondary schools all over the country first responded to the call of Chairman Mao and the Central Committee of the Party and actively participated in the Cultural Revolution movement, rising up in rebellion. They only responded to the call of the Party Central Committee to criticize the "three family village"<sup>389</sup> and uncover the gangsters. Many students targeted their struggle at teachers and individual leaders in their own schools, and some even took their class teachers, who were usually in charge of them, as the target of their "rebellion". The students' struggles and rebellions were more or less related to the central and local leaders of the time. Later on, they even directed their struggle towards the "landlords, rich peasants, counter-revolutionaries, bad elements, rightists and capitalists" in society, and even those who were not well-born. The main reason for this was to prevent the mass movement from going over their heads. Therefore, although there were many big-character posters in various schools at that time, it could not be said that Chairman Mao had launched the Cultural Revolution movement, but rather that the focus was to redirect the rebellion in the direction of the struggle against the capitalist-roaders within the Party.

The "big-character poster" of Nie Yuanzi and seven others at Beijing University was directed not only at the leadership of the university, but also at the old Beijing Municipal Committee, the Central Propaganda Department and the Ministry of Education, blowing the lid off the class struggle in these units and departments which had long been ruled by revisionist and bourgeois ideology. That's why Chairman Mao called it the first Marxist-Leninist big-character poster in the country. But Liu Shaoqi, Deng Xiaoping and others, who were directing the movement on the front line at the time, went in the opposite direction.

It was under these circumstances that Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping sent work groups to various schools. As the large-character posters of Nie Yuanzi and others were affirmed by Chairman Mao, the work group could not do anything to them for a while. However, a large number of students from other schools, such as Li Shiyong from Xi'an Jiaotong University and Kuai Dafu from Qinghua University, who had given their opinions to the leaders and put up big-character posters like Nie Yuanzi, were branded as "reactionary students" and "anti-Party elements" by the work group and the school leaders. The Work Group and some local leaders criticised, censored and even detained

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<sup>389</sup> "Notes from Three Family Village" was a series of articles critical of Mao's policies and written by Deng Tuo, Wu Han and Liao Mosha. In May 1966, Yao Wenyuan in Shanghai published "On 'Three-Family Village'—The Reactionary Nature of Evening Chats at Yenshan and Notes from Three-Family Village".

these students in accordance with central government documents and "instructions" such as Liu and Deng's wholesale "Circular No. 9 Forwarded to Beijing University". Moreover, they also conducted a mapping exercise among the students and teachers, preparing to follow the practice of the 1957 anti-rightist campaign and classifying them as "rightists" in proportion to their numbers, thus putting everyone at risk. Liu Shaoqi also sent Wang Guangmei to take control of the Qinghua work group, in order to catch a typical example of "anti-interference and catching fish", and to catch a "Taoyuan experience" in the Cultural Revolution movement.

It was at this time that Jiang Qing conveyed to me by telephone Chairman Mao's instruction that all of us in the Central Cultural Revolution Group should go to various schools to understand the situation and report to the Chairman. Jiang Qing also instructed me several times over the phone to go and make a public statement that we in the Central Cultural Revolution Group should oppose the work group's practice of targeting the struggle at the students and support those students who had been wrongly hit by the work groups. Wang Li, Guan Feng and I all went to various schools in separate groups to support those students who had been wrongly hit by the work groups. When these students found out that the Central Cultural Revolution Group was supporting them, they were deeply moved. They put up banners saying "The revolution is close to Beijing, the rebellion is closer to Chairman Mao" and sang the song "Looking up at the North Star, longing for Chairman Mao in my heart", and thus built up a relationship of trust with us.

At the same time, students and the masses from all over the world also wrote to or visited us to report on the suppression and crackdown they had been subjected to. On the one hand, we sent reporters from the Central Cultural Revolution Express Group to various places to find out what was going on, and on the other hand, through the Central Cultural Revolution Reception Stations and Letter and Visit Offices, we received and accepted visits and letters from the masses and dealt with them quickly and accordingly. As a result, the repressed masses in various places also developed trust in the Central Cultural Revolution Group and saw it as something they could rely on.

However, in the eyes of many central and local leaders at the time, the Central Cultural Revolution Group was not taken seriously. Chen Boda, the head of the Central Cultural Revolution Group, and Kang Sheng, its adviser, were only alternate members of the Politburo before the 11th Plenary Session of the 8th Central Committee, while the others were not even members of the Central Committee. Not to mention Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping who did not take the Central Cultural Revolution Group seriously, I am afraid that even Tan Zhenlin and Ye Jianying did the same. Ye Jianying headed the "Capital Work Group", and he repeatedly spoke of fighting for the "right to direct" the movement, which was directed at the Central Cultural Revolution Group. Later on, the "Western Pickets" and the "Linking Movement", which were mainly composed of children of high cadres and revolutionary cadres, dared to openly confront the Central Cultural Revolution Group because they were strongly backed by the "Capital Work Group" and the State Council.

Compared to the Capital Work Group, the Central Cultural Revolution Group was directly subordinate to the Standing Committee of the Central Committee, but at that time it did not have much power, neither administrative nor military power, nor even financial power.

It was only after Chairman Mao's return to Beijing on 18 July 1966, when he abolished the Work Group, convened the 11th Plenary Session of the 8th Central Committee, published the big-character poster "Bombard the Headquarters" and formulated and adopted the "Sixteen Articles", that the work of the Central Cultural Revolution Group underwent a fundamental change. Jiang Qing instructed us to support the student organisations of the Beijing universities and colleges that had been suppressed by the Work Group in the past to unite and form the "Three Departments" of the

Red Guards in the capital. At the same time, we also supported the "Red Flag of Beijing Aeronautical University" and "Jinggangshan of the Northern Teachers' University", which opposed Liu's and Deng's line, and other rebel groups that were truly anti-work group at the time. This really formed a powerful Cultural Revolution rebellion in Beijing. These rebellious Red Guards then went to different parts of the country to mobilise and organise rebel groups. It can be said that the Central Cultural Revolution Group had the support of Chairman Mao in addition to the support of the rebellious masses everywhere, which gave it authority and power.

Yet at that time almost all mass organisations, including those set up by party committees at all levels, claimed to be "rebellious". It was not until the 1966 Central Working Conference put forward a critique of the bourgeois reactionary line that a line of distinction between rebels and conservatives was established. At the meetings of the Central Cultural Revolution Group, we decided whether or not to recognise the various mass organisations as rebel groups on the basis of their attitude to Liu and Deng's capitalist and reactionary line.

The Anting Incident in Shanghai in November 1966, and the Central Conference on Labour Relations held in Beijing in the same month, were of great importance to the development of the rebellion throughout the country. In the Anting Incident, Chairman Mao supported Zhang Chunqiao and recognised the Shanghai workers' rebellion as a revolutionary and legitimate mass organisation. And after a fierce struggle at the Labour Conference, the Ten Articles of Industry were finally adopted, which gave the workers' masses the right to establish their own revolutionary organisations and allowed for ties between the workers' masses and workers' organisations and with student organisations. It was only then that the workers' rebellions everywhere rapidly developed and grew, gradually becoming the main force of the Cultural Revolution.

The first workers to organise a workers' rebellion were ordinary workers who had been persecuted by Liu and Deng's bourgeois reactionary line at the beginning of the Cultural Revolution. Zhang Chunqiao told me after he returned from the Anting Incident that when he went to Anting, he only tried to persuade the workers to return to their units to join the Cultural Revolution in order to ensure the safety and smooth operation of the Beijing-Shanghai Railway. But after listening to the workers' complaints to him about how they had been suppressed and persecuted by the powers-that-be in their own units and by the Shanghai Municipal Committee during the Cultural Revolution movement, his mind was greatly shaken. And he told me that the reason why the workers insisted on getting the Central Cultural Revolution Group to recognise their actions as revolutionary actions and their organisation as a revolutionary organisation before they would go back was that they feared further and more serious persecution when they returned. Under these circumstances, he made up his mind to support the workers.

Therefore, the Cultural Revolution rebels were, as Chairman Mao often said, "forced into a corner".

Later, these Cultural Revolution rebels were all stigmatized by Deng Xiaoping and his group as "hooligans and robbers" in society. This is almost the same as when the Guomindang stigmatised the Red Army as "bandits" and "red bandits". In fact, most of the people who rose up in rebellion back then were very sensible and upright people. Chairman Mao had first-hand experience of this, and he had experience of this when he led the Red Army to "fight the landlords". He told us several times that at the beginning of a movement, the first people to rise up were always the brave ones with flaws, and that if these people were properly guided and educated by the Party, they could also become the backbone of the revolution. Of course, Chairman Mao knew very well that among these "brave elements" there were not only those with flaws but also undesirable elements with bad manners. He said that some people who rose up in rebellion were always like Ah Q, with their eyes

always on the women in other people's homes and even on the teeth of young ladies. These people should be purged gradually as the movement develops.

## **2. Support for the Cultural Revolution Rebels by the Central Cultural Revolution Group**

During the Cultural Revolution, it was a very serious matter to determine which mass organizations were rebel groups in a region or unit. It had to be determined after a meeting of the Central Cultural Revolution Group and then by the Premier, Jiang Qing, Chen Boda and Kang Sheng.

At the meetings of the Central Cultural Revolution Group, the materials compiled and reported by the Cultural Revolution Office and those obtained through various other means were usually distributed to everyone for study and discussion. Then they would speak about their views. In fact, at first there was no clear division of labour in the Central Cultural Revolution Group as to who was responsible for which region's movement. Rather, whoever cared more about the affairs of a certain region would speak first on matters concerning that region in future. Chen Boda was more concerned about Hebei and Tianjin, while Kang Sheng was in charge of matters in Inner Mongolia. Guan Feng was more concerned about the movement in Shandong, and he supported Wang Xiaoyu. Wang Li was also concerned about Shandong, so the matters in Shandong were in the hands of Guan Feng and Wang Li; Guan Feng was also concerned about the Northeast, and Guan Feng's daughter was working in the Northeast, and she was supporting Song Renshu's faction. It was Mao Yuanxin who was later involved in the Northeast. Mao Yuanxin was supportive of Chen Xilian and Pan Fusheng. At one point, Guan Feng wanted to go to the Northeast and Chairman Mao asked him to hold off before going, and the Chairman said that he would have to take another look. Yunnan and Hubei and other places were under the charge of Wang Li. Shanghai, Zhejiang and Jiangsu were under the charge of Zhang Chunqiao and Yao Wenyuan. The Chairman was particularly concerned about Shanghai and he knew more about it than any of us. I was mainly responsible for Beijing. Later, after the "Xiangjiang Wind and Thunder"<sup>390</sup> incident in Hunan, I was more involved in Hunan, and I was also more involved in other areas such as Hubei, Guizhou, Sichuan, Henan, Qinghai and Gansu.

It was the Premier who had a better grasp of the overall situation. Comparatively speaking, Jiang Qing, Chen Boda and Kang Sheng all lacked a holistic view and strategic thinking of the national movement; they were too busy with their affairs all day long to have an overall plan and layout. This gradually led to a situation where the Premier was in charge of the overall situation.

In the early days, the State Council and the Central Cultural Revolution Group met separately to discuss their respective responsibilities, and when matters of mutual relevance were involved, joint meetings were held. Later, these joint meetings became the "Standing Committee of the Central Committee", usually held in Huairan Hall and chaired by the Premier. After the "February Countercurrent", many members of the State Council stepped aside, so the Premier moved the

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<sup>390</sup> The "Xiangjiang Fenglei" (full name: "Maoist Red Guards Xiangjiang Fenglei Marching Column", one of the largest mass organisations in Hunan during the Cultural Revolution) was a huge Red Guards rebel group. In 1967, rebel groups were formed in Xiangtan, including the "Xiangjiang Wind and Thunder", the "Red Flag Army", the "Hongzhuo Lian" and the "Gezhuo Lian". "From issuing leaflets and fighting with each other to seizing guns and engaging in armed struggles, the party and government organs were paralysed and society was in chaos. By mid-1967 a campaign to suppress the Xiangjiang Fenglei was in place. "Fenglei" means "wind and thunder".

meeting to Diaoyutai, and the name of the meeting was changed to the "Central Standing Committee Meeting on the Cultural Revolution", but it was still chaired by the Premier. But because there was always a difference in perception between the Premier and the rebels on how to deal with leaders in different places, the rebels in some places also sometimes did not quite buy into the Premier. In some cases, the Premier alone went to speak, but the Central Cultural Revolution Group did not speak, and the rebels often did not listen. So, when the Premier criticised the rebels, the Central Cultural Revolution Group generally had to follow suit and criticise them. But sometimes our criticism was not as strong as that of the Premier. The rebels thought that the Central Cultural Revolution Group disagreed with the Premier and therefore disrespected him, making it very difficult for the Central Cultural Revolution Group to deal with them. On one occasion, the Premier and I met with a rebel faction in Hunan province, the leader of which was called "Commander Lei". When he saw the Premier, he did not stand up, but collapsed on his chair and pretended not to see him. When I sat down, I saw that he was being rude to the Premier, so I put my foot over and kicked him.

When the Premier went to meet with the rebels, he always asked us from the Cultural Revolution Group to go with him. Whoever cared more about that area, the Premier would call on him to go with him, and this invariably seemed to create a division of labour in the Cultural Revolution Group.

I was very busy at that time. All the day-to-day work of the Central Cultural Revolution Group was handed over to me by Jiang Qing, and I reported directly to her. Plus, I had been concentrating on writing articles for the first few months of 1967. So apart from the rebels in Beijing, I had little contact with the rebels in other places. During the Cultural Revolution, I basically never left Beijing, except for one visit to Shandong and one to Tianjin.

The rebels everywhere of course listened to the Central Cultural Revolution Group, and they came to the Central Cultural Revolution Group to reflect and report on anything they had to do. Because they knew very well that the Central Cultural Revolution Group supported them. The rebel students in Beijing were always in regular contact with me, and I often went to them to tell them what instructions Jiang Qing and the Cultural Revolution Group had. When they encountered any problems, they would often come to me for discussion. When they came to me during the Cultural Revolution, I also went to the factory to support the workers in their rebellion against the capitalist-roaders there. I also went to Shougang several times before the Cultural Revolution, so the Shougang rebels were willing to come to me if they encountered anything.

There was a difference between the rebels in Beijing and other places, as the old Beijing Municipal Committee, led by Peng Zhen, was defeated at the very beginning of the Cultural Revolution. The new Beijing Municipal Committee led by Li Xuefeng mainly sent work groups to schools to carry out a bourgeois reactionary line against students, so the students were more vocal against him. The Beijing workers' rebellion, on the other hand, was mainly directed against those in power in their own units.

With the abolition of the Working Group and Li Xuefeng effectively stepping aside, the Central Government transferred Liu Jianxun to head the Beijing Municipal Committee. Liu Jianxun was a very good comrade and I had discussed with Xie Fuzhi to make Liu Jianxun the first deputy director of the Beijing Municipal Revolutionary Committee. But then there were problems in Henan, and the people of Henan wanted him to go back to lead the province, so the Central Committee transferred him back to Henan again. Wu De, Ma Li and Ding Guoyu were mainly in charge of things in Beijing. They

did a lot of work for the Central Cultural Revolution. However, some students and workers' rebels still seized on some of Wu De's and Ma Li's mistakes, and the Central Cultural Revolution often asked me to come out and do some work.

Mao Shengxi was very concerned about the establishment of the Beijing Revolutionary Committee. He said that it was necessary to first hold congresses of the Red Guards (University Red Congress and Secondary School Red Congress), workers' congresses and peasants' congresses, and on this basis the Beijing Revolutionary Committee would be established.

Xie Fuzhi and I were mainly responsible for the preparatory work for the establishment of the Beijing Revolutionary Committee. But we were both very busy. At that time, there was a man called Zhou Jingfang, an old comrade of Guan Feng, who used to work in the Institute of Philosophy of the Ministry of Education. This person was very capable and we asked him to take care of many things. After the Beijing Revolutionary Committee was established, Zhou Jingfang became the secretary-general of the Committee and the deputy head of the core group, and he was responsible for many things.

Nie Yuanzi became the deputy director of the Beijing Municipal Revolutionary Committee, but this person was so determined to be the director that she tried to sway Xie Fuzhi and Zhou Jingfang at every turn. I was very uncomfortable with her, and I discussed with Xie Fuzhi what to do with her. Xie Fuzhi said, "It doesn't matter, let her make trouble, I can handle her". In fact, Chairman Mao knew very well about Nie Yuanzi because Li Na was a graduate of Beijing University, and she told him about Nie Yuanzi's shortcomings. Later on, Chairman Mao also distrusted Nie Yuanzi. After summoning the "Five Leaders" on 28 July 1968, Chairman Mao also sent the military propaganda team and the labour propaganda team to take charge of Beijing University.

### **3. Problems arising from the support for the Cultural Revolution Rebels**

In the case of the "Xiangjiang Wind and Thunder" in Hunan, our Central Cultural Revolution Group made a big mistake. In January 1967, after the "Eight Orders of the Central Military Commission" had been issued, the Hunan Provincial Military Region reported on 3 February that "According to the document of the "Eight Articles of the Military Commission", they should be treated as counter-revolutionaries". At that time, Ye Qun also came and said at a meeting of the Central Cultural Revolution Group that Long Shujin, the commander of the Hunan Military Region, was one of Lin Biao's generals and said that he could fight and was a good fighter and asked us to support him. So, on 4 February the Central Cultural Revolution Group issued a directive about "Xiangjiang Wind and Thunder". I also read it, as did Chen Boda and Jiang Qing.

In this order, it was stated that "the reactionary leaders of the 'Xiangjiang Wind and Thunder' should be subjected to dictatorial measures". As soon as the Hunan military district received this order, they immediately branded the Xiangjiang Wind and Thunder as a counter-revolutionary organisation and quickly banned it. They sent out troops to arrest all the leaders of the organisation and arrested tens of thousands of rebels in the province.

The Hunan Provincial Committee had an alternate secretary of the Provincial Party Committee called Zhang Bosen<sup>391</sup>, who supported the rebels. He complained to Chairman Mao that the "Xiangjiang Wind and Thunder" was the first rebellion in the province, so how could he call it a "reactionary organisation"? Some other friends of the Chairman in Hunan also conveyed their views to the Chairman. The Chairman asked us to look into it again. Once we did, we were wrong. The "Xiangjiang Wind and Thunder" was indeed a revolutionary and rebellious mass organization. After May, the Central Cultural Revolution vindicated it. Chen Boda, Jiang Qing and the Central Cultural Revolutionary Group were severely criticised by Chairman Mao for this incident.

After this incident, I came into more contact with the workers' rebels in Hunan. I attached great importance to Zhang Bosen, but there were many people below who opposed him, and although we went to work, it was not very effective. So I brought up Hua Guofeng, who had made mistakes in the old provincial committee but had good relations with the masses. During the meeting at the Great Hall of the People, I spoke to protect Hua Guofeng and asked him to come forward to work. After the meeting, he stayed behind, thanked me and said he would correct his mistakes and follow Chairman Mao closely. Once Hua Guofeng was converted, he was less antagonistic to confront the rebels. Coupled with the transfer of Long Shujin and the transfer of Li Yuan from the 47th Army to Hunan, the situation in Hunan was stabilised.

Chairman Mao also attached special importance to those veteran cadres who, despite the onslaught of the rebels during the Cultural Revolution, still managed to deal with the rebels correctly. For example, Hua Guofeng and Ji Dengkui<sup>392</sup> were both reappointed for this reason. The "Erqi Commune" in Henan fought Ji Dengkui very hard, but when he went there, not only did he not retaliate against them, he even took the initiative to make good relations with them and was praised by the President. Unfortunately, after Chairman Mao's death, I have always felt that he had a belief in the Cultural Revolution that he wanted to bring the leftists who had formed during the 17 years of the founding of the country, such as Tao Zhu, Tan Zhenlin, Wang Renzhong, Li Jingquan, Chen Pixian, Liu Lantao, Tao Lu Jia, Song Renpeng, Lin Hujia, Li Xuefeng and so on, together with the rebels. But

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<sup>391</sup> Zhang Bosen (1914-1995) joined the Communist Party of China in 1938. In 1958, he was appointed vice governor of Hunan Province. From May 1966 to August 1967, he served as a member of the standing committee of the Hunan Provincial Committee of the Party and alternate secretary of the Hunan Provincial Committee of the Party. On April 22, 1967, Zhang Bosen took the lead in issuing a statement in support of the rebels' actions to seize the "Hunan Daily" at that time. On May 12, Zhang Bosen led 25 provincial and department-level leading cadres to issue "Our Statement on the Current Situation," which clearly and firmly supported the "Federation of Trade Unions" rebels, and accused the provincial military region of making mistakes in direction and line. To widen support for the rebels, he encouraged them to build ties with Hua Guofeng, a move that was supported by Zhou Enlai and the Central Cultural Revolution Group when he met with them in Beijing on June 16. When the Deng clique came to power after Mao's death, Zhang Bosen's Party membership was suspended for review in 1977, and he was expelled from the Party and removed from his posts in 1984. Hua Guofeng, who he had promoted and encouraged, did not say a word on Zhang's behalf.

<sup>392</sup> Ji Dengkui (1923-1988), joined the Communist Party of China in April 1938. He participated in the mobilisation and organisation of young people to participate in the anti-Japanese armed forces and united front work, and to participate in the anti-Japanese guerrilla war behind enemy lines. Since 1968, he had served successively as deputy director of the Henan Provincial Revolutionary Committee and secretary of the Henan Provincial Party Committee of the Communist Party of China. He was an alternate member of the 9th Central Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China and a member of the 10th and 11th Central Political Bureau. At the Fifth Plenary Session of the Eleventh Central Committee of the Communist Party of China held in February 1980, he formally resigned and was removed from the party and state leadership positions.

his wish did not come true. On the one hand, these people were somehow always antagonistic towards the rebels; on the other hand, the rebels were also firmly against them.

Some of them went back to opposing the Cultural Revolution. Chairman Mao also appreciated Ma Tianshui<sup>393</sup> in Shanghai and repeatedly wanted to transfer him to work in the Central Committee, but the work in Shanghai was too important, so Ma Tianshui remained in Shanghai. After the death of the President, Ma Tianshui still maintained his political stance in support of the Cultural Revolution, which was very valuable among old cadres.

I was involved in the handling of the Sichuan issue later on. Li Jingquan was very strong in his bourgeois reactionary line, and the rebels in Sichuan were all against him. However, Li Dazhang<sup>394</sup>, the governor of Sichuan, was a very good person and many people supported him. Jiang Qing also told me that Li Dazhang was her introduction to the Party. I wanted to support Li Dazhang and to stand up for his work. But some other people disagreed. This was the situation at that time. Although the rebels were against Liu and Deng's capitalist-roader line, Liu and Deng were in the central government and their capitalist-road line was carried out through local leaders, so the rebels everywhere regarded these local leaders, who were in direct confrontation with them, as their antagonists. Li Dazhang, too, was sometimes beaten up because he had carried out the bourgeois

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<sup>393</sup> Ma Tianshui (1912-1988) joined the Communist Party of China in 1931. In the winter of 1939, he studied at Yan'an Anti-Japanese Military and Political University. After graduating the following year, he served as Secretary-General of the Leading Group of the Shanxi-Chahar-Hebei Border Area and other posts. After the founding of New China, he served as the fourth secretary and first secretary of the Southern Anhui District Committee, and the Minister of Industry of the East China Bureau of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China. Since October 1954, he has been a member of the Standing Committee, Deputy Secretary and Secretary of the Secretariat of the Shanghai Municipal Committee of the Communist Party of China. During the Cultural Revolution, he served as the deputy director of the Shanghai Revolutionary Committee. He was an alternate member of the Ninth Central Committee of the Communist Party of China and a member of the Tenth Central Committee. In October 1976, immediately after Mao's death, the capitalist-roaders suspended his Party membership and in 1978, dismissed him from all positions inside and outside the party, expelled and arrested him. In 1982, court proceedings against him were dismissed on the grounds of mental incapacity.

<sup>394</sup> Li Dazhang (1900-1976), went to France for a work-study program in 1920. Joined the Chinese Youth Communist Party in Europe in 1922 (renamed the European Branch of the Chinese Socialist Youth League the following year). Later, he worked in the Paris Aircraft Factory and participated in the editing of the monthly magazine "Red Party". In 1924, he became a member of the Communist Party of China. In 1925, he served as Secretary-General of the Executive Committee of the Chinese Communist Youth League in Europe. In the second half of the same year, he transferred to Moscow to study at Oriental University. After returning to China in the spring of 1927, he was sent to the Song Zheyuan Division of the National Coalition Army to engage in political work. After the failure of the Great Revolution in July of the same year, he served as the head of the Propaganda Department of the Shaanxi Provincial Committee of the Communist Youth League. In early 1931, he went to Shanghai to study in the training class of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China. At the end of 1932, he was transferred to the secretary of the Qingdao Municipal Committee of the Communist Party of China. Worked in the Shanghai Central Bureau of the Communist Party of China in 1934. After the outbreak of the Anti-Japanese War, he went to Yan'an in early 1938 to serve as Liu Shaoqi's secretary. After the founding of the People's Republic of China, he was transferred to the southwest region and served as secretary of the Party Committee of the Southern Sichuan District of the Communist Party of China and political commissar of the Southern Sichuan Military Region. In December 1954, he served as the second secretary of the Sichuan Provincial Committee of the Communist Party of China and governor of Sichuan Province. From May 1968 to October 1975, he was deputy director of the Sichuan Provincial Revolutionary Committee. Later served as the head of the United Front Work Department of the CPC Central Committee. He was a member of the Ninth and Tenth Central Committee of the Communist Party of China. He died of illness in Beijing on May 3, 1976.

reactionary line of Liu and Deng. But he was able to treat the masses correctly, and later became the deputy director of the Sichuan Provincial Revolutionary Committee.

Chairman Mao attached great importance to the workers' rebellion. It can be said that without the workers' rebels, there would have been no Cultural Revolution in the true sense of the word. The students were only the vanguard, and they alone could not solve the problem. Some intellectuals also rose up in rebellion back then, and they always had to show at every turn that they were the only ones who were the most revolutionary. But after the Cultural Revolution, many of them became opposed to it, or even strongly opposed to it. When Chairman Mao told us that among the intellectuals, the leftists would not exceed 10% at most, I thought that he had been too pessimistic in his estimation. But history proved that Chairman Mao was right.

We had a big weakness in the Central Cultural Revolution Group; most of us didn't understand the workers, so we always concentrated mainly on the students. If we had all done what Zhang Chunqiao did and established more contact with the workers, the situation would have been very different then. Chairman Mao's consistent idea was to rely on the working class, but the Central Cultural Revolution Group did not do enough in this respect.

From the beginning of 1967, Chairman Mao gave instructions that the People's Liberation Army should support the leftist masses. As a result, a large number of PLA troops took part in the local work of supporting the left. However, as the leaders of the PLA military regions were inextricably linked to the local authorities, the PLA, when they arrived at the local level, supported what were often conservative factions, and not many really supported the Cultural Revolution rebels.

## Chapter 25: The Wuhan "July 20 Incident"

1. The Chairman's and Premier's approach to the Wuhan issue and the impediments of the Wuhan Military Region
2. The Central Government's handling of the Wuhan "July 20 Incident"
3. Beijing holds a mass rally to denounce the Wuhan "July 20 Incident"
4. The criticism of Chen Zaidao

### 1. The Chairman's and Premier's approach to the Wuhan issue and the impediments of the Wuhan Military Region

On the afternoon of 13 July 1967, when the Chairman called a meeting with Lin Biao, Premier Zhou and members of the Central Cultural Revolution Group and others, the Chairman suggested that he wanted to go to Wuhan for a swim. At that time, Wuhan was supposed to be the most chaotic area in the world, so Lin Biao and the Premier and other leaders of the Central Committee opposed the Chairman's going to Wuhan. Everyone suggested that the Chairman go swimming in Beidaihe, where it was safer. But the Chairman said, "There is no better water in the world than the Yangtze River, and there is no better water in the Yangtze than Wuhan". We all knew that the Chairman could not be persuaded to do what he was determined not to do. The Chairman said that Yang Chengwu should just follow him to Wuhan this time. At this point, Wang Dongxing proposed that he should also go along, saying that his main job was to ensure the safety of the Chairman. The Chairman asked, "What about all the things in your office?" Wang Dongxing said that he would make arrangements for the affairs in his office. But the Chairman did not agree that he should make his own arrangements, saying that he would then give it to Benyu, and that Qi Benyu would be the acting director of the Central Office, and asked Lin Biao and the Premier for advice. Lin Biao and the Premier both agreed, so everyone agreed, and then the Central Committee issued a notice appointing me as Acting Director of the Central Office.

The Chairman set off by train in the early hours of 14 July. To ensure the Chairman's safety, the Premier arrived in Wuhan early that morning by plane ahead of the Chairman. As Xie Fuzhi and Chen Zaidao<sup>395</sup> were both formerly with the Fourth Front Army, the Premier again specifically called Xie Fuzhi, who was in the southwest, to Wuhan. Wang Li had gone to the southwest with Xie Fuzhi, and as Wang Li had some experience with the student movement, the Premier asked Wang Li to come to Wuhan with Xie Fuzhi. Several rebel fighters from the "Red Flag of the Beijing Aeronautical

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<sup>395</sup> Chen Zaidao (1909-1993) from April 1926, participated in the Peasant Association and the Peasants' Self-Defense Army. After participating in the Autumn Harvest Uprising at the southern foot of the Dabie Mountains in September 1927, he was incorporated into the Workers' and Peasants' Revolutionary Army of the Eastern Hubei Army with the Peasant Self-Defense Army. He joined the Communist Party of China in 1928. After a distinguished military career, he was awarded the rank of general in 1955. In July 1967, when Mao Zedong was in Wuhan, Xie Fuzhi, Wang Li and others were besieged by the mass organization of "Million Heroes"; Mao Zedong boarded a plane and flew to Shanghai in a hurry. Subsequently, Chen Zaidao and Zhong Hanhua, political commissar of the Wuhan Military Region, were accused of supporting the "Million Heroes" and fell, known as the "July 20 Incident". After 1972, he served as deputy commander of the Fuzhou Military Region, consultant to the Central Military Commission, and commander of the Railway Corps. On July 26, 1978, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China issued a notice, deciding to rehabilitate the "July 20 Incident".

University" who had followed Xie Fuzhi and Wang Li to the southwest also arrived in Wuhan on the same flight.

After the success of the January Revolution in Shanghai, rebel mass organisations in various parts of the country responded to the call of Chairman Mao and the Party Central Committee and took part in the power grab in various provinces, cities and districts throughout the country. However, the "capitalists" and many "old cadres" who did not understand or support Chairman Mao's campaign for the Cultural Revolution, and the masses who supported them, were also provoked into confrontation and resistance. The "Beijing West Hotel Incident" in January, the "February Countercurrent" and the local "February Crackdown" all took place against this background. Prior to his trip, the Chairman was more supportive of the Shanghai January Revolution model, which promoted the resolution of problems in eastern China, including Shandong. In South Central China, the biggest problem was the Wuhan "Million Heroes", which not only had a mass organisation of several hundred thousand people, mainly workers, but also had the support of the Wuhan Military Region behind it; while the rebel organisations were still being suppressed. The Chairman's visit to Wuhan was not primarily a trip to the Yangtze River, but a continuation of the Shanghai model to solve the problem of Wuhan's "Million Heroes". However, he had adjusted his thinking, not intending to let the rebels dominate the world, but to implement a big alliance between the two factions while avoiding armed fighting.

Before going to Wuhan, the Chairman had read a lot of materials on the Cultural Revolution movement from various factions in Wuhan, and had done some research and studies. He hoped to first work with the commander of the Wuhan Military Region, Chen Zaidao, so that the region would change its position from that of supporting the conservative faction, and then work through them to work with mass organisations such as the "Million Heroes". The Chairman believed that the two factions should unite, rather than simply bringing up or fighting down the "Million Heroes". Although the "Wuhan Steel-Tempered Three" and "New Three" in Wuhan were the first rebel groups to criticise the Hubei Provincial Committee's bourgeois reactionary line, their strength was relatively small. Therefore, the Chairman wanted to unite the two factions mainly with the army, which was different from the solution to the January Revolution in Shanghai at the beginning of the year.

At 9pm on 14 July 1967, the Chairman arrived in Wuchang<sup>396</sup> and stayed at the East Lake Hotel Meiling No.1. After Xie Fuzhi and Wang Li arrived in Wuhan, the Chairman found the two of them and talked to them together, listening to their reports on the situation in the southwest, and telling them that they should conduct a proper investigation and study, listen to the troops first and do a good job with them, and then find the heads of the two factions and the masses to do their work. However, Wang Li and Xie Fuzhi did not carefully appreciate the Chairman's instructions and obviously lacked understanding of the complexity of the Wuhan issue, nor did they appreciate the importance and necessity of doing a good job in the Wuhan Military Region first and doing a good job for Chen Zaidao and others. Thus, there was no understanding of the change in the Chairman's approach and thinking in solving the problem of the mass organisations of the two rival factions in Wuhan. Wang Li came out of the Chairman's place and went with Xie Fuzhi to address the university rebel students first, expressing support for the rebels. They probably saw that after Zhang Chunqiao signed the workers' rebellion in Shanghai, the Central Cultural Revolution Group sent only a few telegrams and brought down the "Red Guards" there. So, he thought that he could solve the problem in Wuhan in the same way.

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<sup>396</sup> Wuhan was originally a conglomeration of three separate cities, Wuchang, Hankou and Hanyang.

In the morning of 15 July 1967, the Chairman summoned Chen Zaidao, Xie Fuzhi, Wang Li and Zheng Weishan to report on the situation. In the afternoon, the Premier convened a meeting with cadres from the Wuhan Military Region at the East Lake Hotel Baihua No.1. The Wuhan Military Region reported to the Premier on the ten major crimes of the rebels and the ten major benefits of the "Million Heroes". This meeting lasted until the 18th, when the Premier criticised the Wuhan Military Region based on his knowledge of the Cultural Revolution movement in Wuhan and summarised three principled observations:

1. The Wuhan Military Region has made a mistake in the direction and line of work in supporting the left and should openly review it.
2. The mass organizations such as "Wuhan Steel-Tempered Three" and "New Three" are revolutionaries and should be used as the core to unite other mass organizations.
3. The "Million Heroes" are conservative organisations, and they will change on their own.

(The above is based on the recollections of Wang Li and some participants. As for the Premier's speech, the present record is that the Premier made a total of eight points.)

On 18 July, after the Premier had made three points, he accompanied Chen Zaidao and others to meet the Chairman and then returned to Beijing. That evening, Xie Fuzhi and Wang Li, inspired by the Premier's speech, went together to the headquarters of the Second Division of the Wuhan Water Institute (then known as the Red Water Institute) to meet with the students there, and in the early hours of the 19th went to the gymnasium of the Water Institute to address thousands of students and workers, openly expressing their support for the rebels. Liu Feng, the leader of the Air Force in Wuhan, also made a statement on behalf of his troops. The slogan "Down with Wu Lao Tan"<sup>397</sup> was heard throughout the whole stadium. Xie and Wang's speeches were then repeatedly broadcast throughout Wuhan. This aroused the indignation and dissatisfaction of Niu Huailong, the commander of the independent division of the Wuhan Military Region, and others. They returned to the division and conveyed the speeches of the premier and Xie and Wang to the leaders of the division and the heads of the "Million Heroes", and began planning and making arrangements for people to go to the East Lake Hotel to attack and grab Wang Li and Xie Fuzhi, and "deal the Central Cultural Revolution Group a head-on blow."

While the leaders of the Independent Division and the "Million Heroes " were planning their earth-shattering campaign to capture Wang Li, Wang Li lost his cool amidst the slogans of the rebels to defeat "Wu Lao Tan". At 3 p.m. on 19 July, when Wang Li went with Xie Fuzhi to attend an expanded meeting of the cadres above the division level of the Party Committee of the Military Region, he made a number of statements that he should never have made at that time.

Wang Li, for example, went so far as to accuse these pampered senior leaders of the military region at the enlarged meeting of "not understanding the Cultural Revolution at all and, like primary school children, needing a lesson on the Cultural Revolution, starting with the ABCs." As one philosopher put it, it is the principles of geometry that offend people and are met with resistance. The divisional cadres who attended the meeting were generally disgusted by Wang Li's speech. It is possible that Xie Fuzhi, who went with him, also felt that Wang Li's speech had gone too far, so he left the meeting in the middle of Wang Li's speech and went back to the hotel to rest. Wang Li did not know what to think and continued to criticise incessantly. It can be imagined that after Wang Li's speech,

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<sup>397</sup> This refers to Tan Zhenlin of Wuhan.

most of the cadres in the Wuhan Military Region would support the wrongful action planned by Commander Niu Huailong and others to arrest Wang Li at the East Lake Hotel. That is why Chairman Mao criticized Wang Li after the July 20 Incident, saying, "If you don't do a proper investigation and study, and if you start to express your opinions in a rash manner when you get off the train, you will never fail to make mistakes." The Chairman also criticised Wang Li for his "very aggressive" attitude in criticizing the cadres who made mistakes in the July 20 Incident. But neither the Chairman nor the Central Cultural Revolution considered Wang Li to be the leading factor in the July 20th Incident, which was still dominated by the Wuhan Military Region's resistance to the Central Government's approach to the Cultural Revolution in Wuhan. Wang Li's speech was merely a fuse, without which the Wuhan Cultural Revolution would still have broken out. Moreover, at that time, the leaders of the Independent Division and the main leaders of the "Million Heroes" knew that Chairman Mao had arrived in Wuhan and was sitting in Wuhan to deal with the problem. Their targeting of Wang Li was merely a tactic of their struggle. At that time, even if they had the guts to do so, they would not dare to openly call out and oppose Chairman Mao.

But at that time, Wang Li's public statements and speeches really angered the Wuhan Military Region and the "Million Heroes". They seized on Wang Li as a target, saying that Wang Li was supporting one faction and fighting another. They said that he was deceiving the Central Committee and forging its instructions. At that time, the Independent Division of the Military Region and the "Million Heroes", who had already taken control of Wuhan through violence, brought a large number of people by truck to Wang Li's residence at the Donghu Hotel to arrest and fight him, and later kidnapped him to the compound of the Wuhan Military Region for violent struggle. During the struggle, Wang Li was beaten up, his ankle was broken and he was robbed of his watch and wallet, which had been given to him by President Ho Chi Minh. They then organised an armed march through the city to demonstrate against the Central Cultural Revolution Group. It should be said that, apart from the leaders of the Independent Division and some of the heads of the "Million Heroes", the vast majority of them did not know that Chairman Mao was also staying at the East Lake Hotel. Some of those who followed Wang Li through Wuhan later said that they had deliberately gone for Chairman Mao at that time. Such a claim is unfounded as to the general public. If that had been the case, then the Wuhan incident would never have been resolved so easily. This was a point that Chairman Mao had correctly judged when he left Wuhan and arrived in Shanghai.

## **2. The Central Government's handling of the Wuhan "July 20 Incident"**

The Beijing Aeronautical University (Beihang) had a female Red Guard called Yin Juping who accompanied Wang Li from the southwest to Wuhan. When Wang Li was arrested, she was also caught in the car. Yin said later that she was wearing a military uniform, she was a woman, she was young, and the situation was so chaotic that no one paid attention to her. So, when the car stopped at a corner for some reason, she quietly got out and left. She then ran to the Water Conservancy Institute and rushed to find a phone and reported to Han Aijing, the head of Beijing Aeronautical University Red Flag, that Wang Li had been arrested.

It was already the morning of 20 July when "Beihang Red Flag" received a phone call from Yin Juping and immediately reported it to the Central Cultural Revolution Group. We had all just finished our meeting and had gone back to rest. Wang Guangyu was on duty for the Central Cultural Revolution Group, and after he received the call from Beihang, he immediately went to see Chen Boda. Chen Boda had already taken sleeping pills and gone to sleep by then. When Chen Boda's secretary heard that Wang Li had been arrested by the conservatives in Wuhan, he rushed to get Chen Boda up.

Guan Feng lived just downstairs from Chen Boda, so he got him up too. The two of them came to the Cultural Revolution Group conference room in Building 16 to discuss solutions. I lived upstairs in Building 16. Wang Guangyu asked Chen Boda if he was going to get Qi Benyu up as well. Chen Boda said, "No need, we'll take care of it. But Wang Guangyu had waited outside for more than half an hour and hadn't seen them do anything, so he came upstairs to see me. I never take sleeping pills, so I got up as soon as he called me and asked what was the matter. Wang Guangyu said that Wang Li had been arrested in Wuhan. I was in a hurry. It wasn't about Wang Li, Chairman Mao was in Wuhan too! I hurriedly got up and ran to the office. I saw that Chen Bolian and Guan Feng were drafting a letter to the Wuhan area rebels. They were going to declare the Wuhan incident a "rebellion" in the letter. At this point I felt something was wrong and I had to go and consult Jiang Qing and the Premier.

I first dialed straight to the red machine in the West Flower Room. The Premier's duty secretary said that the Premier had been working hard for two days and nights and had just taken sleeping pills to fall asleep. I had to say that the matter was very urgent and that you must get the Premier up, I had something particularly important to report to him. You go to the nurse and ask her to prepare some medicine that will restore the Premier's consciousness.

While the secretary went to wake up the Premier, I called Wang Dongxing in Wuhan again. Wang Dongxing then told me that the situation was very serious and it seemed that there were troops moving this way. I said, "What is the situation at the Chairman's place?" He said, "I haven't gone to consult the Chairman yet, but the strength of our guards is very strong. We can cope".

That's when the Premier came to answer the phone. I said, "Premier, it's a big deal! They had already arrested Wang Li and Xie Fuzhi (I found out later that Xie Fuzhi had not been arrested), and now I was afraid that they would storm the Chairman's place. I just got off the phone with Dongxing and their guards are making preparations". As soon as the Premier heard about it, he said "Oh? How can this be! I'll come over immediately".

Immediately afterwards, I rushed to report to Jiang Qing. Jiang Qing lived in Building 11, just 200 metres from Building 16, but I took the car to get there. When I got there, I first called up the nurse Xu Chunming and asked her to wake Jiang Qing up, but Xu said, "She has just taken her medicine and fallen asleep, I dare not go". I said, "Just say that I told you to wake her up. I am responsible for everything".

Jiang Qing became nervous when she heard that it was the East Lake Hotel where the Chairman was staying that was under siege. I could see the anxiety in her heart. But on the surface she was still calm and she asked me to give a brief account of the situation. Then, after thinking for a while, she made a snap decision and said, "We have to go to General Lin about this! He is calm, decisive and capable of handling big things". So, I immediately informed Ye Qun and the Premier, and asked the Premier to go directly to Lin Biao's residence in the Great Hall of the People for a rendezvous. I also informed Kang Sheng, who always had insomnia and was easier to be called in. Then I told all the members of the Cultural Revolution Group to get into the car and follow Jiang Qing's car straight towards the Great Hall of the People.

When I arrived at Lin Biao's place, Lin Biao was already sitting neatly in his uniform looking at the map. When I took a look, I saw that Lin Biao was really a great general. When we told him the situation, he said calmly, "It doesn't matter, the Chairman has such a high prestige, they can't

overturn it. But we should be prepared for all kinds of things. The most important thing now is to get a clear picture of the situation there”.

The Premier then immediately called and found Wang Dongxing. Wang Dongxing said that the guards had already set up several lines of defence. But Chairman Mao said, “Even if people rush this way, you must not fire, no matter what! You have to trust that the masses are mostly defeated, and it doesn't matter if someone rushes up, I have my own way”. The Premier said, “The Chairman has his own methods, but we must not put the Chairman at any risk”. Jiang Qing spoke to Chairman Mao on the phone and it was only at those times that one could really feel how deep the bond between Jiang Qing and the Chairman was. Jiang Qing told the Chairman to leave Wuhan. The Chairman said, “I won't leave, I don't believe that they will really be against me”. At that moment, Lin Biao took the call and said in a very firm tone, “No, the Chairman must leave Wuhan immediately. This is the collective decision of the Central Committee!”

After that, it was decided to immediately send Qiu Huizuo, with a personal letter written by Lin Biao and Jiang Qing to Chairman Mao, to Wuhan to persuade the Chairman to leave immediately. When Lin Biao handed the letter to Qiu Huizuo, he said, “When you are there, this letter must be there”. Next it was decided that the Premier would fly to Wuhan immediately and personally go and arrange for Chairman Mao to leave Wuhan and fly directly to Shanghai.

Lin Biao then issued instructions to his staff officers, one by one, for military deployment. I heard Lin Biao's staff officers constantly reporting to him the location of the nearest troops to the East Lake Hotel and the time it would take for them to reach the East lake Hotel, and so on.

By the time we came out of Lin Biao's place, at this time, I saw that Chang'an Street was already plastered with slogans denouncing Chen Zaidao. In just half a day's time, large-character posters and slogans had been plastered all over Beijing. Some of the slogans read “Chen Zaidao” as “Chen Zeidao<sup>398</sup>” and “Down with the Great Warlord Chen Thief!” It wasn't long before Red Guards from many schools took to the streets, shouting slogans like “Chen Zaidao deserves to die for his opposition to the Central Cultural Revolution Group!” And so on. Soon, all the big and medium-sized cities in the country were also taking action. Big-character posters, big slogans and big marches.

When Chairman Mao first received the Red Guards at Tiananmen Square and launched the Red Guards' rebellion, I actually still did not understand it very well. It was only when I came across this that I understood the mastery of Chairman Mao. The power of the masses is great. With the support of the masses across the country, it is not that easy for you to stage a coup. You had not even surrounded the East Lake Hotel there, and the whole country acted up. These people like Chen Zaidao have to have some scruples. On the way back, Jiang Qing said, “My suggestion to go to Lin Biao wasn't wrong, eh?”

### **3. Beijing holds a mass rally to denounce the Wuhan "July 20 Incident"**

On the morning of 22 July 1967, Jiang Qing said to me: “We don't know what Wang Li said in Wuhan, and whether he made things worse. But in any case, since the “Million Heroes” in Wuhan were openly opposed to the Central Cultural Revolution Group, we had to make our attitude clear”. After

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<sup>398</sup> The change of the character “zai” to “zei” used a character for the word “thief”, “traitor”, “enemy”.

receiving the news that Wang Li had been rescued by the Air Force, Jiang Qing asked me to prepare workers, students and cadres to go to the airport to welcome Xie Fuzhi and Wang Li back to Beijing.

When I was making arrangements, I suspected that Wang Li had talked nonsense and made a big mistake. I told Guan Feng that Wang Li had caused a disaster and wanted us to welcome him. I didn't know what he would think. Guan Feng said he didn't need to analyse it to know that he must know he had caused trouble and was now distraught and in a state of flux, not knowing what the central government would do to him.

The Premier and Xie Fuzhi and Wang Li returned to Beijing from Wuhan on two separate planes. When the Premier heard on the plane that there were many people below welcoming Wang Li and Xie Fuzhi back to Beijing, he told Xie Fuzhi and Wang Li's plane to turn around in the air and he himself got off the plane first, and then he joined the welcoming party. When Wang Li got off the plane, he was in a wheelchair, and the Premier and Jiang Qing stood on either side to greet him, as if welcoming a hero back. I told Guan Feng that he still looked quite smug and that the man was hopeless. He had been beaten and still persisted in the revolution, which was not easy. If you were asked to go, what would you do if you ran into those unreasonable "bear masters"? I said, "Yes, the 'bear masters' were not just out for Wang Li. But he should have been modest and cautious when he went to the rally, and he should have asked for permission to speak, too, because he had been gone for so long, and I had not heard him give a decent report to the Cultural Revolution Group".

When Wang Li returned to Beijing and saw how many people from the Central Cultural Revolution Group welcomed him, he dropped his restlessness and became more active. When he was asked by the Xinhua News Agency to tell them what had happened, he gave them a report. He told how those people had beaten him and how he was; he was not afraid of danger and he was righteous. He also told the story of how he heard the men in the army who had beaten him say that the "old man" was also here and that we should go to the "old man" immediately. He said he suspected that the "old man" they were referring to was Chairman Mao.

I asked Guan Feng if what Wang Li said was true. Guan Feng said, "Whether it is true or not, it is not good for him to say so. According to him, then the troops and the masses in Wuhan would not be opposed to Wang Li and Xie Fuzhi, but to Chairman Mao. That would be a big problem". I said, "I think the majority of the army commanders and the masses are supportive of Chairman Mao, and it is impossible that so many people are opposed to him. If they were really against Chairman Mao, they wouldn't dare to say so in front of Wang Li, wouldn't that be self-exposure?" Therefore, I said to Wang Li later that he should stop saying that they were against Chairman Mao and that it was enough to say that they were against him. "Even if you do say it, you should not say it to the masses. Wouldn't that undermine Chairman Mao's prestige?" I also told Wang Li, "You should also stop going around giving reports. The Premier and Jiang Qing went to pick you up, not to establish you as a hero, but to maintain the prestige of the Central Cultural Revolution Group. If you go around like this, you are making yourself out to be a hero. There is no such thing as proclaiming yourself a hero. A hero has to be recognised by others". Wang Li listened to me very humbly.

At the meeting of the Central Cultural Revolution Group, it was decided that a mass meeting would be held at Tiananmen Square on 25 July to denounce the "Million Heroes" who caused the July 20 Incident in Wuhan. The Premier consulted the Chairman, who agreed. During the meeting, Ye Qun also participated in the discussion, and no arrangements were made for Lin Biao to attend the meeting. However, when the meeting was about to start, Ye Qun called me and said that after

repeated consideration, General Lin thought it would be better for him to attend the rally and make a statement. I said, "That would be best, of course". I hastened to report to Chairman Mao in Shanghai that Lin Biao was going to attend the meeting. After a while, Wang Dongxing called me and said that the Chairman wanted him to go to Tiananmen to attend the meeting as well.

I said, "Don't be ridiculous, you are not even in Beijing, how can you go up to Tiananmen Square?" He said, "I didn't want to go, the Chairman told me to go". Even Yang Chengwu had to go. He said that it was not the people who had to go to Tiananmen Square, but their names had to be on the list of leaders who would go up to the Tiananmen Rostrum. Wang Dongxing and Yang Chengwu were both people who followed the Chairman, and the fact that their names were on the list of leaders who went up on Tiananmen showed that people from Chairman Mao's side also took part in the sounding out. This was of unusual significance.

On 25 July, the mass meeting was attended by hundreds of thousands of people. Lin Biao also arrived particularly early that day. Usually, Lin Biao did not attend the mass meetings held by the Central Committee. Sometimes when he was invited to come, he did not make much of a statement, but only followed the Chairman's statement. But for some reason, he was very active on that day. I had never seen him so active on anything else. He spoke to us a lot on Tiananmen Square that day. He said that this incident would definitely divide the rightists more quickly. "The Wuhan issue is not just a Wuhan issue, the Wuhan issue is a national issue. I was worried about not having a topic to write about before, but now that they have given us a topic, we have to make a big deal out of it and turn a bad thing into a good thing". He also said that this unit of Chen Zaidao used to be of the Fourth Front Army, which was led by Xu Xiangqian. Xie Fuzhi was also with the Fourth Front Army and Xie Fuzhi was still their chief. Now they don't even listen to Xie Fuzhi, so there must be someone higher than Xie Fuzhi behind the scenes.

At this rally, the slogan "Down with the capitalist-roaders in the army" was raised. In the May 16 Circular, Chairman Mao himself had already added the slogan of "a handful of capitalist-roaders in power who have infiltrated the Party, the government and the army". Therefore, I was not too concerned about this slogan. But to my surprise, it was this false slogan that led to the downfall of Wang Li and Guan Feng in the first place, but of course there were other reasons for their downfall.

On the night of the mass rally, some people went to the vicinity of Xu Qianqian and Xu Haidong's homes to march and demonstrate, shouting slogans. Later, when I was tried in Qincheng, they said that I had directed the people to do this. In fact, I really did not take the initiative to direct this matter, nor did Jiang Qing give me this task. But I did know about it and supported it, even though I did not direct it. After the rally, it was Ye Qun who dragged me to the Cultural Revolution Group Office and instructed the "Beihang Red Flag" and other rebel groups to call for people to go. It was Ye Qun who told us specifically to tell the Red Guards to go there. Ye Qun was directing people to do this in the Cultural Revolution Group office, and I had to cooperate with her at that time, while Jiang Qing was also present. Now that Ye Qun is dead, they want to put all the blame on me for this, and all I can do is admit it. Anyway, many years have passed and I don't think there's any point in trying to defend myself.

#### **4. The criticism of Chen Zaidao**

When the Premier returned to Beijing, he often discussed with the Chairman in Shanghai what to do with Chen Zaidao. The Premier asked whether to declare them as rebels. The Chairman disagreed

and said, "Don't say that. I don't see that they have made up their minds to oppose me. If they were really determined to oppose me, they would have moved several divisions to surround the East Lake Hotel and we would not have been able to get out".

On July 23, the Central Committee telegraphed Chen Zaidao, Zhong Hanhua and others to come to Beijing for a meeting to discuss their problems, and in the early hours of July 24, Chen Zaidao and his political commissar Zhong Hanhua arrived in Beijing and the Premier put them up at the Beijing West Hotel.

As soon as Chen Zaidao and his group stayed at the Beijing West Hotel, workers, students and cadres from the capital, at least 20,000 to 30,000 of them, surrounded the hotel to the hilt. I had something to do with this, for I had asked the Cultural and Art Group of the Central Cultural Revolution Group to mobilise a number of people to take part in the siege. At that time, everyone was very concerned about this matter and was very angry with Chen Zaidao, so when I told them, Chen Zaidao was staying at the Beijing West Hotel, Jin Jingmai from the literary arts group said, "Let's go and rebel against him!" He brought along the arts group, the art schools and the model theatre groups. Jin Jingmai mobilised at least 10,000 people. There were also tens of thousands of people wearing military uniforms, which were Ye Qun's people. There were also some from factories and schools, which were spontaneous visits by the masses.

These tens of thousands of people first shouted slogans and then stormed into the building, they were going to arrest Chen Zaidao. According to the Premier, Chen Zaidao had been invited to Beijing by the Central Government for a meeting and could not be arrested. And since they had invited him here, he should not be besieged. If you laid siege to him, it would be like setting a trap for people to exploit, and that would be a breach of trust on the part of the Central Government. Besides, if so many people rushed in, Chen Zaidao would really be taken away, and it might be possible to kill him. Therefore, the Premier ordered Fu Chongbi to find a way to protect Chen Zaidao. Fu Chongbi asked the guards to put Chen Zaidao and the others in a lift and then stopped the lift in the middle of two floors, so that it was prevented from going up or down, and was out of reach.

Fu Chongbi was very clever, and when he saw that there were several actors from the model theatre group and representatives of the "Old Third Army" whom he knew, he reported to the Premier that this was related to Qi Benyu and Ye Qun. The Premier then approached me and asked, "Did you mobilise people to arrest Chen Zaidao?" The Premier looked very unhappy. I said honestly that I had given some information to the people in the Literature and Arts Group. The Premier then said, "You should let them go immediately! How can this be? We, the Central Committee, have asked people to come to the meeting, and you have gotten so many people to besiege him, if people get excited and injure or kill him, how are we going to explain this to Chairman Mao?" When I heard this, I also felt nervous, so I hurriedly informed Jin Jingmai to tell him to withdraw the people quickly. Then, the Premier told Ye Qun to withdraw her people.

During the meeting, the Premier again criticised me and Ye Qun for this, saying, "How could you find people to surround the Beijing West Hotel without the consent of the Central Government?" I knew I was wrong, so I admitted my mistake again to the Premier in public. But Ye Qun was not happy, she said to the Premier, "They had surrounded Chairman Mao in Wuhan, so what was wrong with us going to surround him? We are also trying to defend Chairman Mao and show our loyalty!" The Premier said, "Of course you can show your loyalty, but you can't just go in and arrest people without the consent of the Central Committee". Ye Qun said, "We didn't really arrest him either, we

just marched and demonstrated to scare him". The Premier said, "Demonstration is fine, but can you control the situation?" Ye Qun said, "If we don't go in and arrest people, we can ask them to walk around the gate and shout slogans, can't we? He opposes the Central Cultural Revolution Group and Chairman Mao, so can't we shout slogans?"

Frankly speaking, only Ye Qun dared to stand up to the Premier, I did not dare to stand up to the Premier, if I did, then Jiang Qing would look for me. Because of Ye Qun's insistence, the Premier said, "Then you should go and shout slogans, but you are not allowed to storm the hotel and arrest people". The Premier also said that when the time came, when they went to demonstrate, all of you from the Central Cultural Revolution would go along to see what was going on, lest something happen, and in case anything happened, you would be responsible. That night, Ye Qun then organised another demonstration in front of the Beijing West Hotel. Jiang Qing and Chen Boda accompanied Ye Qun in a car to the side of the Beijing West Hotel to see the demonstration. For the evening march, the procession was orderly, unlike the morning when the Beijing West Hotel was surrounded so tightly that water couldn't leak out, and they walked along the road in front of the hotel and shouted slogans. Unexpectedly, Jiang Qing and Ye Qun, who were sitting in the car, were recognised by the marching crowd and the car was surrounded by them. I hurriedly got out of the car and went to Fu Chongbi and asked him to send someone to direct them to disperse the crowd, thus relieving them of the siege. When they returned to Diaoyutai, they all complained that they had fallen for the Premier's trick and that he had told us to go and have a look, but they almost couldn't get out!

Then came an enlarged meeting of the military commission at the Beijing West Hotel to criticise Chen Zaidao. All the commanders of the eight military regions, except Xu Shiyou, came. At that time Xu Shiyou was still in East China and he was responsible for the Chairman's security. Chen Zaidao's room at the Beijing West Hotel was guarded by soldiers at the door, but it was not considered house arrest, and he had the freedom to chat with Han Xianchu and others who came to the meeting.

At the criticism meeting, Chen Zaidao strenuously denied that he had commanded the independent division of the military region and the "Million Heroes" to surround the East Lake Hotel. He said he only had a problem with Wang Li, but he would never oppose Chairman Mao. He said, "We had no time to defend Chairman Mao, how dare we oppose him? I wouldn't dare to oppose Chairman Mao if I had a hundred guts. If I were to oppose Chairman Mao, the people would bite me to death!" I saw that Chen Zaidao was quite sincere when he said these words. I believed that he had not yet made up his mind to oppose Chairman Mao, let alone dare to harm him. But did he really have no intention of putting pressure on Chairman Mao by surrounding Wang Li? I just didn't believe it. The Chairman still said that he just had not yet "made up his mind".

This was the first time I had attended a criticism meeting in the army, and this meeting was not very civilised, even less so than in the local area. The speeches at the meeting were also made with one voice raised higher than the other, cursing loudly and using foul language constantly. I saw that Jiang Qing could not even sit there and listen to them anymore. Wu Faxian even went up and grabbed Chen Zaidao's ear and slapped him twice. During the adjournment, I also saw Wu Faxian ask the attendant to make Chen Zaidao stand on the side and remove his cap and collar badge from his military cap and clothes. But there were no scenes of punching and kicking as depicted in the so-called documentary literature later on, which was all made up.

However, in his self-criticism, Chen Zaidao spoke from his heart. He said that he hated the rebels very much in his heart. He had been living a good life, in peace and quiet. But when the rebels rose up, all hell broke loose. So, he really wanted to have them all arrested and shot. When I heard what Chen Zaidao said, I thought, "How can Communist Party cadres become like this when they are in power?" At the beginning, the Chairman did not have a clear idea of the nature of the July 20 Incident. It was only after he arrived in Shanghai that he was able to clarify some of the circumstances. Later, in a letter to the Wuhan Military Region, the Chairman still referred to Chen Zaidao as his comrade. When the Premier saw the Chairman's telegram, he immediately ordered the removal of the soldiers guarding Chen Zaidao. Chen Zaidao was then put into a suite with a large living room and was treated like any other head of the Central Committee. "After the July 20 Incident, the Chairman was very concerned about the reaction of the troops to the incident, and he asked us to find out more about it. I arranged for reporters from the Cultural Revolution Express team to go to the troops in different parts of the country to collect information. The reporters who went down to find out the situation soon reported that some people in the army were gloating about the incident. When they heard that someone in the Fuzhou military district was eating in the canteen they openly said, "This is great, the Central Cultural Revolution Group will have a lively time of it". I reported all this to Chairman Mao in time.

## Chapter 26: Guan Feng and Wang Li

1. The "August 1" editorial and commentators' articles in Red Flag magazine in 1967
2. Wang Li's "August 7 Speech"
3. Wang Li and Guan Feng Under Scrutiny
4. Chairman Mao's instructions on my review
5. Reflections on Wang Li
6. The Complete Expression of Chairman Mao's Theory of Continuing Revolution under the Dictatorship of the Proletariat
7. Guan Feng's Criticism of Wang Li

### 1. The "August 1" editorial and commentators' articles in Red Flag magazine in 1967

Shortly after the July 20 Incident, the Chairman wrote a letter to the commanders of the Wuhan Military Region, in which he said, "For those cadres who have made serious mistakes, including Comrade Chen Zaidao whom you and the revolutionary masses want to defeat, they can still stand up and join the revolutionary ranks as long as they do not persist in their mistakes, make serious corrections and are understood by the revolutionary masses." At the same time, the Chairman told the Premier, "the problem in Wuhan should be dealt with as an internal error, because Chen Zaidao did not make up his mind to oppose the Centre, or we would not have got out."

But these instructions of the Chairman were not seriously discussed at the meetings of the Central Cultural Revolution Group. Therefore, Chen Boda, Wang Li, Guan Feng, and Lin Jie participated in the editorial of the Red Flag magazine written for the August 1st Army Day of that year, and instead of propagating the above instructions given by Chairman Mao on the July 20th Incident, they called on the whole country to arrest "a handful of capitalist-roaders in the army". A commentator's article in the same issue of Red Flag magazine was even more powerful, as it was entitled "Fire on the People's Main Enemy". This meant that the main direction of the struggle in the Cultural Revolution was to shift from "a handful of capitalist-roaders within the Party" to "a handful of capitalist-roaders within the army".

At that time, the editorials and commentators' articles in Red Flag magazine were very useful in guiding the direction of the national movement. Therefore, according to the regulations, important editorials had to be discussed by the Central Committee, and in some cases, approved by the Chairman. Therefore to propose in an editorial, without the approval of Chairman Mao and the Party Central Committee, to change the general direction of the struggle and the direction of the main enemy, as in this case, was indeed a serious mistake that interfered with the Chairman's strategic deployment. After the editorial was published, there were already some places where the masses understood it that way, and many places had already begun to move, proposing a second great confrontation and a second great disruption. If it really got going like that, the consequences would have been unthinkable. Soldiers are armed with guns, and if you mobilise them to rise up in rebellion, their antagonists will also take up guns, so isn't that the same as calling for armed struggle? If there were more incidents like the July 20 Incident in a few military regions, the whole country would have been in chaos.

### 2. Wang Li's "August 7 Speech"

Since the beginning of the Cultural Revolution, many cadres in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as well as many students from diplomatic outlets, rose up against Foreign Minister Chen Yi. But the Premier was extremely protective of Chen Yi, and the Chairman actually protected him. However, Chen Yi had a strong personality and did not take the rebels seriously, and for all these reasons, the confrontation between him and the rebellious masses below him became more and more intense.

After the "February Rebellion", Chen Yi was criticized within the Party, and the rebels in the Foreign Ministry proposed to fight Chen Yi and bring him down. The Premier asked Chen Boda and me to meet with the rebels at the Foreign Ministry, telling them that diplomacy was no small matter and that the normal affairs of the Ministry should not be affected by the rebellion. The rebel faction was told that they could give Chen Yi advice, but that they should support Chen Yi's work.

At the end of April, Yao Dengshan<sup>399</sup> returned from Indonesia. At a meeting, Yao Dengshan asked me if Chen Yi should be protected. I said, "It is up to the Central Committee to decide whether to protect or not. It is OK for the masses to criticise Chen Yi, and the general direction is right. Now Chen Yi is the one who should give the students a self-criticism to ease the antagonism between the two sides".

At the beginning of August, Yao Wenyuan called me from Shanghai and conveyed the words of Chairman Mao when he received foreign guests in Shanghai, in which Chairman Mao said, "It's fine to fight against Chen Yi, it's fine to knock him down a little, you can still protect him after you knock him down." At that time, I wrote down these words of Chairman Mao and showed them to the Premier and the members of the Central Cultural Revolution Group. The Premier instructed Guan Feng and I to go to the Foreign Ministry and give them a speech in the spirit of the Chairman's instructions. In our speech, we spoke in accordance with what the Chairman had said. However, the rebels in the Foreign Ministry were not satisfied after hearing my speech. It was because there was no clear statement as to whether Chen Yi could be overthrown or not.

After Wang Li returned from Wuhan, he was treated as a hero, but he himself did not know that in fact he had done something wrong in Wuhan and that the Chairman was already dissatisfied with him. When he heard that the two factions in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs were not satisfied with my speech and Guan Feng's, he volunteered to bring the representatives of the two factions in the

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<sup>399</sup> Yao Dengshan (1918-1998) joined the Communist Party of China in 1938. He had responsibilities for political work in the people's army, and beginning in 1950, did diplomatic work in Denmark, Finland and Ceylon. In March 1966 he was posted to Indonesia following Suharto's coup and the massacre of millions of members of the Indonesian Communist Party. On April 15, 1966 more than a thousand Indonesian military and police units, and armed right-wing thugs, broke into the Chinese Embassy and trashed it. Yao and others defended China's national flag and eventually repulsed the attack. On April 30, 1967 Yao returned to Beijing, and was greeted at the airport by Premier Zhou Enlai and 7,000 people from the capital along with Chen Boda, Kang Sheng, Li Fuchun, Chen Yi, Li Xiannian, Tan Zhenlin and other leaders. The next day was Ma Day, and a grand gathering was held in Tiananmen Square as usual. Yao was invited onto the Tiananmen Rostrum where Mao hailed him as a "red diplomatic fighter". Yao was soon involved in the Cultural Revolution struggle of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and became the head of its revolutionary rebel liaison station, but only four months later, with Wang Li, Guan Feng and Qi Benyu defeated, the revolutionary rebel liaison station collapsed. On June 11, 1971, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs held a mass rally at the Beijing Workers' Stadium to arrest Yao, who was later imprisoned in Qincheng prison. In 1980, Yao was released.

Ministry to Diaoyutai to talk to them on 7 August, which later became known as the "Wang's August 7 Speech". His speech was recorded by Yao Dengshan and his colleagues, and they published it in the Red Guards' tabloid. One of the most problematic remarks was that diplomatic work was no big deal, and that Red Guards could also become foreign ministers.

Originally, the Premier had already made an announcement on behalf of the Central Government that the powers of the central ministries and commissions belonged to the Central Government, and that the Red Guards could participate in supervision, but the administrative power could not be taken away. Therefore, Wang Li's speech was out of line. But later in his defence, Wang Li said that he had not said that Red Guards could also become foreign ministers.

On 22 August 1967, only two weeks after Wang Li's "August 7th speech", over 10,000 rebels from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Red Guards from the capital gathered in front of the British Chargé d'affaires in Beijing to protest against the suppression of patriotic journalists in Hong Kong by the British Hong Kong authorities, and held a "meeting of the proletarian revolutionaries in the capital to denounce the crimes of the British Empire". At that time, Premier Zhou signed a "48-hour ultimatum to the British government" at the strong request of the masses. On 22 August, the ultimatum expired, but the British side did not reply. As a result, the rebels stormed the British chargé d'affaires and set fire to the office building (which was saved). This serious diplomatic incident involved the "April 14" faction of the Red Guards in Qinghua. The Qinghua "April 14" were the rival faction of the Qinghua University Kuai Dafu Jinggang Mountain Regiment. However, the Central Government, from the Premier to Jiang Qing, thought at the time that the Red Guards were the rebels and that Wang Li and others were probably behind it. In fact, it was not Wang Li who called it. Premier Zhou took this matter very seriously. In fact, the incident had a lot to do with the fact that he had issued the "ultimatum" in an ill-considered manner.

After this incident, the Premier wrote a letter and brought it to Chairman Mao in Shanghai through Yang Chengwu, reporting to him what had happened in Beijing, including the August 1 editorial and commentators' articles in the Red Flag magazine; Wang Li's "August 7 speech"; the "burning of the British Chargé d'affaires" and the "siege of Zhongnanhai" by the masses. After reading the materials sent by the Premier, Chairman Mao quickly issued instructions to seriously correct the wrong tendencies in the movement.

### **3. Wang Li and Guan Feng Under Scrutiny**

On 26 August Yang Chengwu returned to Beijing from Shanghai. As soon as he returned, he conveyed the Chairman's instructions to the Premier and Jiang Qing.

That evening, a meeting of the Central Cultural Revolution Group was held in Building 16 of Diaoyutai, chaired by the Premier. Those who attended were the Premier, Chen Boda, Kang Sheng, Jiang Qing, Zhang Chunqiao, Qi Benyu and Yao Wenyuan. Wang Li and Guan Feng were not called to attend. At the meeting, the Premier conveyed the Chairman's instructions and criticised Wang Li and Guan Feng. He said that their main mistakes were, firstly, to encourage the seizure of power in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which is an organ of state power and has a bearing on the country's reputation and image, and that Wang Li was very wrong to say that the Red Guards could seize the power of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; secondly, two articles in the Red Flag magazine put forward the wrong slogan of "seizing a handful of people within the army". The Premier then announced on

the spot the Chairman's decision to place Wang Li and Guan Feng under isolation and investigation, and to call them "leave of absence for review".

Jiang Qing then said to me, "Go and ask Wang Li and Guan Feng to come to the meeting". I asked my secretary to go to the 15th floor to inform Guan Feng to come to the meeting. I myself ran to the upper floor of Building 16 to fetch Wang Li down. Wang Li's leg injury had not yet healed and he could not walk, so I pushed him in a wheelchair to the stairway and then walked into the meeting room step by step, holding him.

After conveying to them the Chairman's instructions and the decision of the meeting, the Premier, Chen Boda, Kang Sheng and Jiang Qing criticized them for their mistakes. Seeing the seriousness of the problem, Chen Boda, in order to clear himself of responsibility, said that he had not read either of the two articles and that Wang Li and Guan Feng had taken the decision to publish them without permission. Guan Feng said at the meeting that the two articles were drafted by Lin Jie, editor of the Red Flag magazine, based on the opinions of him and Wang Li, and then he and Wang Li made revisions and approval. They should take responsibility for this mistake. But Guan Feng said that no matter how big a mistake I had made, there was one point that had to be made clear: the article was finally published with the approval of Chen Boda, and it was not, as Comrade Boda said, their decision to publish it without permission. But Chen Boda refused to admit it. He said, "Chairman Mao said that I was Liu Penzi<sup>400</sup>, and people had long taken me for Liu Penzi. I didn't even read the editorial, and they published it." Guan Feng then said, "You obviously issued the article, and you made some textual changes to it, and there was a sentence added by you in your own handwriting on the manuscript, 'Raise your hands to meet the new great storm of class struggle!' How come you don't remember any of that?"

The Premier then asked someone to bring the original manuscript on the spot, but it had been taken by Chen Boda and was nowhere to be found. The Premier then asked his secretary to go to Chen Boda's office to look for it, and when he found it, it was clearly written by Chen Boda when he was examining the manuscript, and Chen Boda had also written the approval of "Send it as it is". This was the first time that Chen Boda had been required to do anything about it, so he said that he had taken sleeping pills at the time and was confused and had forgotten.

Although it was clear to everyone what was going on, we all understood that Chen Boda could not be held responsible for the matter at that time. Chen Boda was the head of the Central Cultural Revolution Group, and taking him down would have been too big a shock. So, the Premier said at the meeting that it seemed that the article had been approved by Comrade Boda. But Chen Boda was justifiably saying that he was on sleeping pills at the time and his mind was not clear. Comrades Guan Feng and Wang Li should have handed the article over to other central leaders for review at that time, but they did not do so. Therefore, comrades Guan Feng and Wang Li still bear the main responsibility.

Then we discussed Wang Li's "August 7th speech".

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<sup>400</sup> Liu Penzi (10-?) was a puppet emperor put in place by the peasant rebels of the Red Eyebrows Army. They had risen against the Han Dynasty. He had no real power. When the Red Eyebrows were defeated in a battle soon after, the victorious Liu Xiu (the eventual Emperor Guangwu) restored the Eastern Han Dynasty but spared Liu Penzi's life, allowing him to live on rent from a grant of land.

Wang Li denied at the meeting that he had said that "even Red Guards can become foreign ministers". The Premier then pulled up the records of the communication made by the Foreign Ministry that day and the Red Guards' tabloids, some of which contained these words. Although it may have been an exaggerated memory of the records, it did have a great impact on the outside world.

Jiang Qing then asked me to take the two of them out of the conference room and send them to the Diaoyutai Building 2, which the Premier and Jiang Qing had asked me to prepare for them in advance, for isolation and examination. At that time, Diaoyutai Building 2 was vacant, so I arranged for the two of them to be placed there. Before going there, I asked the Premier specifically what treatment was to be given to the two of them. The Premier said that they were still being treated as leaders. After I had made arrangements for Wang Li and Guan Feng, I went back to the conference room and reported the arrangements to the Premier, Kang Sheng, Chen Boda, Jiang Qing, etc., and expressed on behalf of both of them their willingness to seriously review their mistakes. The Premier said to me, you often go to watch them when you have time and care for them. The Premier then left the conference room. Kang Sheng and Chen Boda followed. After they had all left, Jiang Qing suddenly burst into tears, crying so hard that Zhang Chunqiao, Yao Wenyuan and I, who were present, were all surprised. Yao Wenyuan also burst into tears.

#### **4. Chairman Mao's instructions on my review**

The day Yang Chengwu returned to Beijing, I was on the sidelines as he conveyed the Chairman's instructions to Jiang Qing. After the meeting, Yang Chengwu came with me to my office. It was the first time he had come to my place. Yang Chengwu said to me, "The Chairman asked me about you and said, 'How has Qi Benyu been behaving lately?' I put in a good word for you at the time. I said that Qi Benyu was loyal to the Chairman and was following him in the revolution, and I spoke about the articles you had written, which were very combative and useful". The Chairman said that you were one of the more thoughtful people among the young people and said that you were different from Wang Li and the others. My secretaries were present when Yang Chengwu came to my office and the meeting was entered into my work log. But after I came out of Qincheng, I saw Yang Chengwu tell the person interviewing him that the Chairman had said at that time that Qi Benyu was a bad person. I think if the Chairman had really said that, then Yang Chengwu would not have dared to come to my office to say those words at that time. In fact, there are different accounts of what the Chairman actually said to Wang Li and Guan Feng. What Xu Yefu told me was that he had heard the Chairman say that Wang Li and Guan Feng had made mistakes and should reflect on them. I wrote a letter to Yang Chengwu after I was released from prison asking him what the Chairman actually said at that time. Why was there a discrepancy between what he said at the time and what he told the journalist later? He never replied to me.

At that time, Jiang Qing also said to me, this time you are happy, this business is nothing to do with you. But you should also pay attention. This time you have to thank Marx's spirit in the sky for letting you escape. I saw Jiang Qing was very happy that I had escaped.

Shortly after Wang and Guan were isolated, the Premier told me that it was time for me to write a self-critical review to the Chairman. Jiang Qing also asked me to write it, so I wrote a letter to the Chairman. In the letter, I said that "this time Guan Feng and Wang Li had made very serious mistakes, and that the mistakes they had made were manifested in the form of 'left' leaning blind actions ..... I had not been aware of some of their problems. The mistake Wang Li made on the Foreign Ministry issue was related to me. I am willing from the bottom of my heart to try to reform myself and always be a junior soldier loyal to Mao Zedong's (Chairman's) thought."

Within a few days, Xu Yefu brought me back from Shanghai an instruction from Chairman Mao on my letter.

"I have read it and return it to Comrade Qi Benyu. It is good to make some mistakes so that you can think deeply about them and correct them. Whenever possible, please inform Comrades Guan and Wang. September 7".

I took the Chairman's instructions to the Premier, Kang Sheng, Chen Boda and Jiang Qing and showed them to them.

They all drew circles on it, but wrote nothing. Only the Premier wrote the word "read". But what I found strange was that in the past, whenever the Chairman had given instructions, the Premier would immediately issue the document as a central document. But this time the Premier did not.

I asked Jiang Qing if I could show the Chairman's instructions to Wang Li and Guan Feng. Jiang Qing said, "You can take it to them and show it to them". I said, "I am afraid it is not appropriate for me to go alone, should I ask someone to go with me?" Jiang Qing said, "Let Chunqiao go with you". So I went with Zhang Chunqiao. Wang Li and Guan Feng were very happy to read the Chairman's instructions.

Ever since Wang and Guan were isolated, I had had a feeling of having nothing to do. I rarely went out, and I didn't go to some meetings to save others from getting ideas. This is when Zhang Chunqiao said to me, "You are wrong, you have to come out more at times like this, so that those who see the wind as the rudder don't easily fall on the stone"<sup>401</sup>. The first mass meeting held by the Central Committee after Wang and Guan were isolated, which I did not attend, was immediately followed by a slogan outside: Down with "Wang, Guan and Qi". When I went to subsequent meetings, the slogans outside did not include "Qi". So I went to all the meetings from then on until I was knocked down.

Before the National Day in 1967, Chairman Mao returned to Beijing. At a meeting of the Central Cultural Revolution Group, a division of labour was made: Zhang Chunqiao drafted Lin Biao's National Day speech; Yao Wenyuan drafted the National Day editorial; I was responsible for compiling the speeches made by the Chairman during his inspection of the north and south of the country.

As I had participated in the proofreading of Mao's Selected Works, I was familiar with the Chairman's language style, so I summarised the Chairman's speeches compiled from various places and published in newspapers. I found that the most important idea of the Chairman's speech was that he proposed to implement a "grand coalition" of the revolution, that is, all factions should take part in taking power, instead of supporting one faction to overwhelm another. This was in fact a major change in strategic thinking. I think Chairman Mao was so determined to bring down Wang Li and Guan Feng in order to realise this new strategic thinking. The Chairman was satisfied with what I had put together and crossed out and circled the draft I had sent up. Basically, he didn't make many changes, so I took it for publication.

In Lin Biao's National Day speech drafted by Chunqiao, one of the important points is that he quoted Chairman Mao's phrase "fight self, repudiate revisionism". However, in the original draft, it was

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<sup>401</sup> Zhang Chunqiao uses two metaphors here. To see the wind as the rudder means to act according to peer pressure or to other people's sly suggestions. To fall into a stone means to see a person falling into a trap, and instead of reaching out to save him, the observer pushes him down and throws a stone at him; it is a metaphor for setting up a person when he is in danger.

written that "we should criticise and fight against selfishness". I suggested that the revolution should always be internal before external, and that logically, one must first get rid of one's own selfishness before one can criticise revisionism. So it would be better to change it to "fight self, repudiate revisionism". Chunqiao thought this was reasonable, and the Chairman and Lin Biao also said it was good. So they changed the phrase "criticising and fighting selfishness" to "fight self, repudiate revisionism".

## 5. Reflections on Wang Li

Kang Sheng had raised the issue of Wang Li having a history of membership in the Guomindang when Wang Li was under scrutiny. Wang Li explained that that was when he was working in the Northeast Army and was assigned by the underground party organisation to join. Wang Li also said that the head of the underground party organisation at that time was Gu Mu. Later on, Gu Mu wrote a certificate saying that this had happened and that the organisation had asked him to join the Guomindang for work purposes. This incident gave me a good impression of Gu Mu, who, despite the differences of opinion in his attitude towards the Cultural Revolution, did not kick Wang Li when he was down on his luck.

Jiang Qing was not familiar with Wang Li. It was only when Kang Sheng brought him from Beijing to Shanghai when he was involved in the drafting of the May 16 Circular that he met Jiang Qing. Wang Li was a bright, flexible and eloquent person, but his words were often watery, so Jiang Qing was not very comfortable with him, saying that he was like Ma Di<sup>402</sup> of the Three Kingdoms and that he was "overstating the case". Once, Jiang Qing even whispered to me, "Don't look to Wang Li, he is so impassioned, but if there is a setback in the Cultural Revolution, he may not be as good as Guan Feng!" Guan Feng was a bit stubborn and did not give in easily. Jiang Qing had a good eye for people sometimes.

I came across Wang Li's Reflections shortly after it was published, after my release from Qincheng in 1986. There is nothing wrong with a person to making a review of his past affairs and rethinking some issues, regardless of his views. But at a minimum it must be in line with objective facts.

However, in Wang Li's Reflections, I found that he ignored many historical facts and deliberately catered to the needs of Deng Xiaoping.

For example, in his Reflections, Wang Li has a chapter devoted to the fact that Chairman Mao had talked to him alone in Wuhan in July 1967, saying something about how he still wanted to use Deng Xiaoping if Lin Biao was unwell. This was followed by some words of praise from the Chairman for Deng Xiaoping.

Chairman Mao did say at that time that he wanted to separate Deng Xiaoping from Liu Shaoqi. But when it comes to such a sensitive topic as the successor, how could Chairman Mao go and say it to someone he didn't know very well at that time? What would have happened if this had reached Lin Biao's ears at that time? At that time, the Chairman still trusted and relied on Lin Biao. Moreover, as far as I know, at that time, apart from Jiang Qing and Kang Sheng, the Chairman seldom summoned

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<sup>402</sup> Ma Di (190-228) was an official and general of the Shu Han Dynasty during the Three Kingdoms period. Zhuge Liang, the prime minister of the Shu Han Dynasty, appointed him to join the army. Ma Di was very talented and good at military strategy. Zhuge Liang always took him seriously. In 228, during the Northern Expedition of Zhuge Liang, Ma Di violated Zhuge Liang's combat instructions and caused Jieting to fall. After the withdrawal of the Shu army, Ma Di was executed by Zhuge Liang.

members of the Central Cultural Revolution Group to meet with him alone. I sometimes went to see the Chairman alone because of the work of the Central Secretariat. It was only later in Shanghai that the Chairman summoned Zhang Chunqiao and Yao Wenyan alone. But he never summoned Wang Li alone.

On the other hand, the Central Committee has strict rules that if the Chairman really said something important to Wang Li, then Wang Li should immediately report the Chairman's speech to the Standing Committee of the Central Committee, and he is not allowed to go and talk to others in private. Wang Li had been working in the Central Committee for quite some time, and he should have known these disciplines very well.

However, why Wang Li had to make up these things out of nothing was something I couldn't understand at first. Later, I heard from someone that after Deng Xiaoping returned to power in 1978, he sent Deng Liqun to Qincheng to talk to Wang Li twice. Deng Liqun told Wang Li that Deng Xiaoping had said that now was the time to reuse people like Wang Li. Now we need people like him who know what they are talking about. I think that's how these things came out for Wang Li.

But then Deng Xiaoping did not reappoint Wang Li. The reason I know is that at this time, someone came out to denounce Wang Li, and this person told Deng Xiaoping that Wang Li was the most vigorous one in denouncing and criticizing Deng Xiaoping back then. The first thing that happened was that when Wang Li criticized Deng Xiaoping at the Central Committee meeting, he sometimes did not call Deng Xiaoping by his first name, but by the name of "Shorty".

In addition, Chen Yun insisted that Wang Li be expelled from the Party. Therefore, despite Wang Li's good words about Deng and Chen, he was "doubly expelled" from the Party, and ended up in a situation where he was not a good person inside or outside. In his Reflections, he boasted that he had "left a clean slate on earth", but in fact the more he left it, the less clean it became.

Wang Li was very unhappy with Chen Yun's attack on him. He said in his Reflections that Chen Yun was very Marxist, but he was no longer Marxist on this issue.

In his Reflections, Wang Li also said that he had drafted most of the documents of the Central Committee, and that he had drafted most of the editorials during the Cultural Revolution, all of which were exaggerations. In fact, among the various heroes and heroines of the Central Cultural Revolution Group, Wang Li was relatively short of ideas. Wang Li's strength was his quickness in taking notes, and he was known at the time as "Wang's quick pen". When we discussed articles together, Wang Li usually took notes, so that many of the surviving texts were in Wang Li's handwriting. Wang Li also had the advantage of being an eloquent speaker. If you asked him to present a point of view, he could relay it better than you could. But if you ask him to come up with some new ideas on his own, it would be very difficult.

Wang Li said that the six points of Chairman Mao's theory of continuing revolution under the dictatorship of the proletariat were also summed up by him, which was an outrageous exaggeration. In this matter, Guan Feng, Zhang Chunqiao and Yao Wenyan made much greater contributions than he did.

## **6. The Complete Expression of Chairman Mao's Theory of Continuing Revolution under the Dictatorship of the Proletariat**

It was around May 1967 when Chairman Mao was discussing the revision of The Great Historical Document - an article commemorating the first anniversary of the publication of the May 16 Circular

- that he said that this year was the fiftieth anniversary of the October Revolution in the Soviet Union, and that it was important to take this opportunity to clarify the issue of the Soviet Union's change to revisionism in theory. This year was the 50th anniversary of the October Revolution in the Soviet Union. He said that he would write an article on the continuation of the revolution under the dictatorship of the proletariat using Marxism-Leninism.

The article was then given to Chen Boda and a few of us to draft. We publicly elected Guan Feng as the main drafter. Guan Feng said that the article was difficult to write and that time was short. So, during that time, Guan Feng often shut himself up in his room at Diaoyutai to meditate. His secretary said that Guan Feng was afraid of being disturbed in his thinking and did not usually answer the phone.

During the drafting process, Wang, Guan and I often had discussions together. Usually Guan Feng was the main focus, that is, Guan Feng talked about his ideas, Wang Li took notes, and I also put forward - from time to time - some of my ideas.

I remember that there was a book written by the Yugoslavian Djilas called "The New Class". In it, it was written that after the socialist revolution had won and the Communist Party had taken control of state power, a new privileged class would inevitably emerge. They controlled all the resources of the state and, as a result, "contrary to previous revolutions, the communist revolution, which began with the call to abolish class, ended with the creation of a new class that held unprecedented absolute authority".

When I read it, I felt that what Djilas said was very similar to the situation that has arisen in our country, and was right. But why criticise Djilas as revisionist? Guan Feng said that there was no contradiction. Djilas is saying that the emergence of a privileged class within socialism is inevitable. And in this way he rejects socialism as a whole. We believe that this is not inevitable and that the "Great Cultural Revolution" can be used to prevent the emergence and development of a privileged class.

By late August, when Wang Li and Guan Feng were being investigated in isolation, a draft of this article had been completed. The most important part of it was that it gave a more complete expression for the first time of Chairman Mao's idea of continuing the revolution under the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Later, after Wang Li and Guan Feng were under review, Chen Boda, Yao Wenyuan and Zhang Chunqiao continued to revise this article. I saw Chen Boda and Yao Wenyuan typeset out six theoretical points of Chairman Mao's ideas on carrying on the revolution under the dictatorship of the proletariat and gave them to the Chairman. The Chairman read and approved, "The inner copy has been read, well revised and usable."

On 6 November 1967, this article was published as an editorial in the People's Daily, the Red Flag magazine and the People's Liberation Army Daily (the "two newspapers and one journal") to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the October Revolution in the Soviet Union: "Marching along the path opened up by the October Socialist Revolution", which had a huge international and domestic impact. This article, together with the "Great Historical Document" commemorating the May 16 Circular and the National Day editorial "Long Live the Victory of the Cultural Revolution under the Dictatorship of the Proletariat", are three very important documents on Chairman Mao's idea of continuing the revolution under the dictatorship of the proletariat during the Cultural Revolution, all three of which were approved and revised by Chairman Mao. Chairman Mao

instructed that when discussing the idea of continuing revolution, not only his words but also more quotations from Lenin should be quoted, and that they should be closely related to the philosophical, political and economic principles of Marxism-Leninism. Guan Feng and others actively carried out Chairman Mao's instructions and repeatedly quoted Lenin's statement that the petty bourgeoisie "engenders capitalism and the bourgeoisie continuously, daily, hourly, spontaneously, and on a mass scale."

After Wang Li and Guan Feng were isolated and censored, Jiang Qing said that Wang Li and Guan Feng had contributed to the Cultural Revolution, especially Guan Feng's contribution in criticizing the "bourgeois reactionary line" and summarizing "Chairman Mao's theory of continuing the revolution", which should not be denied.

After I was released from Qincheng, I went to see Guan Feng. I told Guan Feng about Jiang Qing's weeping after he was isolated and her affirmation of his merits in the Cultural Revolution. Guan Feng thought for a while and said he believed that Jiang Qing's tears and affirmation of him were true, that we had fought together for so long after all, and that we still had feelings for each other. He said that Jiang Qing had flaws and mistakes, and some of them were quite big. But at the same time, he had a very high opinion of Jiang Qing. He said, "Look at all the female comrades who joined the revolution, how many of them can compare with Jiang Qing? Not even Cai Chang or Deng Yingchao could compare with Jiang Qing; Shuai Mengqi<sup>403</sup> was firm and brave in the face of the enemy, and would rather die than give in, but she did not fare well in the line struggle, and ran after Liu Shaoqi. Besides, internationally, Marx's wife, Engels' wife, and Lenin's wife, which of them can be compared to Jiang Qing? So Guan Feng said that he was not against Jiang Qing, he had never been against her before and he was not and would never be against her. Guan Feng thought it would be good for Jiang Qing to be more capable. Jiang Qing had no experience in military struggle, no experience in production struggle and no experience in politics. In addition, she is not very good at seeking common ground with others, which does not make it easy to unite comrades.

However, Guan Feng's student Yan Changgui scolded Jiang Qing very badly when he came back to work. When Guan Feng asked him not to scold Jiang Qing, Yan Changgui refused and Guan Feng criticised him, and the two stopped seeing each other. Recently, Yan Changgui has written some more articles about Jiang Qing, which are more objective and truthful than before.

When he talked about Wang Li's "Reflections", which denied all aspects of the Cultural Revolution, especially his flattery of Deng Xiaoping, Guan Feng was furious and called him a traitor, shameless and a disinformationist. He wrote criticisms all over the Reflections of Wang Li denouncing him.

## **7. Guan Feng's Criticism of Wang Li**

Guan Feng and Wang Li had a very good relationship during the Cultural Revolution and they discussed and worked together on many things. I did not spend as much time with them as they did together because I was busy with the day-to-day affairs of the group and the work of the Central

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<sup>403</sup> Shuai Mengqi (1897 - 1998) was born into a poor peasant family, and as a youth, embraced progressive ideas. She was a pioneer of the Chinese women's movement and joined the Communist Party of China. She was an alternate member of the Eighth Central Committee of the CPC, but was attacked by Kang Sheng and others during the Cultural Revolution and accused of being a "secret agent" and a "traitor to foreign countries". She was imprisoned for seven years and expelled from the Party. After Deng Xiaoping came to power, she was elected as a member of the Standing Committee of the Central Disciplinary Committee at the Third Plenary Session of the Eleventh CPC Central Committee, and elected as a member of the Central Advisory Committee at the Twelfth CPC Congress. She died aged 101.

Secretariat Bureau. I always had respect for Guan Feng, but I had an opinion about Wang Li. But Guan Feng always advised me not to be too prejudiced against him.

After I was released from Qincheng in 1986, I managed to find a way to go to Guan Feng. And Guan Feng and his wife Zhou Ying were asking around for news of me and wanted to meet with me. When I met with Guan Feng, he told me that Wang Li had defected to Deng Xiaoping and was following him to deny the Cultural Revolution and Chairman Mao. Guan Feng said that Wang Li also wanted to drag him along, but he refused. I knew then that Wang Li was also asking around about me and wanted to meet with me. After listening to Guan Feng, I did not meet with him. Later, when Wang Li came to Shanghai, he asked someone to come and tell me again that he wanted to meet with me, but I also politely declined.

On 24 April 1995, Guan Feng wrote to me from Beijing to tell me that Wang Li had reportedly sold his collection of cultural relics, bought two houses and limousines in the suburbs of Beijing, and employed a number of drivers, cooks, typists and nanny service staff at his own expense. I was unable to check and had no interest in confirming this and laughed it off.

On 23 June 2002, Guan Feng wrote to me, "A friend in Hong Kong sent me a set of Wang Li's two thick books, Wang Li's Reflections. At a cursory glance, more than 85 per cent of it is disinformation, distortion of facts and glorification of oneself, which is simply shameless. .... was a big surprise to me, and probably to you as well. How to deal with it? When will you come to the capital and read the fine print."

Guan Feng underlined many areas on Wang Li's Reflections that he was prepared to refute. Unfortunately, as he was seriously ill, he could not write much and finally failed to do so. A fuller account of the contents of the above-mentioned letter from Guan Feng to me can be found in some of the letters we exchanged, which I reproduce in the later part of the Memoirs.

## Chapter 27 - Premier Zhou and the Central Cultural Revolution Group

1. The Central Meeting and the Central Cultural Revolution Group Meeting
2. The Premier and Jiang Qing
3. The "Wu Hao Incident" and its history
4. Premier Zhou and I

### 1. The Central Meeting and the Central Cultural Revolution Group Meeting

After the 11th Plenary Session of the 8th Central Committee, major decisions of the Central Committee were made through "Central Committee meetings". The list of names for each meeting was generally decided by the Premier, except for those specifically mentioned by the Chairman. The Premier wrote the list and gave it to the Secretary to inform the public.

If the Chairman attended the meeting, it was called the "Central Standing Committee Meeting" and was usually held in the Beijing Room, Room 118 of the Great Hall of the People; occasionally it was held in the "swimming pool", but in winter it was colder there. The Chairman seemed to be particularly hardy, as we were still cold in our thick clothes, but he never allowed the heating to be turned on.

If the Chairman did not attend the meeting, then it was usually held in Huai Ren Hall, usually with the Premier presiding over the meeting. The meeting was attended by the main leaders of the State Council and members of our Central Cultural Revolution Group. At Lin Biao's place it was basically Ye Qun who came, the army was attended by Yang Chengwu, and Xie Fuzhi basically came to every meeting.

This was the highest central decision-making meeting at that time. Matters such as the criticism of Zhang Linzhi and the bringing back of Peng Dehuai from Sichuan had to be discussed and approved by this meeting. Some matters had to be approved by the Chairman before they could be implemented.

As far as I know, at that time, apart from the staff around the Chairman, only the Premier could go to the Chairman without being informed. Everyone else, including Chen Boda, had to inform the Chairman in advance and obtain his consent if they wanted to see him. In the past, Liu Shaoqi was allowed to go to the Chairman without being informed, but now he was not allowed to do so. This included meetings of the Central Committee, which he could not attend if he had not been informed. The day-to-day work of the Central Committee was actually conducted by the Premier, who was assisted by Tao Zhu.

After the "February Countercurrent", several Vice-Premiers of the State Council and others stopped attending the Central Committee's meetings, except for the needs of their work. Later, the Premier moved the meeting from Huairan Hall to Building 16 at Diaoyutai. The list of participants was still decided by the Premier, who gave the list to me, and I sent it to the Cultural Revolution Office to inform them of the meeting. At this time, Chairman Mao personally appointed Su Yu to attend the meeting of the Central Committee. After the "Qinghai February 23rd Incident", Ye Jianying generally did not come to the meeting either.

Whenever there was a meeting attended by the Premier, the meeting was chaired by the Premier, who would write down the issues to be discussed on a slip of paper beforehand, and then discuss them line by line. From February 1967 onwards, even many matters of the State Council were

brought to the Central Cultural Revolution Group meetings for discussion and resolution. To be honest, at that time, we felt that the Premier was like the political commissar of the Central Cultural Revolution and Jiang Qing was the commander.

Apart from attending the meetings chaired by the Premier, the Central Cultural Revolution Group also met frequently. Except for important matters that required special meetings, there was no set time for meetings on everyday matters. The first ones to arrive would sit down together and discuss the matter. If there was an important matter, Chen Boda, Kang Sheng and Jiang Qing had to be invited to the meeting.

At the beginning, most of the meetings were chaired by Chen Boda, but his accent was difficult to understand and his speeches were often incomprehensible, so when he chaired the meetings, we often had small meetings downstairs. When Jiang Qing chaired the meetings, we all listened carefully and discussed seriously, and there were no mini-meetings. At that time, the people in the group (including me) were all a bit bullying to the "old man".

## **2. The Premier and Jiang Qing**

Premier Zhou and Jiang Qing, the two of them had a very deep friendship with each other. When they met together, they basically agreed on major issues, at least 80 per cent of which they agreed on. Sometimes there were differences of opinion, such as the rebellion of "temporary workers" and "outsourced workers", who were living in dire straits and were indeed treated unfairly for policy reasons. When Jiang Qing heard their complaints and read their materials, she was so sad that she cried. Jiang Qing had the merit of loving and caring for the ordinary workers and peasants, and she was very affectionate towards them. She told the Premier that they were also part of the working class, so why couldn't they be treated fairly? The Premier said that the country was in real financial difficulties and he listed the shortfalls in the country's finances, saying that for the time being, he could not get the money to solve these problems. There was nothing Jiang Qing could do after hearing this. The relationship between the Premier and Jiang Qing was a bit like that of brother and sister. Jiang Qing would often ask the Premier to help her with ideas to solve some minor problems in her life, and the Premier was willing to give her some ideas. It was not like what some people said, that the Premier was often made to laugh and cry by her. That is all nonsense with ulterior motives.

Jiang Qing often told me, "Tell them (Wang, Guan and others) that they are not allowed to oppose the Premier, for this is the overall situation. The Premier is also a close comrade of Chairman Mao! So I told Wang Li and Guan Feng what Jiang Qing had said.

Guan Feng did have a problem with the Premier. He said that there was an inextricable link between the Premier and those capitalist go-getters, so he would often act left and right. When the masses criticised a certain person, he would usually defend him, which was right; but when he knew that the Chairman also had an opinion about this person, the Premier would quickly turn around and criticise him more vigorously than others, and raise his platform very high, which was left. Wang Li's attitude towards the Premier was multi-faceted. In front of the Premier, he was generally respectful; but behind his back, he agreed with Guan Feng's views on the Premier. Wang Li said that those key leaders in the Foreign Ministry, such as Chen Yi and Ji Pengfei<sup>404</sup>, were protected by the Premier. But

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<sup>404</sup> Ji Pengfei (1910- 2000), joined the Communist Party of China in 1933. He was criticised during the Cultural Revolution, but was not overthrown. In January 1975, he was elected as a member of the Standing Committee of the Fourth National People's Congress. In 1978, he took part in leading the preparatory work for the Fifth National People's Congress and was elected Vice-Chairman and Secretary-General of the Standing Committee of the Fifth National People's Congress.

those people had accepted too much of the West and simply could not transform. In his view, except for Qiao Guanhua<sup>405</sup>, who could still be fought for, Ji Pengfei and the others were not good enough to be reappointed. The various mistakes on the diplomatic front after the failure of the Cultural Revolution, including the betrayal of the motherland by Ji Pengfei's son<sup>406</sup>, proved that he was right.

Sometimes, Jiang Qing would say to the Premier's face, "Premier, people say you are a 'lao bao'<sup>407</sup>, but you are really a lao bao". When the Premier heard this, he just laughed and said nothing. In fact, among the top leaders of the Central Committee at that time, the Premier was the only one who supported Jiang Qing, so how could Jiang Qing oppose the Premier? As for what happened after I was arrested, I don't know. But after I was released from prison, I asked someone to ask Mao Yuanxin about Jiang Qing's criticism of "Zhou Gong"<sup>408</sup>. Mao Yuanxin said that he could responsibly say that Jiang Qing had never opposed the Premier, nor had she said that criticising "Zhou Gong" was criticising the Premier.

The Premier was not against Jiang Qing and defended her in every way. However, there were many people under the Premier who opposed Jiang Qing. Although the Premier did not ask them to oppose her, this often made things difficult for him, as these people were very close to him.

Deng Yingchao was very concerned about the Premier, and she wrote many notes to me at that time. Whenever a meeting was late, she would ask her secretary to send me a note saying that the Premier had a cold today or that he had not slept well yesterday and that I should let him go home early to rest. I reported this to Jiang Qing, who said, "The Premier is too tired, and Sister Deng is right, you should try to take care of the Premier, it is not good to have a late meeting, you should ask the Premier to leave early". I said, "Is it good to let the Premier retire early from a meeting convened by the Central Government and let us preside over it?" Jiang Qing said, not to preside over the continuation of the meeting, but to do a good job of winding up the meeting, which is OK.

Whenever the Premier came to a meeting, although Deng Yingchao did not attend the meetings, she sometimes had to wait in the Great Hall of the People and wait for the Premier to finish the meeting and go home together. When I received the notes she wrote to me, I would try to bring the meeting to an end according to Jiang Qing's instructions. Sometimes there were still people who wanted to

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<sup>405</sup> Qiao Guanhua (1913- 1983) joined the Communist Party of China in 1933. He played an important role in the diplomatic activities of the new China, participating in the Korean armistice negotiations at Panmunjom, attending the Geneva Conference, drafting the Sino-US Joint Communiqué, and, in particular, leading the Chinese delegation to the United Nations for the first time in November 1971, when he formally attended and addressed the 26th session of the General Assembly, marking the restoration of China's legal seat in the UN. At the beginning of the Cultural Revolution, Qiao Guanhua was targeted by rebels in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for "beating", but in 1973, at the suggestion of Mao Zedong, he resumed his work. At the end of 1973, he took part in the criticism of Zhou Enlai, but later apologised and they reconciled. After the fall of the Gang of Four in 1976, Qiao Guanhua was placed under isolation until 1982 when he became an advisor to the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries.

<sup>406</sup> Ji Pengfei's son, Ji Shengde, was a former head of the Intelligence Department of the General Staff of the Chinese People's Liberation Army, and former major general of the Chinese People's Liberation Army. He was tried in 2001 and was charged with bribery, corruption and embezzlement of public funds. The amount involved was extremely large and he was sentenced to death with a two-year reprieve. He had long colluded with social, Hong Kong and foreign organizations to sell military intelligence, and betray the party and the country.

<sup>407</sup> A "lao bao" was a male attendant and protector in brothels in the old society.

<sup>408</sup> Zhou Gong ("Gong" means Duke or Lord) was a founding father of the Western Zhou Dynasty, an outstanding statesman, military strategist, thinker, educator, and pioneer of Confucianism. During the campaign to criticise Lin Biao and Confucius, he was often referred to and criticism of him was taken to be criticism of Zhou Enlai.

raise questions, so I would say, "The Premier is too tired, let the Premier go first now, and we will listen to the rest of the questions and report back to the Premier". And every time after the Premier left, Deng Yingchao would ask his secretary to hand me a note with the words "Thank you very much".

Once I said to the Premier that you are so busy, you should let Comrade Deng Yingchao come out to work as well. The Premier said to me seriously, "Ah Benyu, let me tell you this: Xiaochao<sup>409</sup> and I should by definition agree politically, but in reality there are many areas where we do not agree. Although she was very concerned about me in life, her understanding of the Cultural Revolution is not much different from those of Chen Yi and Tan Zhenlin. We often had discussions (I remember clearly that the Premier said discussions, not arguments), but in many places she still couldn't keep up with her understanding. That's why I can't let her out to work, otherwise she will say the wrong thing and affect the work of the Party." From this remark, I realised that the Premier had a deep understanding of the Cultural Revolution launched by Chairman Mao and was not just coping with the Chairman and Jiang Qing, as some people said.

### 3. The "Wu Hao Incident" and its history

One day in the spring of 1967, Zhou Rongxin's<sup>410</sup> daughter came to the Central Cultural Revolution at Diaoyutai, saying that she had a very big matter that she could only talk about with Jiang Qing or Qi Benyu, but no one else. When I asked Jiang Qing for advice, she told me to go and listen. I said I didn't know what it was about, but it seemed quite big, so I couldn't go alone. Jiang Qing said, "Then ask Guan Feng to go with you". After I met her with Guan Feng, Zhou Rongxin's daughter showed us an old newspaper that the Red Guards in Tianjin had found, which contained a notice of Wu Hao's<sup>411</sup> defection from the party. Although we did not know much about the matter, when we read the full text of the notice, it was groundless and poorly written, not like the Premier had written the notice. Even if our level was low, we had after all participated in some struggles against the enemy, so we told her on the spot that this was a rumour created by the Guomindang. Guan Feng was even more specific than I was, saying when the Premier went to the Soviet Union; he also said that if the Premier defected, would he still be leading the Long March of the Red Army? Zhou Rongxin's daughter was delighted to hear this and said she did not believe that the Premier would defect either. But her father said that she could not go and speak to the Premier about this, it was an organisational principle. So one must come to Jiang Qing. We reported back to Jiang Qing. Jiang Qing

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<sup>409</sup> "Xiao" ("little") in front of a person's given name indicates endearment.

<sup>410</sup> Zhou Rongxin (1917—1976) served as Secretary-General of the State Council and Minister of Education. In November 1975, he published an article entitled "The direction of the educational revolution cannot be tampered with", which was criticised for "promoting a counter-revolutionary revisionist line". The "temporary leading group" in the Ministry of Education deprived him of all powers and he was struggled against, dying on April 13, 1976. After the rightists came back to power, in 1977, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China rehabilitated Zhou Rongxin.

<sup>411</sup> "Wu Hao" was a pseudonym of Zhou Enlai's dating back to the May 4th Movement of 1919. He, Deng Yingchao and some other young people used numbers to codify their names. Deng Yingchao was (Yi Hao, or number one) and Zhou was (Wu Hao, or number five). Zhu continued to use the name into the 1930s for writing and publishing articles. In mid to late February 1932, the Guomindang secret service system forged the so-called "Notice of Secession from the Communist Party by Wu Hao and 243 others" and published it in the Shanghai Times, the News, the Current Affairs New Paper, and the newspaper "Declaration", as well as other city newspapers in China, in a vain attempt to slander Zhou Enlai and divide the Communist Party. In response, the CPC made a public statement in the Shanghai newspapers to clarify the situation. By this time, Zhou Enlai had already arrived in Ruijin, the capital of the Central Soviet, from Shanghai to become the Secretary of the Central Bureau of the Soviet Republic. In his capacity as Chairman of the Provisional Central Government of the Chinese Soviet Republic, Mao Zedong issued a statement exposing the shameless disinformation campaign of the Guomindang.

said that she knew about it and that it was a rumour created by the enemy. The Chairman also knew about it. Later, she reported it to the Chairman. The Chairman said that the Premier was already in the Soviet Union at that time and that the newspapers in the Soviet Union had already dispelled the rumours.

When Deng Xiaoping and his men wanted to put Jiang Qing on trial, they sent someone to Qincheng prison to ask me about this, asking me to answer how Jiang Qing was using this to oppose the Premier. I told them that it was nonsense, and Jiang Qing said at that time that it was a rumour created by the enemy. Later she reported it to the Chairman, who also told me at the meeting that it was a disinformation campaign by the enemy. They asked me to write a detailed account of what had happened, which I did, but they didn't dare to show it to the "court".

After the public release of the "May 16 Circular" in 1967, a so-called "May 16 Corps" emerged in Beijing to oppose the Premier. Jiang Qing and the Premier specially called me from Zhongnanhai to Diaoyutai to discuss the matter. One of the leaders of the "May 16 Corps" was Zhang Jianqi, a student of the Beijing Iron and Steel Institute; another was Liu Lingkai, a student of the Beijing Foreign Language Institute; and another was Cheng Zhenhua, a student of the Beijing Business School. They were the three main leaders of the "May 16 Corps". They thought that the Premier was the chief backstage leader of the "February Countercurrent" and was the biggest capitalist-roader. So they came out quietly at night to post anti-Premier slogans and big-character posters. They were discovered by the public and taken to the Ministry of Public Security, where Xie Fuzhi approved the imprisonment of three of them. When I arrived at Diaoyutai, the Premier and Jiang Qing were talking about this. Jiang Qing said, "Xie Fuzhi has approved the arrest, good". The Premier said, "No, it's not good. If they oppose me, you have to arrest them?! That's no good. Only those who oppose Chairman Mao can be arrested". Jiang Qing said, "Let's do it this way, tell Benyu to go to the Ministry of Public Security to join Xie Fuzhi, reprimand these people severely, and then release them in the name of carrying out the Premier's instructions". I immediately made a record of the meeting, had them both sign it, and then drove to the Ministry of Public Security. I met with Xie Fuzhi and conveyed to him the speeches of the Premier and Jiang Qing and handed over the minutes of the meeting I had made. Xie Fuzhi said that it was better to handle it this way. He then accompanied me to the interrogation room. I spoke to the students and said in a very stern manner, "If you oppose the Premier, you are opposed to the revolution. This is a very serious crime. The revolutionary masses sent you here and Minister Xie approved your imprisonment, which was very correct and necessary. It is only that the Premier, in the manner of a proletarian statesman, who feels that you are still young and do not understand the complexities of political struggle, has asked us to release you after educating you. It is on the orders of the Premier that we are now releasing you. According to our opinion, we would not release you, and that includes Comrade Jiang Qing, who also does not advocate your release". These people expressed their gratitude to the Premier, Jiang Qing and the Central Cultural Revolution Group and said that they would never oppose the Premier again when they returned. However, they did not keep their word and went back to oppose the Premier as usual. They were later transferred to the Ministry of Public Security, and this time I did not go to release them.

#### **4. Premier Zhou and I**

I have known the Premier since I joined Zhongnanhai in 1950. But it was only during the Cultural Revolution that I had direct contact with the Premier at work. The Premier was always very kind to me. The Premier also liked to read books, but he didn't have time to do so. When the Central Committee met, sometimes the Premier arrived early, he would often say to me, "Benyu, come here and tell me what books you have been reading lately?" I told him about the books I was reading, such as Plato's *The Ideal State*, Marx's *The Civil War in France*, and the biographical book Penn's

Biography. He said, "Well, tell me about them. In this way I had the privilege of being his reading secretary a few times. I remember in particular that in 1967 I read *On the New Class* by the Yugoslavian Djilas. The author was criticised at the time and he argued that a new class had emerged in socialism - a privileged class. I said to the Premier that this idea of a privileged class was similar to Chairman Mao's view. The Premier said, "Don't talk nonsense, it's not comparable to Chairman Mao's thinking!" Sometimes I read some ancient books and told the Premier about them, and he was very willing to listen. For example, Jiang Qing once told me that "the eyes are the windows to the soul" and she asked me to be good at observing people's eyes. She told me to be good at observing people's eyes. I related this to an ancient saying: "If one's heart is right, one's eyes will know what to do; if one's heart is not right, one's eyes will have poor eyesight". This is what Mencius said, which means that you can tell what is in a person's mind by looking at his eyes. The Prime Minister said, "Write that down for me." The Prime Minister had a small slip of paper with him, so I wrote it down for him on a small slip of paper. The Prime Minister put what I wrote in a folder he had with him and saved it.

After the "February Countercurrent", the Premier was short of staff and he often asked me to help him with certain matters. I went to help solve the coal mine problem. At that time, after the workers revolted, the coal mine production was reduced. I went to the coal mines in Beijing West and went down with the workers. I reasoned with them that we could not just carry out a revolution without focusing on production. I said that the people of Beijing all depended on this coal for their livelihood in winter, and that if we did not get production up, the boilers in Beijing would have to stop. The workers all loved Chairman Mao, so I said that it was cold in Chairman Mao's house. So the workers shouted slogans, asking everyone to go to work, and to struggle against anyone who didn't. Soon, production went up. At that time, Wei Wei, a famous military writer, was also experiencing life in this coal mine and we were old friends, so he also helped me mobilise the workers. I brought this experience to the Ministry of Coal, and they promoted it. In fact, the workers were very sensible and it was not difficult to ask them to work, even overtime, as long as they were told clearly. Otherwise, they would not accept it even if they were frightened by the white cat or the black cat, or if they were not paid for not going to work. There was a strain on the railways and I suggested to the Premier that a Grade 3 Minister, Wang Su, be transferred from the Air Force to take charge of the railways. Wu Faxian said that Wang Su was of low rank, and he said he wanted to transfer the best first-class minister over. I said no, I wanted this third-ranking minister. The reason is that the official was too big and had a big status, so he can't do anything concrete. That Wang Su was very good, and he quickly solved the railway problem. Until after I was knocked down, the Premier continued to use this man. Wang Su was transferred from the Air Force to be my assistant at the beginning of the Cultural Revolution. He was both loyal to the revolution and resourceful. Later, Wang Su's son told me that his father never believed I was a counter-revolutionary and had missed me for many years.

On one occasion, the Premier asked me which of the people I knew in the Foreign Office could be rehired. I introduced to him a few people I knew. Qian Qichen, who was my junior leader when I was in the Shanghai underground, was very smart and capable; Li Daoyu, who was my comrade in the Shanghai Nanyang Model High School underground, and so on. The Premier wrote down their names in his book. I didn't know that some of the people I had introduced to him had later become officials and I heard that they had also become a privileged class. According to some, Qian's son made a fortune off him; it was also said that a book was published saying that this man was the father of Chinese diplomacy and it was criticised by old comrades in the Foreign Ministry. I cannot verify this, but if it is true, it again shows that it is so important for a communist to keep his integrity in his later years. I hope he was not what the legend says he was.

However, after I was imprisoned in Qincheng, the Premier spoke badly of me in one of his speeches. According to him, shooting me several times would not have been enough. Yet none of the things he

said were substantiated, and even the task force that later examined me didn't take them on board. I don't know who put together that speech for him. What was particularly funny was that the Premier said at the conference that my two sons were also bad, and so on. I did not yet have two sons, only a boy and a girl, both in primary school, and one had just started school, only in the first grade. The people in the Secretary Bureau of the Central Office all sniggered when they heard this conveyed, but did not dare to make a sound.

Guan Feng had always believed that the Premier was responsible for the arrest of Wang, Guan and Qi. I said no, the Premier even spoke up for me when Jiang Qing thought I was compiling "black materials" on her. Guan Feng said, "You! Don't get sold by others and help them count the money!"<sup>412</sup> Guan Feng also believed that after 1970, the whole country caught the "May 16 elements" and many rebels were persecuted and suppressed. The Premier should be held largely responsible for this. On this point alone, I agree with Guan Feng's view.

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<sup>412</sup> This is a Chinese idiom referring to people who not only do not know that they are used, but feel that those using them are actually helping them, so they are very grateful to these people.

## Chapter 28 Chen Boda, Kang Sheng, Zhang Chunqiao, Yao Wenyuan and other members of the Cultural Revolution Group

1. Chen Boda and Kang Sheng
2. Zhang Chunqiao and Yao Wenyuan
3. Yin Da
4. Several other members of the Cultural Revolution Group

### 1. Chen Boda and Kang Sheng

The relationship between Chen Boda and Kang Sheng was never good, they had deep prejudices against each other and were always suspicious of each other. On that occasion, when I went to Shanghai with Chen Boda and Yang Chengwu to listen to Chairman Mao's "May 7 Instructions", I came out from the Chairman's place and stayed at the Jinjiang Hotel. Chen Boda said, "This time I'm staying on the same floor I stayed on last time, because the last time I came, Kang Sheng lived above me". I said, "Kang Sheng didn't come this time". Chen Boda said, last time Kang Sheng lived above me and spent all day shitting and pissing on my head. This was Chen Boda's way of openly expressing his displeasure with Kang Sheng to us. It was not all Chen Boda's fault, because Kang Sheng often embarrassed Chen Boda in front of all of us, and Chen Boda was nowhere near as eloquent as Kang Sheng and was often at a disadvantage.

During the Cultural Revolution, someone at the Central Party School put up a large-character poster of Kang Sheng, and Kang Sheng suspected that Chen Boda was behind it. When someone at Beijing University put up a large-character poster of Chen Boda, Chen Boda also suspected that Kang Sheng and Nie Yuanzi were behind it. In fact, I went to see them, but they were not. They were spontaneous efforts by the masses. The person who wrote the big-character poster on Kang Sheng at the Central Party School was a good friend of Guan Feng, surnamed Li, who was against Kang Sheng at that time. But this was definitely not the work of Chen Boda, nor did Guan Feng ask him to write it. At that time, it was already time to bring down Guan Feng, and since Kang Sheng was protecting him, it was impossible for Guan Feng to ask someone to put up a big-character poster against Kang Sheng.

When downing Wang Li and Guan Feng, Chen Boda behaved most actively. Because usually the three of us used to tease him together. Why did we tease Chen Boda? Because he was always wavering and talking about demoralising things all the time. He always told us that the Cultural Revolution was no longer viable, that if we continued like this, more and more people would be offended, and that we would have to bear a lot of the responsibility in the future. He was scared. He was smarter than us and had more political experience, he knew that the Cultural Revolution would end up on his head. We said to him, "Why are you so afraid of the wolf in the front and the tiger in the back? If you follow Chairman Mao's revolution, what are you afraid of? If Chairman Mao wins, we will win, if Chairman Mao fails, we will fail". But Chen Boda did not see it that way. He said, "Chairman Mao will not fail, but we will". After all, he had more experience in the struggle within the Party than we did. But at that time we were disgusted with him.

Chairman Mao saw Chen Boda very thoroughly. At the Second Plenary Session of the Ninth Central Committee, Chairman Mao asked whether Chen Boda, seeing Mao's ship about to sink, ran to Lin Biao. Kang Sheng was never like that, he had no such thing as worrying about offending anyone by following Chairman Mao. Kang Sheng was firmer than Chen Boda. It was later said that before his death, Kang Sheng exposed to Chairman Mao that Jiang Qing and Zhang Chunqiao were historically traitors, which was probably an exaggerated misrepresentation. My former colleagues who worked in Zhongnanhai told me that Kang Sheng was simply unconscious for a long time before his death and that all the documents sent to him by the Central Government were returned unopened. Was it then that someone had exposed Jiang and Zhang and Kang Sheng asked someone to report it to Chairman Mao when he was conscious?

Chen Boda was very good to me. He transferred me from the research room in the back building of Zhongnanhai to the "Red Flag" magazine and immediately asked me to be the leader of the history group. This was a leapfrog promotion. Deng Liqun told me that the old master had never promoted people like this before, and I was an exceptional exception!

But later on, I gradually came into conflict with Chen Boda. When Liu Shaoqi was promoting the bourgeois reactionary line, I went to the Light Industry College to read the big-character posters and said something against the work group's "catching fish and anti-interference". When Chen Boda found out about it, he told me, "Don't say anything, the Light Industry College is under Bo Yibo's control". He didn't want the Central Cultural Revolution Group and Bo Yibo to be in conflict. But when I reported to Jiang Qing, Jiang Qing said I hadn't said enough. I said, "But Chen Boda told me to speak less". Jiang Qing said, "Don't pay any attention to him". When Jiang Qing returned to Beijing, she criticised Chen Boda, saying that you, the head of the group, were like Li Yuanhong during the Xinhai Revolution, when soldiers pulled you out from under your bed to make a revolution. At that time, Chen Boda looked at me, suspecting that I had said something about him to Jiang Qing. In fact, I was only reporting truthfully at that time and did not deliberately try to badmouth him.

Despite the fact that Chen Boda was the leader of the group and a theoretical authority who had published many articles in public, in reality his prestige was not very high. The main reason for this was because when anything happened to him, he pushed it downwards. A good number of people have suffered from him, and I have had the experience myself many times.

Once, Chen Boda and his wife quarrelled. His wife said, "I will write to the Central Committee about all the bad things you say about Chairman Mao behind his back". When Chen Boda heard this, he was so anxious that he immediately came to me, because I was in charge of letters from the masses. I said, "You had better tell her not to write. The couple shares the same fate. You can reason with her, but if you can't, I will do it for you. Otherwise, as soon as her letter arrives at the petition office, it will be registered and it will be difficult to get it out again. That really would be "One word enters the public gate, but nine cows cannot be pulled out"<sup>413</sup>. In fact, I was deliberately trying to scare him. Later on, he listened to me and eased his relationship with his wife, and she did not write a letter.

Chen Boda was indeed of a certain level in theory, but unfortunately it was not systematic. Unlike Kang Sheng, who had studied Marxism-Leninism systematically, who was systematic in his theories and spoke in a set manner. Kang Sheng was also very eloquent and quick to respond to the situation, but his ability to handle matters was not as good as that of the Premier, his thinking was one-sided

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<sup>413</sup> This is a Chinese proverb, which means that once a complaint is sent to the yamen (the feudal magistrate's court), no matter how tired you become of litigation, you cannot get out of it.

and he was not cautious enough in deciding issues, and he even made rash decisions on matters of vital importance based on a few unverified materials without studying them properly.

Once when Chen Boda and I had a meeting at the Chairman's place, we talked about the fact that some people now attended meetings but did not speak at any of the meetings. The Chairman then said, "Hasn't that become Lady Xi?" Lady Xi was a great beauty of the state of Xi (a small state during the Spring and Autumn Period) and she married the king of the state, which was later destroyed by the state of Jin and her husband killed. Lady Xi did not commit suicide and was not buried. Because she was so beautiful, the king of Jin took her as his concubine. She served the king of Jin meekly, but she did not speak. The king of Jin did not allow her to speak either. At this point, Chen Boda intervened and said that Lady Xi was married to Duke Xian of Jin and that Duke Chong Er was her son. This was a bit new. The Chairman said, "Oh, I didn't know about this. Chen Boda is really a historian". Chen Boda was very pleased to hear this.

When I came back, I thought, "The mother of Duke Chong Er is Lady Xi? How come I had never heard of such a big story?" So, I went to look up the books, and I don't know how many books I looked up, but I couldn't find anything about it. It took me the whole evening, but I was basically sure that it was not true. The next day, when I met with Chen Boda, I said, "Old Master, I've been searching all night for information about Lady Xi being the mother of Duke Wen of Jin<sup>414</sup>, but I can't find anything. Where did you read that? I'll go back and check again". Chen Boda looked at me and didn't say anything for half a day, then he asked his secretary to go and look for books such as "The Records of the Grand Historian" and "Zuo Zhuan". After the books were brought to him, he flipped through them, and after half a day, he couldn't find it.

I said, "No need to turn it over, I've gone all the way to the Story of Gong Yang<sup>415</sup> and it's not even there". He believed it and said, "Oops, what can I do about this?" I said, "Don't worry, you write a note to the Chairman right away". He said, "Right. Then you write one for me". I said, "That won't do, this has to be in your own handwriting". He said, "You write it, and I will copy it afterwards". So I wrote it for him: "Chairman, at the meeting yesterday I had said that Lady Xi was the mother of Gongzi Chong'er. When I came back, I checked many books but failed to find the evidence, so I am afraid my memory is faulty on this matter. It has misled the Chairman". Chen Boda finished copying it and hurriedly sent it to the Chairman. The Chairman did not mention it again later.

Chen Boda was severely criticized by the Chairman for publicly proposing to overthrow Tao Zhu at the conference, but he couldn't figure it out. He came to tell me that he didn't want to live anymore, for the Chairman had scolded him so fiercely! I said, "You can't commit suicide, it's treason to the Party". He said that Marx's son-in-law committed suicide, and no one said he had rebelled against the party. I thought he was serious, so I persuaded him, saying "The Chairman scolded you for your own good. He would not scold you like that if he is not being good to you! Do you think he scolded Tian Jiaying later?" He pondered for a long time and said, "Yes, the Chairman had never scolded Tian Jiaying".

I later thought that Chen Boda did sometimes have a bit of a opportunistic mentality on some issues, but he was only trying to guess between this faction and that faction within the Communist Party, an intra-party speculation. And not choosing between the Communist Party and the Guomindang. Our relationship with Chen Boda was not handled properly and affected the unity of the Central Cultural

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<sup>414</sup> Duke Wen of Jin (697–628 BC), was born Chong'er.

<sup>415</sup> "The Story of Gong Yang" is one of the Confucian classics.

Revolution. Although this was mainly a matter for Kang Sheng and Jiang Qing, I was also responsible for a great deal. I should also reflect on this.

Chen Boda usually lived a rather extravagant life. He talked about being for the people and even wrote a special inscription for me, but it was not easy to pass the socialist hurdle. If you want to pass the socialist hurdle, you must not be above the people, and you must not override them, otherwise you should not talk about "for the people".

Tian Jiaying went around buying paintings and calligraphy of the Qing Dynasty and other antiques. In Zhejiang Province, there was a couplet written by Deng Shiru, a great calligrapher of the Qing Dynasty, which read "The sea is the world of dragons, the sky is the home of cranes", and he liked it, so he insisted that they sell it to him. They said that it was a national treasure, a treasure of our shop, and that it was not for sale and could not be sold. Tian Jiaying did not accept that and insisted on buying it. They had no choice but to ask the Zhejiang Provincial Party Committee for permission, but they said, "Then you should let him write an IOU and allow him to borrow it for a while". This loan was not to be returned. After Tian Jiaying's death, the couplet was in the hands of his family. I don't know if his family has returned the couplet to them. It is said that the couplet is now worth hundreds of millions of dollars. At that time, Chen Boda knew about this matter, and also went to Zhejiang heritage shops to borrow cultural relics, saying Tian Jiaying can borrow them, so why can't I borrow them. They had to find another piece of Deng Shiru's work and "lend" it to him. So they both failed to pass the socialist hurdle.

Yet such things were not the case with Kang Sheng. Kang Sheng was a recognized expert in the identification of cultural relics. During the Cultural Revolution, he also acquired many cultural relics at low prices, and his aim was to preserve them. Before he died, he donated all these relics to the state, leaving none to his own family.

## **2. Zhang Chunqiao and Yao Wenyan**

Zhang Chunqiao was the political secretary of Ke Lao (Ke Qingshi), and his article on breaking up bourgeois right in 1957 was taken seriously by the Chairman. However, both Chen Boda and Tian Jiaying were disgusted by his article. Tian Jiaying and the others then went to investigate the so-called Di Ke incident to vilify him, saying that he was anti-Lu Xun. At that time, whoever was anti-Lu Xun was not a good person. So Chunqiao was not very popular in Beijing. At this, Zhang Chunqiao was a bit angry.

In the Central Cultural Revolution Group, Chunqiao and I were considered to be relatively close friends. When he went to Shanghai to deal with the workers' rebellion, he and I were in particularly close contact. But Chunqiao was not on good terms with Wang Li and Guan Feng, and I tried to reconcile them, but they always looked down on each other a bit. As far as I know, Chunqiao and Yao Wenyan were also very rusty at first, but the two of them hit it off and their relationship later became very good.

Yao Wenyan was a very stable man who did not say anything that he should say until he was very sure.

Under the influence of his father, Yao Wenyan made a great effort to study Lu Xun. He wrote a book entitled Lu Xun as a Giant of the Chinese Cultural Revolution. In the book, Lu Xun is quoted as saying that much of his own writing "can also be described as 'literature in compliance with orders', but I am following the orders of the revolutionary pioneers of that time". In a sense, it can also be

said that many of Yao Wenyuan's writings, both correct and flawed, were by and large "literature in compliance with orders", as he was following the instructions of the Party Central Committee and Chairman Mao.

Yao Wenyuan was released from prison later than I was, and after his release he was still not free. Once Yao Wenyuan's daughter came to see me. I asked her to ask her father a question on my behalf: Why was I arrested in the first place? Soon afterwards, his daughter came to me and told me that her father had told her sincerely that neither he nor Chungqiao had said a word about the handling of Qi Benyu's case. Yao Wenyuan's daughter also told me that her father told her that at the Second Plenary Session of the Ninth Central Committee in 1970, Lin Biao and his group launched an attack on several people from the Central Cultural Revolution and the situation was very tense at that time. Once when Chairman Mao talked to Yao Wenyuan, he told him that at the end of the Qing Dynasty, Zhang Taiyan and Zou Rong, the "pawn of the revolutionary army", were imprisoned and tried for the "Su Newspaper Case"<sup>416</sup>. In prison, Zhang Taiyan wrote a poem of mutual encouragement to Zou Rong, who was only twenty years old:

Zou Rongwu's little brother, was sent to Yingzhou;  
Quickly remove the braids with scissors, and use the mashed beef for glutinous rice.  
As soon as the hero goes to prison, the world is also sad in autumn;  
Fate must be mixed with hands, the universe has only two ends.

After reading it out, Chairman Mao patted Yao Wenyuan's hand and said, "We are now also in a situation where we have to mix our hands with our destiny. But we have to fight hard to turn the tide".

Listening to Yao Wenyuan's daughter's account, I was overwhelmed with emotion. The struggle within the Party was so frightening that even Chairman Mao was prepared for the thought of "having to intervene at the cost of one's life"!

After Yao Wenyuan's death in 2005, his daughter often visited me. She showed me her father's notes in his own handwriting before he died. I said to her, "This is a precious relic left by your father, and you should keep it as a memento". Later, I just had to have a copy of one of Comrade Yao Wenyuan's reading notes written in his own handwriting, and the original of a short letter he wrote in his own handwriting to his daughters.

Judging from the reading notes he left behind, he was very diligent and serious in his reading and study. No wonder Chairman Mao forwarded his study plan to everyone before his death.

### 3. Yin Da

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<sup>416</sup> In 1903, Zou Rong and Zhang Taiyan wrote the nationwide sensation "Revolutionary Army" and "Refutation of Kang Youwei's Book on Revolution" respectively. The Revolutionary Army was recommended as the first textbook that the nation must read. At the same time, it reported on the patriotic movement of students from all over the country. In response, the Qing government notified the Shanghai Concession authorities and had Zhang Taiyan arrested on charges of "inciting the world to revolt" and "treason". Zou Rong was so outraged that he voluntarily turned himself in. Their writings had been popularised in the "Su Bao", a newspaper originally run by Japanese expatriates, and first published in Shanghai on 26 June 1896. In the summer of 1903, the newspaper supported the activities of the China Education Association and the Patriotic Society, employing Zhang Shizhao as the main writer and Zhang Taiyan and Cai Yuanpei as contributors. It published many articles that fiercely propagated the bourgeois democratic revolution,

Yin Da<sup>417</sup>, director of the Institute of History in the Department of Philosophy and Social Sciences, wrote an article in 1964 entitled "The Revolution in History Must Be Carried Through to the End". In December 1965, Yin Da sent the article to the History Section of the Red Flag magazine, which, after consulting the leadership, organised four people - Fan Ruoyu, Guan Feng, Qi Benyu and Du Jing - to discuss and revise it with Yin Da, and then published it in the third issue of the Red Flag magazine in 1966. I still have the three letters he wrote to me before the article was published.

On 20 March 1966, at an enlarged meeting of the Standing Committee of the Politburo, Chairman Mao said, "This article by Yin Da has been published and is well written. Yin Da is the director of the Institute of History, and he is Zhao Yimin's brother. His article was written in 1964 and was suppressed for a year and a half before it was published. Don't suppress any good or bad articles about young people. Don't be afraid of touching Luo Erzang or Jian Bozan. What does it matter if they are not deprived of the right to eat anyway. Don't be afraid to touch authority. Who is the authority now? It's Yao Wenyuan, Qi Benyu and Yin Da. Who can dissolve who? It has not been resolved yet." This passage from Chairman Mao was deleted from both the Manuscripts of Mao Zedong (Chairman) Since the Founding of the State and the Chronology of Mao Zedong (Chairman)<sup>418</sup>.

However, at the beginning of the Cultural Revolution, Yin Da also implemented Liu Shaoqi's bourgeois reactionary line in the Institute of History, which led to the purging of many people. So, the people in the Institute of History were very much against him. In addition, he had conflicts with Chen Boda. Soon after the start of the Cultural Revolution, the historical community criticized Hou Weilu, and Chen Boda took the opportunity to launch a criticism of Yin Da. Guan Feng and I went to the Institute of History several times to put in a good word for him, but to no avail. He then stopped coming to work at Diaoyutai and automatically withdrew from the work of the Central Cultural Revolution Group, but the Central Committee did not issue a letter revoking his membership of the Cultural Revolution Group.

#### **4. Several other members of the Cultural Revolution Group**

Originally, Chairman Mao had always held Wang Renzhong in high regard, and he was nominated by Chairman Mao to be the deputy head of the Central Cultural Revolution Group. The Chairman wanted him to contribute to the Cultural Revolution, but it turned out that he actively supported Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping in their bourgeois reactionary line. The same was true of Tao Zhu. At that time, Tao Zhu, Wang Renzhong and Liu Zhijian were a trinity within the Central Cultural Revolution Group, echoing each other. He was the advisor and deputy head of the Central Cultural Revolution Group, but he was dedicated to confronting Chairman Mao on the line. These three were knocked down successively in late 1966 and early 1967.

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<sup>417</sup> Yin Da (1906- 1983), was a Chinese archaeologist and historian. In 1932, he worked in the archaeological group of the Institute of History and Language of the Academia Sinica. In 1938, he went to Yan'an to participate in the revolution. Since 1955, he has served as a member of the Standing Committee of the Faculty of Philosophy and Social Sciences of the Chinese Academy of Sciences. He once edited the magazine "Historical Research" and participated in the construction of the Chinese History Museum. In 1980, he was elected as the executive director of the Chinese History Society.

<sup>418</sup> Part of this passage is included in Vol 9 of Mao's Selected Works on the marxists.org website and in the hard copy published by the Foreign Languages Press, Paris. However, Yin Da's name is replaced with "xx" and there is no reference to Luo Erzang and Jian Bozan, nor to Yao Wenyuan and Qi Benyu.

Mu Xin had been the editor-in-chief of Guangming Daily for many years, but he was very unpopular in Guangming Daily. His wife, Zhang Huizhong, was a bully at Guangming Daily, oppressing the public. The people of the newspaper said that with Zhang Huizhong around, the entire Guangming Daily could not have peace. When the Cultural Revolution began, she had a hard time at the newspaper, so we transferred her to the Cultural and Art Group of the Central Cultural Revolution Group, but in reality she was not needed in the Group either.

At the beginning of the Cultural Revolution, Mu Xin was active in implementing Liu Shaoqi's bourgeois reactionary line in Guangming Daily, and suppressing the masses so much so that they were strongly dissatisfied with him. Mu Xin's level was also limited, and the deputy chief editors of the Guangming Daily, whichever one, was higher than him. I read something that one of their deputy chief editors had changed. As soon as I looked at it, I said, "You're a good deputy chief editor." He said, "Yes. But this is the guy who messes with me all the time." I thought to myself, "You're not as good as he is, and you're saying he's messing with you!" In January 1967, the 88th Combat Team of the Central Academy of Finance and Economics went to the Guangming Daily to revolt and took Mu Xin back from the Central Cultural Revolution Group to the Guangming Daily for criticism. I slowly found out that there was something wrong with him as a person, that he would support whoever came to power and pillory whoever was in trouble. I thought at that time that maybe one day when I was in trouble, he would also do the same to me. Later on, he did, and even the speeches I made to defend him at the beginning turned out to be poison ivy for him. Even after the Cultural Revolution he vilified me on the issue of Lu Xun's manuscripts.

Although Mu Xin had actually left the Central Cultural Revolution Group in January 1967, he was somehow also imprisoned in Qincheng after we were arrested.

Back then there was an old agent of the former Guomindang Military Intelligence who had been under the surveillance of the public security department after liberation. This person wrote a letter to me and Guan Feng during the Cultural Revolution, saying that the Mu Xin you were protecting was the one we sent to Yan'an back then. His original name was so-and-so and he changed his name to so-and-so. After the Cultural Revolution, once Deng Xiaoping came to power, Mu Xin wrote to Deng Xiaoping to complain and expose how so-and-so opposed Deng Xiaoping back then, and Deng Xiaoping released Mu Xin from Qincheng. After his release, people from the Central Commission for Discipline Inspection (CCDI) sent someone to ask me some questions about him in order to draw a conclusion about him, and I said that there was such material on him at that time. The people from the CCDI immediately said that those materials were the product of factional struggle and were not credible. I said, "The person who wrote the letter was an old agent of the military junta, what would he have to do with factionalism?" They said that the old agent was already dead.

Later on, when Mu Xin and Qiao Shi<sup>419</sup> became in-laws, Mu Xin became even more exuberant. Sometimes I thought, "After all the anger he suffered during the Cultural Revolution, let him be this proud for a few days!"

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<sup>419</sup> Qiao Shi (1924 - 2015) was appointed Vice Premier of the State Council in 1986. From March 27, 1993 to March 16, 1998, he served as Chairman of the Standing Committee of the Eighth National People's Congress.

## Chapter 29: The "Rectification of Jiang Qing's Black Materials" Case and My Isolation and Interrogation

1. Jiang Qing talks to comrades of the Cultural Revolution Group about her history
2. The Circumstances of the So-called "Rectification of Jiang Qing's Black Materials"
3. What was the real reason for my arrest?

### 1. Jiang Qing talks to comrades of the Cultural Revolution Group about her history

Although Jiang Qing was the first deputy head of the Central Cultural Revolution Group, her role actually surpassed that of Chen Boda. There was a time when Chen Boda was ill and hospitalised, and with the agreement of the Chairman, the Central Committee even issued a special document for Jiang Qing to act as the head of the group.

When the Central Cultural Revolution Group decided on some important matters, they were decided by Jiang Qing in consultation with the Premier, and sometimes Kang Sheng and Chen Boda also took part in the opinion. After they had made their decisions, it was mainly up to Zhang, Wang, Guan, Qi and Yao to carry them out. But then Zhang Chunqiao and Yao Wenyuan's main focus was put on Shanghai. When they were in Beijing, they were involved in some matters together.

Although the Central Committee decided that I should take over from Tian Jiaying as Chairman Mao's secretary, I usually reported to the Chairman through Jiang Qing unless the Chairman wanted to see me or there were urgent documents or events that needed to be reported to the Chairman immediately. Therefore, I was in fact also Jiang Qing's secretary, but not in that capacity.

Jiang Qing's prestige in the Central Cultural Revolution Group was very high. She would remind us of what we had to pay attention to when we went outside to speak. We would all follow her advice. However, we didn't want her to go outside and talk much. She was too straightforward and sometimes she couldn't do what she reminded us to do. Sometimes she said the wrong thing and it took a lot of effort for us to turn it around.

One afternoon in the winter of 1966, Jiang Qing suddenly spoke to us about her history. The talk lasted for about two hours in the conference room of the Central Cultural Revolution in the 16th building of Diaoyutai. Among those who attended were Zhang Chunqiao, Wang Li, Guan Feng, Qi Benyu, Yao Wenyuan and Mu Xin. I sat opposite Jiang Qing with Chunqiao and Guan Feng, Wang Li and Yao Wenyuan sat next to Jiang Qing, and Mu Xin sat quietly on a soft chair behind Jiang Qing, taking detailed notes on the spot.

Jiang Qing said, "You have probably heard a lot of historical rumours about me! You don't know the truth, and you can't ask me about it. I will tell you all about my history today, so that you don't hear the wind and then take it as rain".

Jiang Qing said that Tang Na was actually not a bad person, a progressive (press: according to historical archives, Tang Na was a secret member of the Chinese Communist Party). But his

shortcomings were that he was too weak and timid, unlike a revolutionary. At that time his influence in the acting world was great, and she pointed to Yao Wenyuan and me and said that it was the same as the influence you have outside now. When he would say that play was good, that play was hailed; when he said that play was bad, people said that play was bad. If he wanted to promote that actor, that actor would immediately become popular. There were so many girls who were after him. But Tang Na was just desperate for me and was really nice and obedient to me when I was in love. She said, "Of course, Tang Na is nothing compared to Yu Qiwei (Huang Jing)"<sup>420</sup>. We asked her frankly at the time, "Why didn't you marry Yu Qiwei?" She said that Yu Qiwei was young and had to listen to his family. His family was a big feudal family and his family was firmly against Yu Qiwei marrying her. The family rules were very strict and they married young ladies from big families, and if you were regarded as a playboy, you could not enter his family's house. She said that Yu Qiwei was only a student in his twenties at the time and there was no way she could compete with his family. So, she could only consider marrying Tang Na. However, after he married her, he was different, always restricting her from this and that, not allowing her to socialise with other people and seeing her as his subordinate. She could not stand this. Jiang Qing said that I was greatly influenced by the play *The Doll's House*, and played Nora on stage and liked her very much. However, Jiang Qing also said that Tang Na was a very simple person, not complicated. But he also treated his family in the same way as in feudal society. So I asked for a divorce from him. The incident was a big deal in the community at the time. The divorce from Tang Na was a big blow to her. She said that at that time she felt that her future was uncertain, that she could not connect with the organisation, and that it was impossible to go back to Yu Qiwei. Fortunately, she had many good friends to help her at that time, and she said she could never forget Cai Lao - Cai Chusheng<sup>421</sup> - who gave her great encouragement and help at those times. And his help was completely selfless. And Cui Wei, who was her classmate in Qingdao, also helped her a lot and he protected her like a big brother. Cui Wei was a decent person, unlike the literary gangsters in Shanghai who always tried to take advantage of her.

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<sup>420</sup> Yu Qiwei (1912-1958), also known as Huang Jing, was former Secretary of the Tianjin Municipal Party Committee and Mayor, Minister of the First Machinery Industry Department and Secretary of the Party Leadership Group. In 1930, he participated in the Nanguo Society, a left-wing literary group in Shanghai, and engaged in progressive cultural activities. In 1931, he was admitted to the Department of Physics of National Qingdao University (now Shandong University), actively participated in the patriotic student movement, led Qingdao University students to participate in class strikes, and became the leader of the Qingdao student movement. He set up the Seagull Drama Club to perform progressive dramas. At this time, he lived with Jiang Qing who worked in the library of Shandong University. They joined the Party in 1932 but he was arrested the following year and Jiang Qing went to Shanghai to work in the performing arts. In February 1937, he was appointed Secretary of the Beiping Municipal Committee of the Communist Party of China. In May, he attended the CCP National Representative Conference and the White District Working Conference held in Yan'an. In 1939, Yu Qiwei married Fan Wei. In September 1956, he was elected as a member of the Central Committee at the Eighth National Congress of the Communist Party of China. He suffered from periodic bouts of mental illness and died in Guangzhou on February 10, 1958. He was 46 years old.

<sup>421</sup> Cai Chusheng (1906- 1968), was born in Shanghai and was a director, screenwriter, and producer. In 1932, he independently directed his first film "Southern Spring". In 1934, he wrote and directed the feature film "Yuguang" ("song of the Fisherman"), which won the "Honorary Award" at the Moscow Film Festival and became the first Chinese film to win an international award. In 1937, he directed the drama film "Wang Lao Wu" which co-starred Jiang Qing under her then name of Lan Ping. In 1947, he co-directed the feature film "A River of Spring Water Flows East". In 1963, he directed drama "Nan Hai Chao (Part 1)" was released. In 1956, he joined the Communist Party of China. On July 15, 1968, during the Cultural Revolution, he was attacked as a "cow demon and snake monster" and died.

Jiang Qing said frankly that she would never forget her first love with Yu Qiwei. She said that Yu Qiwei was her first mentor in life and her guide to the revolution. Although she was unable to marry him because he was bound by a feudal family, it was thanks to his guidance that she joined the revolution and later ran away to Yan'an so that she could meet Chairman Mao and find her place in life.

When I listened to Jiang Qing's confession, I was touched by her sincerity and openness. How could I have imagined that it was because I had listened to her past experiences that Jiang Qing would later imagine that I was behind the so-called "black materials" case against her in Beijing and Shanghai? It's true that things don't develop according to people's will.

## **2. The history of the so-called "black material on Jiang Qing"**

In the second half of 1967, the masses demanded the opening of the Beijing Library, and the Literature and Arts Group made a report to me to that effect. I said, "The Cultural Revolution is a cultural revolution, so it would be a joke if we didn't even open the library. So I approved the report. However, it was stipulated therein that all internal materials could only be consulted with a letter of introduction from the Revolutionary Committee.

When the Beijing Library was opened, someone was looking for old newspapers in there and saw a report about Jiang Qing (then called Lan Ping). When the situation was brought to my attention, I asked someone from the literature and arts team to collect and seal them up. At that time, a female cadre in the library who had been transferred from the Air Force Political Department reported this to Wu Faxian, who then reported it to Ye Qun. At the end of a meeting, when everyone else had left, Ye Qun asked me to stay behind and she told Wu Faxian to report the incident to Jiang Qing in front of me. The Premier was also there. I said, "There is such a thing, and I told the people in the literature and arts group to put it away and seal it up so that it would not spread". Jiang Qing said unhappily, "What is there to spread? What is there to spread about me?" But the Premier felt that what I said was reasonable, so he said, "In that case, I will write a report to burn all these materials and inform the Beijing Library to cancel the registration number". After the Premier himself issued the report, the materials were taken to be burned by Xie Fuzhi's Ministry of Public Security. Afterwards, Zhang Chunqiao said to me, "You should have told Jiang Qing that it was the work of the literature and arts group below you and that you didn't know about it". I said, "No, I agreed to let the arts and culture team seal the material". Zhang Chunqiao said, "You must first protect yourself so that you have a chance to speak for them in the future. If not, then both the jade and the stone may be burned<sup>422</sup> and you and they will both be punished. If you can't protect yourself, then who else will come out to speak for them in the future?" These were words from the bottom of his heart, which people would not normally say. But I thought that I had agreed to this, and now I was putting it all on the people below me, so they would be disciplined even more severely. So, I insisted on admitting that it was something they had reported to me and that I had agreed to it.

Shortly after the Premier ordered the destruction of newspaper materials about Jiang Qing, the Shanghai Municipal Revolutionary Committee sent someone to deliver to me in Beijing some old newspaper materials about Jiang Qing that they had collected in Shanghai. Since I was the acting director of the General Office of the Central Committee at the time, they sent them to me to handle.

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<sup>422</sup> Zhang was using a 4-character idiom that warns of good people being destroyed with the bad as the jade and stone are burned up together.

But someone in Shanghai, who knows who, had someone hand over the materials to me, but at the same time went to report directly to Jiang Qing that a batch of materials they had found to slander her had now been handed over to Qi Benyu. I opened the materials and saw that they were nothing but rumours created by the Guomindang press at that time, saying that "Yi Zhangqing" (Jiang Qing) had married Song Jiang (Chairman Mao) and had become his wife, and was now the wife of the village. I found this quite difficult at the time. I thought it would be difficult to leave it to the Chairman, for how could you disturb him with such a trivial matter? I could give it to the Premier, but it would just make things more difficult for him. But I thought I couldn't give it to Jiang Qing either, because it was not in line with the principles of the organisation. So, I decided for myself not to archive these materials. In fact, I was a bit dogmatic at the time. Shanghai didn't send the materials directly to Jiang Qing, because it also had to consider organisational principles, so they had to give them to me. But then they went and talked to Jiang Qing about it and didn't tell me. Jiang Qing waited for a few days and when she saw that I had not told her about this, she came to my office herself and asked me what was going on with the batch of materials sent from Shanghai. This time Jiang Qing probably really suspected that I was collecting materials on her. The matter was later handled by the Premier. When I told the Premier about the process, he understood what was going on as soon as he heard it. He also told Xie Fuzhi to take the materials and burn them. After this incident, Zhang Chunqiao said to me in private that it was wrong for you not to hand over these materials to Jiang Qing. We are all tied together now.

One wave had not yet subsided, but another wave had started! Yan Changgui was recommended by me to Jiang Qing to be her secretary. I don't know which tendon in his head is misaligned? A letter was sent to Jiang Qing by a person called Jiang Jing at this juncture. Some people pronounced the word "jing" as "qing". This person was an actress from the old society who had been a member of the military junta. During the Cultural Revolution she was criticised by the masses, so she wrote to Jiang Qing, asking him to save her. Yan Changgui took the letter and didn't read it properly, so he wrote a note saying that someone was now claiming to be Jiang Qing and that she had been in the military junta. Then he sent the letter to Jiang Qing along with the note. When Jiang Qing saw the letter, she came to my office in a rage and slammed the letter and the note written by Yan Changgui on my desk. She asked me what the hell I was up to. She said that you got my black materials a few days ago, and now you are working together with Yan Changgui to frame me. I picked up the letter and took a look at it. Because I often dealt with letters from the public, I quickly understood the contents of the letter. I said, "People are not saying at all that you, Jiang Qing, were in the military junta. It was that she herself (Jiang Jing) had participated in the military junta in the past and she had come to beg you to be lenient with her". And I said, "The name Jiang Qing was only given to you when you went to Yan'an. The name Jiang Qing did not exist at the time that Jiang Jing was talking about. How could it be said that Jiang Qing had been in the military junta?" But at that time, Jiang Qing could not listen to any of my explanations, because she was already preoccupied with the note written by Yan Changgui. She thought that we were deliberately using this method to frame her. In fact, Yan Changgui did not read the letter carefully when he delivered it that day. Until I came out of Qincheng and ran into him, he was still confused and said that the person was slandering Jiang Qing for having participated in the military junta. I said, "You can really talk nonsense. She clearly said that she had participated in the Junta, where did she say that Jiang Qing had participated in the Junta? You've mixed up two important things. You're in jail for a reason, even though you're over-punished".

After this happened, Jiang Qing told me not to leave my office in Diaoyutai for the time being and to wait for the organisation to review me. Yan Changgui, on the other hand, was soon arrested. Before

arresting Yan Changgui, Jiang Qing invited him to see a film called One Servant, Two Masters. Suspecting that he was working as her secretary while still under orders from others, she agreed that he was an undercover agent that I had deliberately planted beside her. After a few more days, I guess waiting for the Chairman's decision, Jiang Qing invited me alone again to see a film called The Queen of Spades, based on Pushkin's novel about an ambitious young man who tries by all means to pry into the secrets of his mistress, with tragic results. After the film, Jiang Qing came over and shook hands with me, then said in a long, drawn-out voice, "So, goodbye". I knew in my heart that she was saying goodbye to me in this way.

On the night of 20 January 1968, the Premier's secretary informed me that I was to go to a meeting at Huai ren Hall, at which I was declared "incommunicado". Wang Dongxing then handcuffed me to a small building in Diaoyutai, where I was guarded by a company of soldiers. After the Chinese New Year that year, Wang, Guan and Qi were all imprisoned together in Qincheng Prison.

### **3. What was the real reason for my arrest?**

For many years, this question has been bothering me. I should say that there was no trouble between Jiang Qing and me. Then why did Jiang Qing hate me so much? I think maybe she couldn't understand why I had to investigate her history again and again when she was so nice to me!

This did happen from time to time in the political life of Zhongnanhai at the time. After Tian Jiaying's suicide, the person who denounced him the most was his secretary. If the materials uncovered by his secretary had been followed, then Tian Jiaying would have been sentenced to death a long time ago. Was Jiang Qing afraid that I would become a second Secretary Tian?

It was also said that I was arrested because I had "stolen" Lu Xun's manuscript. Shortly after I was imprisoned in Qincheng, Fu Chongbi and Yang Chengwu came to interrogate me about Lu Xun's manuscript. I could see from Fu Chongbi's eyes that he was sympathetic to me, unlike Yang Chengwu who, after only a few days, put on the air of an interrogator. I told them that at that time the Ministry of Culture had told the Central Cultural Revolution that the masses from both factions of the Ministry were going to the archives of the Ministry to grab the archives, and that at that time Lu Xun's manuscript, Guo Moruo's manuscript and many other writers' manuscripts were kept in the archives of the Ministry of Culture. The situation was published in the Central Cultural Revolution's "Important News of the Cultural Revolution", on which Chen Boda and Jiang Qing both gave instructions that Lu Xun's manuscripts must be protected. They also appointed me to deal with this matter. So, I took a few PLA soldiers to the Ministry of Culture and said that Lu Xun's manuscripts were the most important national archives and that no one was allowed to rob them. I told the PLA soldiers to take the cabinet and the manuscript to Diaoyutai, where they were sealed and kept in the confidential room of the Central Cultural Revolution Group. The cadre in charge of the confidential room was called Bu, so you should go and find him. The first thing that I did was to take a look at it. In fact, Jiang Qing said that I had stolen Lu Xun's manuscript. I guess one of the reasons is that she forgot that she and Chen Boda had appointed me to do it; another is that perhaps the reasons for my arrest were not sufficient, so she needed to find some other reasons.

Some others, like Wu Faxian, say that I was arrested because I gave Dream of the Red Chamber to Li Na and tried to woo her. That's even more nonsense. She had just graduated from university and she studied history, so she liked to come to my place to look through books and chat. I was quite happy to talk to her, as I could learn from her a lot about the current thinking of university students, their

aspirations and pursuits, and so on. Now that she is still alive, anyone who is interested can write to her or call her to ask her about it.

In fact, there were already rumours that Qi Benyu was Jiang Qing's son-in-law at that time. Chairman Mao liked to know about political rumours circulating among the people, and he regarded them as a special reflection of the class struggle. On one occasion, Ye Qun sent Jiang Qing a copy of this rumour, which the Ministry of Public Security had collected from folk talk at the time. Jiang Qing read it and laughed it off, saying, "So, I am still the mother-in-law". At that time, I was still very protective of my feathers, so I was always very self-disciplined in my lifestyle, which was well known in Zhongnanhai. I had long been a married man, so how could I possibly have had such delusions of grandeur.

Because of the position I was in at the time, I knew that Chairman Mao's approval was necessary to have me arrested and investigated, and that Jiang Qing would not be able to make this decision. But the Chairman had just given his approval on my review a few months ago, calling us comrades. Is this really a "delaying tactic" to stabilize me, as Yang Chengwu later said nonsensically?

After I was released from Qincheng, I read a book called "The Truth about the Yang Youfu Incident" written by a man called Dong Baocun, in which Fu Chongbi's recollections were quoted. Fu Chongbi recalled that after the "July 20 Incident", the Premier ordered him to move Li Jingquan, Jiang Weiqing, Wang Renzhong and some 30 other old cadres to a safe place for protection. After the "July 20 Incident" in Wuhan, some students wanted to seize the "Chen Zidaos" of various regions, provinces and cities, and they searched everywhere for these people but could not find them. The students came to the Central Cultural Revolution Group to ask them, but the Central Cultural Revolution Group did not know where they were. At that time, we even published in the "bulletin" of the Central Cultural Revolution Group that the Cultural Revolution Office had to send these people "criticism materials" written by the public, but they could not be found anywhere. When the Premier read this "bulletin", he said, "Give me the materials and I will pass them on to them". Jiang Qing was not happy about it and she had a lot of opinions about it. So, when a meeting of the Central Cultural Revolution Group was held, Fu Chongbi was brought in for questioning. I still remember the situation very clearly. It was probably Kang Sheng who first asked Fu Chongbi where you had gotten these people to go. Fu Chongbi stammered and refused to tell us. Then someone asked him again who had told him to do that. Fu Chongbi did not say who it was, but pointed his finger upwards and said, "Upwards. This enraged Jiang Qing, Chen Boda and Kang Sheng, who all wanted him to tell them whose order it was. But Fu Chongbi just refused to say. When the second meeting was held, Fu Chongbi had to be questioned again, but at that very moment, a call came from Chairman Mao, saying that the Chairman wanted Fu Chongbi to come over immediately. I guess this was probably arranged by the Premier in advance. By then, the Chairman had already returned to Beijing. This must have been in late September to October 1967.

According to Fu Chongbi, Chairman Mao met him this time in the lounge of his own residence and talked to him for more than two hours. It was during this conversation with the Chairman that Fu Chongbi reported to the Chairman that the Premier had asked him to keep those old cadres under protection. The Chairman said that this was a good thing to do. Then Fu Chongbi told the Chairman that the Central Cultural Revolution Group had met and criticised him for this. The Chairman asked him, "Who is criticising you? Fu Chongbi was about to say that it was Jiang Qing and Kang Sheng. But then he withdrew the words from his mouth. He thought that it would be difficult to deal with Jiang

Qing and the others if he had bad relations with them. So he told the Chairman instead, "Qi Benyu and the others have criticised me". The Chairman then said to him, "Don't be afraid of them".

Since this conversation between the Chairman and Fu Chongbi had a great deal to do with the development of the Cultural Revolution, I quote below some important episodes from Fu Chongbi's original recollections:

In his Hunan accent, the old man asked, "Comrade Chongbi, have you eaten yet?"

"I have eaten, Chairman."

"Sit down, sit down. I came to see you today to ask about the situation in Beijing. Has the martial fighting been stopped?"

Mao Zedong lit a cigarette and slowly inhaled and exhaled.

"The situation in Beijing has improved, but the two factions are still fighting and cannot be stopped."

Mao Zedong asked again, "Are there any more big-character posters of Comrade Zhu De?"

"Yes, there are still people who want to bring down Commander-in-Chief Zhu."

Mao Zedong said, "This is not good. Zhu Mao Zhu Mao, Zhu De and Mao Zedong are inseparable."

When Mao finished, he exhaled another cloud of smoke, as if in deep thought, and did not speak for a long time. Suddenly, he noticed that Fu Chongbi was holding a roll of something in his hand and asked, "What is that in your hand?"

Fu Chongbi said, "It's a comic that just came out, I just saw it this afternoon."

"Can you show it to me?"

Fu Chongbi handed Mao Zedong the colourful 'Hundred Ugly Pictures'. On it, a palanquin is drawn, with Comrades Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping sitting on it, and those carrying the wheels below, all of whom are old revolutionaries. Comrade Tan Zhenlin's hands are stained with blood, and Comrade Luo Ruiqing has a knife in his mouth. .... Fu Chongbi looked at this picture and felt very sad, knowing that it was made by the "Central Cultural Revolution Group" and the Red Guards.

Mao Zedong seriously flattened the "hundred ugly pictures" and looked serious, he put out his cigarette and said angrily: "What a mess, this is a scandal to the Communist Party!"

He turned sideways and said to his secretary, "Call Chen Boda at once and tell him that this 'Hundred Pictures' is cursing us and cannot be done, and that we cannot let this kind of scandalous stuff fly around!"

The secretary turned to make a phone call, and only then did Mao Zedong sit upright and continue to ask the question.

"Do the Red Guards still fight the cadres?"

"They are fighting very hard."

"How is that?"

Fu Chongbi raised his waist and held his arms back in a standard "jet pose".

"That's it, some of them even have an iron sign around their necks with their names and x's on them."

Mao frowned for a moment and asked again.

"Was this the same way when you fought the landlords and held struggle meetings back then?"

Fu Chongbi thought for a moment and said, "At that time, there was no 'jet-setting', at most a high hat was worn to parade through the streets."

"That's right! It's not good to do that. Good people mess up and patients die."

Seeing Mao Zedong speak in this way, Fu Chongbi realized that Mao Zedong was not aware of these circumstances. It seems that he did not agree with this kind of screwing up. He boldly reflected many situations to Mao Zedong.

Comrade Zhang Xi, Chen Yi's wife, was ill and was paraded by the rebels, and the "three Hu's" (Hu Yaobang, Hu Keshi and Hu Qili) of the Central Committee of the Communist League were also seized by the rebels and criticised at a conference. Hu Yaobang had a high fever and was still seized .....

Mao Zedong listened very carefully. He casually asked the names of several provincial party secretaries and ministers. "How are they?"

Fu Chongbi took this opportunity to report to Mao Zedong the transfer of old cadres as arranged by Zhou Enlai.

Without hesitation, Mao Zedong stated, "Good! The Premier has made good arrangements! You have done well."

Hearing these two words from Mao Zedong, a stone fell from his heart.

"Chairman, if we don't protect them, the Red Guards will fight them to death!"

"You have done the right thing!"

Mao repeated the sentence again. Turning to his secretary, he said again, "Tell the 'Cultural Revolution' (group) that they must not fix people to death!"

Fu Chongbi hurriedly said, "Chairman, you can't say that I said that."

"What are you afraid of?"

He told Mao Zedong, somewhat aggrieved, "I've been criticised enough for transferring old comrades."

"Who criticised you?"

Fu Chongbi's mouth opened and he almost said Jiang Qing's name, but he swallowed the words at the end. Jiang Qing and Mao Zedong were a couple. He changed his tone and said, "Qi Benyu and the others have criticised me."

"Don't be afraid of them."

Mao Zedong finished and prepared to go to work. Fu Chongbi was busy asking.

"Does the chairman have any more instructions?"

"The situation you have reflected today is very good, very good."

"I'm leaving."

*From The Truth about the Yang Yu Fu Incident, pages 58-61, by Dong Baocun, PLA Press, December 1987*

But many of the things that Fu Chongbi recalls were not done by the Central Cultural Revolution Group. For example, we knew nothing about the "hundred ugly pictures" or the struggle against Zhang Xi. At that time, Jiang Qing had instructed us to listen to the Premier and not to interfere with the campaign in the Foreign Ministry. If the Premier wanted Chen Boda or anyone else to speak, he had to consult Jiang Qing.

It's just that I never knew that Fu Chongbi would be able to openly end me up in front of the Chairman. Fu Chongbi and I have always had a good relationship. During the Cultural Revolution, I helped him with a lot of things at work and solved many problems. Otherwise, he would not have proposed to Jiang Qing that I should become a political commissar in the Beijing garrison. I think he didn't mean to harm me either, he had no choice. Ever since Wang Li and Guan Feng were arrested, I had been very cautious and low-key in what I did. So I couldn't have gone to criticise him, as he said, at the meeting to trace the residences of capitalist-roader bigwigs around the country. It was Jiang Qing and Kang Sheng who criticised him, but he planted all these problems on my head. In fact, I did

not say a word on this issue. The fact that Fu Chongbi was so polite to me in Qincheng prison later on was probably also related to the fact that he used me as a substitute for Jiang Qing and Kang Sheng when reporting the situation to the Chairman in the way he did.

This incident I guess caused the Chairman to be displeased with me. But whether this was the main reason why Chairman Mao approved the investigation of me, I do not know. But it was at least an important factor, I suppose.

After Wang Li and Guan Feng were arrested, all the rebels who had gone to them turned to me. All the information and demands they reported were sent up in documents or briefings through me. So what Chen Yi said at that time was reasonable: to arrest Wang and Guan without arresting Qi was the same as not arresting them. However, Chen Yi's statement that "if Qi Benyu was not arrested, the Party would not be convinced; the military would not be convinced; and the hearts of the people would not be convinced" was somewhat unrealistic, as the hearts of the Party, the hearts of the people and the hearts of the military were two separate camps and fronts at the time, and could not be generalised. When I was also isolated and investigated, the rebel faction received less support. Originally, the rebel faction had been more assertive in the negotiations for the establishment of revolutionary committees in various places, but now they had to compromise. In this way the work of realising the great unity, implementing the three unions and thus setting up revolutionary committees in various places had gone more smoothly.

At the same time as they were arrested, key members of the Cultural Revolution Office were also investigated; the work of the Express Group was semi-stopped; and even many people in the Secretarial Bureau of the General Office of the Central Committee, with whom I had more contacts, were also investigated. Wang Dongxing described some people in the Secretarial Bureau (including some members of the former "Eight Secretaries Incident") as remnants of Tian Jiaying's gang and subjected them to "isolation censorship".

The editorial of the first issue of Red Flag magazine in 1968 was revised by Yao Wenyuan and me and then submitted to Chen Boda, who sent it to the Chairman for approval before publication. Soon after this, Red Flag ceased publication. It was not until August of that year, when Chairman Mao issued his instruction that "the working class must lead everything", that Yao Wenyuan continued to publish Red Flag magazine two months later in order to promote Chairman Mao's idea that "the working class must lead everything".

## Part 4: My Qincheng Years

### Chapter 1: From "leave to review" to arrest and imprisonment

On the night of 12 January 1968, I was called from my office in Diaoyutai to a meeting in Huarentang. I knew in my heart that it was time to announce the decision to deal with me. So, when my secretary wanted to go with me, I told him not to go. But he still insisted on going with me. Sure enough, I was later told that after I had entered Huarentang, both he and the driver were imprisoned. The main reason they were locked up was because they were afraid that word of my "arrest" would get out.

When I entered the conference room in Huarentang, I saw that four people were already sitting inside, namely Xie Fuzhi, Yang Chengwu, Yao Wenyuan and Wang Dongxing. I understood in my heart that the four of them represented the Premier, Lin Biao, Jiang Qing and the Chairman respectively. This was a sign to me that my treatment had been approved by the consent of these four people.

Wang Dongxing announced to me that I would be given "leave to review". I was then escorted back to Diaoyutai and locked up in a small building under the guard of a company of armed PLA soldiers. My hands were handcuffed behind my back all day and all night. I knew in my heart that this must have been Wang Dongxing's doing, and that no one else would have bothered with this. Wang Dongxing only had to use the excuse of preventing me from committing suicide like Tian Jiaying did. When he did this, he made me so miserable that I couldn't eat or sleep.

After the Chinese New Year that year, Wang, Guan and Qi were all taken away from Diaoyutai and imprisoned in Qincheng Prison.

I learned later that at the same time as I was arrested, the "Express Group" and the "Literature and Art Group" of the Central Cultural Revolution Group, which I had been leading, were both reorganized or disbanded, and the head of the Literature and Art Group, Jin Jingmai, and some other people were "arrested" or censored respectively. "The offices of the Central Cultural Revolution Group were also reorganized or disbanded. The office of the Central Cultural Revolution Group was also reorganised and put under the charge of Li Na. Wang Dongxing branded the faction of the Zhongnanhai Secretarial Bureau that had supported me as the "Tian Jiaying Remnant Party" and investigated them separately.

Wang Dongxing also sent people to raid my home, and many of my personal belongings were taken away. When I was released from prison, only a small number of the books they had examined were returned to me, and the vast majority of my belongings have never been returned, including a handwritten copy of "Reply to Comrade Guo Moruo" given to me by Chairman Mao.

At the same time, my wife, who worked in the secretary's office in Zhongnanhai, was imprisoned in Qincheng prison. She was pregnant when she was imprisoned. My youngest son was born in Qincheng prison, and from the moment he landed, he was imprisoned with his mother, and was then called the "baby of Qincheng".

## Chapter Two: The "three no's" policy of "no reprimand, no interrogation, no filing of a case"

At the end of August 1967, when Premier Zhou asked me to send Wang Li and Guan Feng to Diaoyutai Building No. 2 for "closed-door reflection", he told me that if anyone asked, you should tell them that they were on "leave for review" (in reality, they were being examined in isolation). The Premier also told me that the Chairman had told him that they were not to be handed over to the public for criticism, nor was anyone allowed to interrogate them. They were only to be investigated internally and no special cases were to be set up.

Within five months I was also placed in solitary confinement. We were then sent to Qincheng prison together. However, we were still subjected to the "three no's" policy of "no criticism, no interrogation, no case". For a long time, except for the time when Yang Chengwu and Fu Chongbi came to the prison to interrogate me about the whereabouts of Lu Xun's manuscripts, I was not subjected to any further examination or interrogation. When I asked Guan Feng about this after I was released from prison, he said that he, too, had not been subjected to any interrogation. It was not until a year or two before the Chairman's death that Wang Dongxing set up a task force to examine us.

After I was released from prison, my old colleagues in Zhongnanhai told me that when I was first under investigation, the faction in Zhongnanhai that supported Wang Dongxing proposed to criticize me several times, but Wang Dongxing prevented them from doing so. Wang Dongxing said to them, "What's the fuss? Chairman Mao would not allow the criticism".

Even in 1970, when the whole country was conducting an investigation into the "May 16 elements", no one asked me what my relationship with the "May 16" was, and at that time we, "Wang, Guan and Qi", were said to be the general backstage of the "May 16" Movement. However, later on I heard some people who were investigated as "May 16 elements" tell me that when they were investigated, they were asked about their relationship with "Wang, Guan and Qi". But none of them could say what their relationship with us was. In fact, we had no relationship with them other than the Central Cultural Revolution Group's support for the rebellious mass organisations.

After I was released from prison, I read that Jiang Qing had spoken ill of me after I was arrested. I think her remarks were mainly to fabricate some charges to be put on my head, so as to clear the Central Cultural Revolution Group's relationship with us.

Unlike Jiang Qing, Premier Zhou's speech against me had to be much more heavy-handed. In his speech on 18 March 1968, the Premier described me as an ambitious person who meddled everywhere. But he could not have forgotten that there was not a single important thing I did that was not discussed and decided at meetings of the Central Committee and the Central Cultural Revolution Group, most of which were chaired by Premier Zhou. After the "February Countercurrent", I was personally appointed by the Premier himself to do many of the tasks that belonged to the State Council system. Without his consent, Jiang Qing would not have asked me to do it. In his speech, the Premier even said that both of my sons were not good people. But at that time, my eldest son was still only 11 years old, in primary school, he was very introverted and did not and could not participate in any political activities except for playing. And my youngest son was not yet born at that time; he was born in September 1968 in Qincheng prison.

According to the materials I read later, Chairman Mao spoke about "Wang, Guan and Qi" on two occasions. Once was at the First Plenary Session of the Ninth Central Committee in 1969, and the main point of his speech was that after the overthrow of "Wang, Guan and Qi", no one had revealed the contents of the Central Committee's meetings to the Red Guards and the rebel faction. Another time was when he talked to Snow in 1970, he said that those who set fire to the British Chargé d'affaires in August 1967 were a group of "ultra-leftists".

On this occasion, although the Chairman did not name "Wang, Guan and Qi", the timing of what he said showed that we were at least included. He probably thought that we were behind all these radical actions.

On the whole, I always felt that Chairman Mao did not "speak absolutely" or "speak definitely" about "Wang, Guan and Qi" at that time. Later on, I learnt that after we were arrested, Chairman Mao recited two lines of a poem: "When the time comes, all heaven and earth share the same force; when the luck goes, heroes are not free." Many people said that the Chairman was alluding to "Wang, Guan and Qi". After I was released from prison, I talked to Guan Feng about this. Guan Feng's view was different, as he believed that the Chairman's quotation of these two lines was also a lament about his own situation.

## Chapter 3: My Encounter in Qincheng

When I first entered Qincheng prison, most of the administrators were from the former Ministry of Public Security, and these people still spoke policy to me. Then somehow a group of administrators who had been transferred from the Navy were brought in. One of them, for whatever reason, seemed to have a special hatred for me and used to beat me up on various excuses. One time he kicked me in the head with his feet, which were wearing navy leather shoes, and I passed out on the spot. I slept for several days afterwards, and although I was still conscious at times, I was not aware of anything in my head. When the man saw that I had not eaten for several days, he said that I had faked my death and was trying to resist by going on a hunger strike. Then he took a very large iron pliers and pried my teeth open, and I don't know what he poured into my mouth. It took several days before I gradually woke up.

Perhaps the leaders of the prison were also afraid that if I really died, then they would be responsible. So I was changed to an older person called Li and a female comrade with the surname Wang to look after me. The comrade asked me what I wanted to eat and said that they could make it for me if I told them. So I said, "I want to eat some noodles". She really made a bowl of hot egg noodles and brought it to me. With their care, I slowly recovered. But to this day, whenever the weather is bad, my head still hurts.

I made serious representations to the prison regarding this matter, (my head injury is documented in the prison sick list.) I was determined to find out the person who beat me up, and I needed to know what the reason was for him to do this to me so viciously. But the prison authorities took a long time to reply to me, saying that the person who had beaten me no longer worked in the prison and that they could not find out who he was, but they assured me that it would never happen again.

Later on, Chairman Mao had a directive about the strict prohibition of fascist treatment of prisoners in prison, and asked that this directive be conveyed to all prisoners in custody. But the prison just didn't pass it on to me. They said that if I knew about this instruction from Chairman Mao, I could bring the heavens down on the prison!

After this, there were no more beatings to death like this. However, abuse was still a regular occurrence. In the memoirs written by some of the people who left Qincheng, it is said that Qi Benyu often disobeyed the management and contradicted the managers in Qincheng. In fact, they did not know what actually happened. Some of the prison staff and guards at the time would often use nasty words to abuse me and even insult my parents. When I came across such a person, I would firmly protest to him, even though I knew that my protest would not bring me any good results, but I had to maintain my minimum human dignity and could not allow myself to be insulted.

After I was released from prison, my wife told me that as she had given birth to the child in prison, the lack of nutrition and milk had resulted in a child with a poorly developed mind and poor intelligence. It was only after the child was born more than four months later that she agreed to send the child to her grandmother's home in Shanghai, seeing that the child was too frail and sick to be raised in prison.

Whatever my problems, in the new socialist China, Wang Dongxing, who was in charge of Qincheng prison, used feudal chains and the cruel methods of the Guomindang reactionaries to put innocent

women and babies in prison, which was a disgrace to the Party and the country, and those responsible should be investigated and condemned by history.

When the "Qincheng baby" was brought to Shanghai, he was festering and dying, but thanks to my grandmother and my fourth aunt, who took care of him as if he were their own, and patiently treated him, he was able to survive. After I was released, I did my best to help him overcome the brain damage he had suffered as a child and taught him to concentrate on one subject, so that he could now become an expert in computers.

I recently read an article written by a man surnamed He reminiscing about Qincheng Prison. This man was a former administrator of Qincheng Prison, and he came to Qincheng after Deng Xiaoping came to power. He was the one who, in 1980, put both Guan Feng and me on death row in Qincheng Prison. It was a single cell in the worst conditions in Qincheng prison. The cell was closed all around except for the cell door. It was a very small room, where one ate, drank, shit and slept on the floor, with a hole dug in the floor for urinating and defecating. When Guan Feng was mad, he used his hands to pick shit out of this hole and eat it. This man named He said in the article that he came up with this method to subdue me because I disobeyed the management. He came up with the idea of putting mosquitoes in the cell to bite me, which supposedly made me honest. I don't know how he could have come up with such a story. In Qincheng prison, most of the cells are not screened, and mosquitoes and flies fly freely everywhere. Besides, the mosquitoes were not kept by him, so how could they obey his command? In fact, as long as the people who have been in prison will have this experience, I'm afraid, if you are not used to being bitten by mosquitoes, then you simply do not want to sleep in prison. People in prison are used to being bitten by mosquitoes. I woke up every day and there were at least a few mosquitoes crushed under my body. I think I had some kind of antibodies in my body, and I didn't care about the mosquito bites anymore.

The food in the prison was also unbearable. According to the rules, I was paid 38 yuan a month for food, which was considered very high for the time. But the food we were given often contained dead rats, flies and cockroaches. I saw several times when the caretaker took a dead rat out of the pot and threw it out, and when I saw it, I could not eat for a day. I remembered that during the Great Leap Forward, Chairman Mao was so wise in calling on all the people to get rid of the rodent pest.

## Chapter 4: "Mindful Reading" in Qincheng

When I first entered Qincheng prison, I felt that my days were like years. I was kept in a single cell, and I had no contact with anyone other than the prison staff and guards. In such an environment, it is easy for one's spirit to go awry. I knew that if I could not resist this brutal blow at the beginning, it would be my demise. I could hear people who had become mentally ill shouting and screaming outside almost every day. I had to figure out a way to fight the harsh conditions of the prison.

After thinking about it, I decided that prison was a good opportunity to learn, to think. In the past 18 years, I have come into contact with so many great people, especially people like Chairman Mao; I have experienced so many things that are so engraved in my mind that it is like drinking so much milk that I should now digest it. The human brain is a storehouse, but if you don't use it for a long time, it will break down. Although my body was confined, my mind could not be confined.

I started to make a plan for myself to "read". There were no books in the cell, so I relied on my own memory, recalling as many books as I could from the books I had read before, and then reading them again and again in my mind. I call this method of reading "mindful reading". In this way, I feel that I have a lot to do every day.

Once I was immersed in 'mindful reading', my mind was enlightened. When I revisit those words, I feel as if I am engaged in a kind of meditation that transcends time and space, where everything in heaven and earth becomes the object of your thoughts. Your mind is completely free, it breaks through all the nets, and only truth, goodness and beauty are tossed around in your mind.

Through 'mindful reading', you can not only revisit the books you have read, but you can also compare yourself to the characters in the books you have read. It is an arrogance, but not an ignorant arrogance, but an arrogance of knowledge, and 'mindful reading' must be arrogant.

My first "mindful reading" was Qu Yuan's Li Sao. When I was in junior high school, I had a language teacher who told us to memorise it all, regardless of whether we knew what it meant, so I could recite it almost word for word. Then I chewed it over and over, word by word, and in the process, it made me feel as if I was having a face-to-face conversation with this great man of ancient China. In the end, I felt as if I had become one with him, as if I had become his double, using his ideas and methods to think and understand his thoughts, and using his thoughts to analyse and view the people and events he encountered, as well as the various people and events that I encountered. This has given me a deep understanding of why Qu Yuan, who loved his country and his people as much as he did, committed suicide; of his great personality; and a deep understanding of why Chairman Mao loved Qu Yuan so much.

After my release from prison, I wrote a book, Qu Yuan and Li Sao. However, it has not been published until today. I have put some of the ideas and contents of the book in another book I wrote, Pre-Qin Characters. I believe that the person who understands Qu Yuan best in China is not Guo Moruo, but Wen Yiduo<sup>423</sup>.

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<sup>423</sup> Wen Yiduo (1899–1946) was a Chinese poet and scholar known for his patriotic and democratic poetry who was assassinated by the Guomindang. He had been very active in promoting Qu Yuan, an ancient poet, as the only person in the whole of Chinese history who is fully entitled to be called 'the people's poet'."

After that, I "mindfully read" Zuo Zhuan's "Cao Jian Discusses War" and "Zheng Boke Duan Yuyan", Shi Ji's "Xiang Yu Benji", Han Shu's "Over the Qin", the famous essays of the Eight Masters of Tang and Song, and Fan Zhongyan's "Yue Yang Lou Ji".

I also recalled lines from the Yi Jing that I had recited with my grandfather when I was a child, such as "The Qianlong dragon lives under the sea, the Kanglong dragon will have regrets"<sup>424</sup>, "Seeing the dragon in the field, the dragon flies in the sky"<sup>425</sup>, and so on. I memorized them all and pondered them all day and night. I felt that the Yi Jing was actually about the process and laws of change and development of things. When I related the things in the Yi Jing to my own experiences of people and events, the more I thought about it, the more it made sense, and I became obsessed with it all day long. According to Mr Tang Lan's testimony, the Yi Jing is 7,000 to 8,000 years old. The earliest eight trigrams were carved on pottery, and it can be said to be the first written book of mankind.

It was not until June 1971 that I was allowed to read newspapers and books. The first newspaper I saw carried the news of Chairman Mao's meeting with Romanian President Ceausescu.

There was also a library in Qincheng prison, but it contained very few books, just some Marxist-Leninist works that had been torn up by the number of people who read them. But whenever I could, I borrowed them and read them. Over time, I became acquainted with some of the prison staff, and they liked to come and talk to me when they had nothing to do. Some of the women even came to me to help them name their children. I told them that I was a prisoner and that it was unlucky to have a name. They saw that I liked to read, so they helped me to find books; some of them were released from prison and left their books in their cells, so they brought them to me to read.

As I read the books, I tried to remember the books I used to read when I was following Chairman Mao. During his lifetime, Chairman Mao was fond of reading "Zizhi Tongjian" and "The Twenty-four Histories", and he read them over and over again for I don't know how many times. He also wrote down many annotations. I felt that the annotations written by Chairman Mao were very unique in his comments on historical figures, so I tried to recall and make notes on all the annotations on historical figures that I had seen written by the Chairman. After I was released from prison, it was from the notes I had made in prison that I wrote four books on the evaluation of historical figures, including On the People of the First Qin Dynasty and On the People of the Western Han Dynasty.

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<sup>424</sup> These are two of four lines from the Yi Jing talking anthropomorphically about dragons in order to comment on human qualities. These two lines are said to mean that people with noble spiritual practices are generally relatively hidden and don't pursue fame and wealth, don't worry about confusion, or right and wrong. The second line is said to mean that if one is in a high position, his prosperity will decline and he will inevitably suffer regret.

<sup>425</sup> The remaining two lines from the Yi Jing which are said to mean that seeing dragons in the fields is conducive to people of great virtue coming out to take care of things, and dragons flying in the sky means that all is well and things are in their right place.

## Chapter 5: I Heard Jiang Qing's Song

On 9 September 1976, I learned of Chairman Mao's death in prison. At that time, I was very sad. A great man of his generation, he had defeated many powerful enemies in his life, but he never took pride in his achievements and often said that the masses were the real heroes and that he was only a pupil of the people. He enjoyed immense prestige and wielded supreme power, but he never sought special benefits for himself or his family. He only thought about how to consolidate the people's democratic regime in which they were the masters, and how to make their lives happy through their own hard work. He was profoundly thoughtful, wise and far-sighted; his theoretical and cultural attainments were so profound that they are unmatched not only by his contemporaries, but also by anyone else in the history of the world for thousands of years. When he was in his seventies, he resolutely launched and led the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution in order to prevent the Communist Party, after coming to power, from changing from a revolutionary party fighting for the interests of the people to a ruler riding on the head of the people. He mobilised and supported the lowest strata of the people to rise up, asking them to "care about national affairs" and dare to revolt against the "capitalist-roaders". Needless to say, his move was inevitably opposed by those in the Party who were bent on the path of capitalism for the sake of their personal and small group interests. Other people who seemed to support him and who had followed him in his rebellion were now, because of their changed status, disgusted with those who had responded to his call to rebel. Because of this, the Central Cultural Revolution Group, which supported the revolutionary masses of the rebels according to the instructions of Chairman Mao and the Central Committee of the Party, met with predictable opposition within the Party. As these opponents were afraid of Chairman Mao's authority, they did not dare to direct their opposition at him, so they inevitably directed it at the Central Cultural Revolution Group, and the "Wang, Guan and Qi", who were less senior and of lower status in the Central Cultural Revolution Group, naturally became the first targets.

From 16 May 1966 onwards, Chairman Mao called on the vast number of young students, workers, peasants and cadres throughout the country to rise up against revisionism and against those in power within the Party who had taken the capitalist road. In this process, the Central Cultural Revolution Group played a great role. Without the practical support of the Central Cultural Revolution Group, the rebellion in Beijing and throughout the country would have been suppressed and could not have developed and grown as rapidly as it did later.

The January Revolution in Shanghai in 1967, a bottom-up movement of the masses to seize power, and the development of the Cultural Revolution to a new stage, sharpened the contradictions within the Party as never before. In time, Chairman Mao proposed the "three-in-one combinations" of the army, cadres and the masses, and the establishment of a new Paris Commune style regime in the form of revolutionary committees. The "July 20th Incident" in Wuhan in 1967 was a striking reflection of these contradictions and struggles.

After the "July 20 Incident" in Wuhan, Chairman Mao's strategic guiding ideology underwent a major change. In the process of establishing a new revolutionary order, he moved from the policy of relying on the rebels and uniting the majority to the policy of implementing a "grand unity" of the revolution. Not only did Wang, Guan and Qi fail to understand this change in the Chairman's strategic thinking, but Jiang Qing, Kang Sheng and Chen Boda also failed to catch up with the Chairman's thinking. So, we continued to rely on the same approach as before, relying on support

for the rebels. In the editorial of the Red Flag magazine on 1 August 1967, we even put forward the erroneous slogan of "seizing a handful of people within the army", which actually seriously interfered with Chairman Mao's strategic plan to establish a new revolutionary order.

After Wang Li and Guan Feng were isolated and interrogated, I was at the centre of the conflict. Because Zhang Chunqiao and Yao Wenyuan and their main work at that time was in Shanghai, and the Cultural Revolution movement in Shanghai was under the personal supervision and leadership of Chairman Mao, so I invariably became the main channel for the rebels everywhere to forward their demands to the Central Committee. All day long, I complained about the suppression they were receiving. So I think that Chairman Mao's agreement to put me under isolation could not have been the result of just a momentary misunderstanding or misjudgement, but rather the result of the situation.

I am reminded of Stalin's saying that when the wheels of history turn, someone has to be thrown off the train. I am probably one of those who have been thrown off the wheel of history! Yet even so, I was not shaken in my pursuit of the goals of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution and my belief in, and my loyalty to, Chairman Mao's continuing revolutionary ideology.

After the Lin Biao incident in 1971, I could not hear any communication about the central government documents in prison. From what I knew at that time, I, like Guan Feng, would not have believed that Lin Biao would plot against Chairman Mao. Later, when I saw a photocopy of Lin Biao's "handwriting" on a central document, I could see that it was not Lin Biao's handwriting at all. At that time, I thought that someone within the Party must have framed Lin Biao. At that time, I did not know that his son, Lin Liguo, had acted against heaven and was secretly plotting to murder Chairman Mao. Whether Lin Biao knew of these plots by his son or not, he is to blame for his laxity in teaching his son.

After the death of the Chairman, a prison administrator surnamed Li, the one I have previously mentioned, came to talk to me and asked me what I thought of the situation in the country after the death of the Chairman. I told him casually, "Go and clean up all the empty cells, I reckon there will be new people coming in soon". Old Li was very unimpressed with my statement.

But within a few days, Old Li came to me and said, "How did you know that new people will be coming in soon?" I smiled at him.

It wasn't long before I could faintly hear Jiang Qing's shouting and cursing. I let out a long sigh.

Some time later, I heard Haoliang<sup>426</sup> singing a verse from "The Red Lantern" in his cell. After that, I heard Jiang Qing singing again, she sang "Red Plum Praise"<sup>427</sup>, she was an unyielding heroine.

After I found out that Deng Xiaoping was back in power, I had no idea that I would leave Qincheng prison alive, let alone that he would be lenient with the revolutionaries. Let him do what he likes!

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<sup>426</sup> Qian Haoliang (1934-2020), was a veteran of Beijing opera. He was born in Shaoxing, Zhejiang and was born in Shanghai. He was a leading member of the Revolutionary Committee of the Chinese Beijing Opera Theater and the deputy secretary of the Party Committee of the Academy. He was particularly noted for his role as Li Yuhe in the revolutionary drama "Red Lantern". After the "Gang of Four" was crushed, Qian Haoliang was regarded as a "person implicated in the Gang of Four" and was sent to prison for review, and was finally determined to have "conducted serious political errors and was exempt from prosecution." Freedom was only restored in early 1982.

<sup>427</sup> "Red Plum Praise" is a patriotic song composed by Yan Su and composed by Yang Ming, Jiang Chunyang and Jin Sha. It is the theme song of the opera "Sister Jiang".

## Chapter 6: My "Trial" after Deng Xiaoping's Rise to Power

### Appendix: The indictment, statement of the prosecutor, statement of defence and judgement in the Qi Benyu counter-revolutionary case.

After Deng Xiaoping came to power, in order to remove the influence of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution initiated and led by Chairman Mao, and to clear the way for his so-called "reform and opening up", which in essence was the restoration of capitalism, criminal proceedings were introduced in 1980 to try the so-called "Jiang Qing " and "Lin Biao" "anti-Party groups", for "subverting the dictatorship of the proletariat and restoring capitalism".

The "special court" formed by them also sent someone to Qincheng to look for me. They said to me that you had been imprisoned by Jiang Qing for more than ten years. Now that Jiang Qing was to be tried, you should come forward to expose her problems and testify in court in order to obtain leniency. I said, "I can testify in court, but I must do so according to my own wishes". They asked, "Then how are you going to testify?" I said, "According to Chairman Mao's words of being truthful and saying what is true. I will not pander to others to give any false testimony". They asked me about the seizure of Peng Dehuai from Chengdu. I said that it had been discussed and decided at a meeting of the Central Cultural Revolution Group, and that Guan Feng, Wang Li and I had first proposed it, and that the Premier and Jiang Qing had also strongly advocated it. They asked, "Why did you make this proposal?" I said that we had made it on the basis of the report sent to us by the Southwest Bureau. Later they quoted my testimony in the "court", but when they did so, they dropped "Premier" and replaced it with "Jiang Qing and I strongly advocated this proposal". They then asked me how Jiang Qing had used the "Wu Hao incident" to persecute Premier Zhou. I said, "This is nonsense. Jiang Qing pointed out at that time that this was a disinformation campaign by the enemy". They asked me to write down everything that had happened, so I did so. However, they did not quote this testimony in the "court". This attitude of mine certainly did not satisfy them. So they said to me, "If you don't cooperate with us, then you must consider the consequences for yourself". I said, "You don't have to scare me, I've already been in jail for more than ten years, so another ten years is no big deal".

After the trial of Jiang Qing and the others, it was my turn to be tried. They set up a special team to prepare the materials for the "prosecution". People from the special team came to the prison and asked me for my opinion. They said, "You can express your opinion". I said, "According to my opinion, it is totally wrong for you to "try" Jiang Qing and others". They said, "Don't be confrontational, you have to hold yourself to the standard of a Party member". I said, "I was expelled from the Party a long time ago, so why should I talk about the standards of Party members?" They said, "No matter what, you have to obey the decision of the Central Committee". They asked me if I wanted to hire a lawyer. I said, "If I want to hire one, I will ask Ms Lei Jieqiong to be my defence lawyer". They said that she was too old to appear in court. I said, "Have you talked to her?" They said that someone had tried to hire her last time, but it didn't work out. I later found out that the person they referred to as "the last time" someone wanted to hire Lei Jieqiong as a defence lawyer was Jiang Qing. As a result, they appointed a Beijing lawyer, Fu Zhiren, to defend me. This lawyer is a professional lawyer.

The first thing they asked about was Zhang Linzhi's death. In fact, they all knew that Zhang Linzhi was named by Chairman Mao as a capitalist-roader, and that it was the Premier and Jiang Qing who decided to mobilise the masses to fight against Zhang Linzhi at a meeting of the Central Cultural Revolution Group, and it was they who appointed me to speak. But since this was the only issue they could use as a basis for convicting me of a felony, they used it as a breakthrough to pursue me repeatedly. They asked how Zhang Linzhi had been killed. I said that the coroner's report was there and that his subcutaneous injuries were not fatal and that he had indeed hanged himself. They continued to question me, saying that whether he had committed suicide or not, I was responsible for his death. But why must you say that he was killed? Are you going to get this conclusion from me and then you can go and screw those masses? You can say that I mobilised the masses to criticise Zhang Linzhi to death, but you cannot say that I told the masses to beat him to death. If you say that I told people to kill him, then wouldn't that be deliberate murder? I will not shirk my responsibility, but I cannot agree that I told people to kill him. The man who was in charge of my conversation nodded his head and listened to my plea. Later, they changed the wording from "beaten to death" to "persecuted to death" and settled the matter vaguely.

The next thing they said was that I had "framed" and "persecuted" Wan Li. I told them that the report that Guan Feng and I had written to the Chairman was based on my investigation in Beijing of the "old Red Guards" who had "beaten people up", "raided homes" and "killed people", as well as the information we had learned about the tragic killings in Daxing County, and the report of the Central Cultural Revolution Group's "Express Report Team". If you can now produce evidence to prove that the "Red Terror" of the so-called "Red August" in Beijing and what happened in Daxing County had nothing to do with Wan Li, then I will admit that I had "falsely accused" him. In response, they replied, as usual, with silence.

In their "indictment", it says that Guan Feng and I wrote the letter on June 16, 1966, but I didn't pay much attention to this at the time. I remembered that Guan Feng and I wrote the letter to Chairman Mao on August 26, 1966, and then Chairman Mao gave his instructions on August 28, and the meeting was held on August 29, so how could it be June 16? In June of that year, when Liu and Deng were still working on their bourgeois reactionary line, the Chairman and Jiang Qing were not in Beijing either. There was no letter to Jiang Qing, Kang Sheng or Chen Boda on this issue, and the "Red Terror" of August 1966 had not yet occurred.

After the interrogation, I heard people from the Ministry of Public Security say in prison that it seemed difficult to judge Qi Benyu's case because what he had done had been decided and instructed from above, such as the seizure of Peng Dehuai and the criticism of Zhang Linzhi, which were all instructed from above, and he was only the implementer.

I have a friend called Cao Yin who wrote a book on Laozi and asked me to write the foreword for him. He was very good with Jiang Hua's son, and he once asked Jiang Hua's son: Qi Benyu was just an implementer, how come he was sentenced to 18 years? Jiang Hua's son went to ask his father and told him: His father said that Qi Benyu's case was personally instructed by Deng Xiaoping to be dealt with more severely.

**Appendix: The indictment, statement of the prosecutor, statement of defence and judgement in the Qi Benyu counter-revolutionary case.**

Qi Benyu's Counter-Revolutionary Case

Beijing Municipal People's Procuratorate Branch

## Indictment

### (83) Beijing Procuratorate Branch Trial No. 92

The defendant is Qi Benyu, a male, aged 51, from Weihai, Shandong Province. He was formerly the head of the history section of the Red Flag magazine, a member of the Central Cultural Command Group during the Cultural Revolution, and deputy director of the Secretariat of the General Office of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China. He was arrested on 14 July 1980 for counter-revolutionary crimes and was sent to the Beijing Public Security Bureau for examination and prosecution.

The Court has confirmed that during his tenure as a member of the "Central Cultural Revolution Group", the defendant Qi Benyu actively participated in the criminal activities of Jiang Qing's counter-revolutionary group and committed the following crimes.

First, he falsely accused and incited the persecution of such Party and State leaders as Liu Shaoqi, President of the People's Republic of China; Zhu De, Chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress; Peng Zhen, Vice-Chairman of the Standing Committee; Deng Xiaoping, Tao Zhu, He Long, Lu Dingyi and Luo Ruiqing, Vice-Premiers of the State Council; Peng Dehuai, member of the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee; and Yang Shangkun, Alternate Secretary of the Secretariat of the CPC Central Committee.

At three meetings on 16, 18 and 19 July 1967, the defendant Qi Benyu spoke with the heads of the propaganda departments of newspapers and radio stations in Beijing and Nie Yuanzi, Kuai Dafu, Han Aijing, Wang Dabin and Tan Houlun, as well as some people from the Zhongnanhai organs who attended the meetings, falsely accused people, saying: "What Liu Shaoqi, what Peng Dehuai, what Deng Xiaoping, what He Long, what Peng Zhen, all these people, Peng, Luo, Lu and Yang are all traitors to their country and great robbers and thieves who kill people without blinking". "Peng Dehuai and He Long are all man-eating tigers" and "careerists who kill people without blinking". "Peng Dehuai and Luo Ruiqing have a lot of blood on their hands". And, he incited them that "not only Liu Shaoqi, but also Deng Xiaoping, Tao Zhu, Peng Dehuai, Peng Zhen, Lu Dingyi, Luo Ruiqing and Yang Shangkun should all be criticised", "Never be kind to them". "If they are not criticised", "your leaders and so on", "they will all be arrested and killed!"

On 12 January 1967, on the 16th floor of Diaoyutai, the defendant Qi Benyu summoned some people from the General Office of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China to a meeting, saying that "Zhongnanhai is cold and clear while the outside is roaring" and that "Liu, Deng and Tao are very comfortable in Zhongnanhai, so why don't you go and fight them". At Qi Benyu's instigation, 70 or 80 people from the Secretary Bureau of the Central General Office broke into the residence of Liu Shaoqi, Deng Xiaoping and Tao Zhu, and rounded up the struggle session against them that night. On July 14 of the same year, some people from the Secretarial Bureau of the Central General Office wrote to Wang Dongxing and Premier Zhou Enlai, requesting a meeting to criticise Liu Shaoqi face to face. Qi Benyu received the letter, but sent it to Jiang Qing, Kang Sheng and Chen Boda. Jiang Qing, Kang Sheng and Chen Boda took the liberty of deciding to criticise Liu Shaoqi, Deng Xiaoping and Tao Zhu.

In the early hours of 18 July, Qi Benyu summoned some people from the Zhongnanhai organs to a meeting in the Great Hall of the People and said, "A few days ago Zhongnanhai rounded up Liu Shaoqi, on a small scale; it is always good to have people round him up, but the firepower is not strong". "To fight Liu, Deng and Tao face to face", "this is your first and foremost important task for quite some time". "You must sweep away their prestige, you must be ferocious", "you can make

them bow their heads and bend their backs". And it was laid out that "a few fighting organisations should be set up, some for Liu Shaoqi, some for Deng Xiaoping and some for Tao Zhu. Wang Guangmei and Zhuo Lin should also be engaged." Under Qi Benyu's organisation and incitement, more than 300 people in Zhongnanhai that day criticised Liu Shaoqi and Wang Guangmei, forcing them to bow their heads and bend their backs. Subsequently, Liu Shaoqi and Wang Guangmei, Deng Xiaoping and Zhuo Lin, Tao Zhuo and Zeng Zhi were repeatedly criticized and physically persecuted, and their homes were raided one after another.

On 12 January 1967, the defendant Qi Benyu called a meeting at Diaoyutai with some people from the Central Office to falsely accuse Zhu De of being a "great ambitious person" and a "great warlord", and instructed some people to force Cao Quanfu, who had been Zhu De's secretary, to expose the alleged problems of Zhu De and Kang Keqing. Qi Benyu also incited them, saying "You can put up big-character posters to expose them, and you can go to the Women's Union and light a fire." That night, some people from the Central Office broke into Zhu De's residence, rounded up Kang Keqing and posted large slogans and big-character posters falsely accusing Zhu De at the West Gate of Zhongnanhai and other places. At the end of January, Qi Benyu received some people from the Renmin University of China and incited them again, saying, "Sun Yang (the vice-president of the Renmin University of China) worked as Zhu De's secretary, you can get into Zhu De's problems through Sun Yang, don't have any worries." At Qi Benyu's instigation, large posters and slogans reading "Down with Zhu De" and "Zhu De is a Great Warlord" were widely posted in the streets of Beijing.

The defendant Qi Benyu, together with Guan Feng, wrote a joint letter to Jiang Qing, Kang Sheng and Chen Boda as early as 16 June 1966 falsely accusing "Peng Dehuai of still actively carrying out improper activities after his arrival at the Third Front" and that "until now it is still a black flag". "This hidden danger must be completely eliminated". On December 26 of the same year, the day before Peng Dehuai was held hostage by students instructed by Qi Benyu to return him to Beijing from Sichuan Province, Qi wrote to Jiang Qing saying, "Peng Dehuai has now been seized by the Red Guards and will be escorted back to Beijing within one or two days. The students in Beijing are ready for the struggle." In July 1967, Qi Benyu instructed Han Aijing and Wang Dabin to organise the persecution of Peng Dehuai. On 19 July, Han Aijing gathered dozens of people from the Beijing Aeronautics University to "interrogate" Peng Dehuai. During the "interrogation", Han Aijing was the first to beat him, followed by some others who punched and kicked him, resulting in Peng Dehuai being seriously injured with broken ribs and lung injuries. On 26 July, the Beijing Aeronautics University and the Beijing Geological Institute jointly held a 10,000-strong criticism meeting, where Peng Dehuai was criticised and then taken to a truck and paraded through the streets.

2. Falsely accused and incited the persecution of Zhang Linzhi, Minister of Coal Industry, Wan Li, Chen Kehan and Zhao Fan, Secretaries of the CPC Beijing Municipal Committee.

On December 14, 1966, Jiang Qing falsely accused "Zhang Linzhi of being a member of Peng Zhen's gang". On the 19th, Zhang Linzhi was illegally detained by some people from the Beijing Mining Institute. On the 24th, Qi Benyu told a mass meeting at the Beijing Mining Institute: "The leaders of the Ministry of Coal, a small group of people in power who have taken the capitalist road, have done nothing good, and the Minister of Coal, Zhang Linzhi, is a die-hard member of Peng Zhen's party." "Our artillery fire is not enough, we have to concentrate our shelling and strike hard." At Qi Benyu's instigation, some people from the Beijing Mining Institute and the Ministry of Coal repeatedly criticised, tortured and severely beat Zhang Linzhi. Zhang Linzhi was persecuted to death.

On 16 June 1966, the defendant Qi Benyu, together with Guan Feng, wrote to Jiang Qing, Kang Sheng and Chen Boda, falsely accusing "Wan Li, Chen Kehan and Zhao Fan of being bad people" and "letting them still sit in the Beijing Municipal Party Committee's secretariat, where they would plot and wreak havoc".

Thirdly, he instigated beatings, vandalism and looting, causing serious damage to national cultural relics.

In October 1966, the defendant Qi Benyu instructed Lin Jie of the Red Flag Miscellaneous Society to send Tan Houlan of Beijing Normal University to Qufu County, Shandong Province, with a group of people to "revolt against Confucianism". On November 9, Tan Houlan brought more than 100 people to Qufu, conspired with some local people, set up the "Liaison Station for the Revolutionary Rebellion against Confucianism", held a "Pledging Conference for the Revolutionary Rebellion against Confucianism", and incited the destruction of the Confucius Temple, the Confucius Mansion and the Confucius Grove, causing serious damage to national cultural relics. This led to the destruction of the Confucius Temple, the Confucius Mansion and the Confucius Grove, resulting in serious damage to the national heritage.

The above crimes of the defendant Qi Benyu are supported by witness testimony, physical evidence and documentary evidence, and the facts are clear and the evidence is solid and sufficient to be found.

In accordance with the provisions of Article 9 of the Criminal Law of the People's Republic of China concerning the application of the law, the Court finds that the defendant, Qi Benyu, actively participated in the criminal activities of Jiang Qing's counter-revolutionary group and committed the crimes of inciting counter-revolutionary propaganda under Articles 90 and 102 of the Criminal Law of the People's Republic of China, falsely accusing and framing people under Article 138, and gathering a crowd to "smash and grab" under Article 137. The crime of "vandalism and looting" should be investigated for criminal responsibility, and is hereby prosecuted in accordance with the law.

Yours sincerely

Beijing Intermediate People's Court

Procurator Zhao Yunyan

Sun Chengxia

Clerk Yan Mei

April 22, 1983

**Statement of the crimes committed by the defendant Qi Benyu**

Zhao Yunge, Public Prosecutor

(20 May 1983)

Presiding Judge, People's Jurors.

I will now make the following remarks regarding the nature and main circumstances of the crime committed by the defendant Qi Benyu and his criminal responsibility.

First, the defendant Qi Benyu was an active instigator in the false accusation of persecuting the leaders of the Party and the State.

In this connection, I would like to make the following four points.

Firstly, the trial investigation proved that at three meetings held on 16, 18 and 19 July 1967, Qi Benyu had wantonly framed the President of the People's Republic of China, Liu Shaoqi; the Vice-Premiers of the State Council, Deng Xiaoping, Tao Zhu, He Long, Lu Dingyi and Luo Ruiqing; the Vice-Chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress, Peng Zhen; a member of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China, Peng Dehuai; and the Alternate Secretary of the Secretariat of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China, Yang Shangkun. The nature and circumstances of the false accusations against these Party and State leaders are very serious. In particular, his false accusations on the 16th were mainly made to the heads of the propaganda departments of newspapers and radio stations in Beijing and the so-called "five leaders" at the time, including Nie Yuanzi, Kuai Dafu, Wang Dabin, Han Aijing and Tan Houlan. As a result, it created chaos throughout the country and played a significant role in seizing power for Jiang Qing's counter-revolutionary group.

Secondly, on 12 January 1967, Qi Benyu called a meeting of some people from the Zhongnanhai authorities at Diaoyutai and actively instigated the personal persecution of Liu Shaoqi, Deng Xiaoping and Tao Zhu. In his incitement, he said, "There are some things the Central Government cannot say, and when you, the masses, do it, the box will be broken." Someone suggested, "There are guards at Liu Shaoqi's place and they can't get in." Qi Benyu said, "If the guards won't let you in, you can question him whether he is a revolutionary or a royalist?" At Qi Benyu's instigation, that night, 70 to 80 people from the Secretary Bureau of the General Office of the Central Committee stormed into the residence of Liu Shaoqi, Deng Xiaoping and Tao Zhu, and carried out a siege and criticism against Liu Shaoqi, Deng Xiaoping and Tao Zhu. In early July 1967, Jiang Qing, Kang Sheng and Chen Boda plotted: "Liu Shaoqi should be criticised to the extent that he stinks more than Trotsky." Qi Benyu then incited some people from the Zhongnanhai organs to force President Liu Shaoqi to come out and read the big-character posters and carry out a siege on him on July 14, another physical persecution of President Liu Shaoqi. That night, the people who surrounded President Liu Shaoqi reported this siege to Qi Benyu. On that very day, some people from the Zhongnanhai authorities wrote to Wang Dongxing and Premier Zhou Enlai, proposing a general meeting to "criticise Liu Shaoqi". Instead of sending the letter to Premier Zhou, Qi Benyu wrote on the letter, "Please ask Kang Sheng, Chen Boda and Jiang Qing to decide". Chen Boda changed the letter from "criticizing Liu Shaoqi" to "criticizing Liu, Deng and Tao", while Jiang Qing and Kang Sheng proposed "criticizing and raiding the family". On the evening of 17 July, taking advantage of Chairman Mao's visit to the south, Jiang Qing, Kang Sheng, Chen Boda, Qi Benyu and others took the liberty of deciding to criticise Liu, Deng and Tao in the Great Hall of the People.

Next, Qi Benyu instigated and directed the physical persecution of President Liu Shaoqi, Vice Premier Deng Xiaoping and Vice Premier Tao Zhu. After planning with Jiang Qing and others overnight on the 17th, he personally summoned some people from the Zhongnanhai authorities to a meeting at 1am on the 18th, inciting that "Liu Shaoqi was rounded up in Zhongnanhai a few days ago, but on a small scale and with little firepower", and that "we should urgently mobilise" against "Liu, Deng and Tao should carry out a face-to-face struggle, which is your first and foremost task for quite some time", and that the criticism "should have a murderous intensity" and "should be so murderous that you can bow their heads and bend their backs". "We must make them look bad," and "we must not show

them any mercy." "We must carry out the spirit of beating the dogs that fall into the water"<sup>428</sup>, knocking them to the ground and putting one foot in front of the other." He also instructed the immediate establishment of a "battle command to criticize Liu, Deng and Tao" and to "organize teams and put them into fierce battles." From how to set up the "Combat Command", how to collect the so-called "materials", how to draw up the "battle plan", how to organize the teams, how to write the briefings, to the manner, scale, number of participants, date and time of the criticism, and how to organize the battle. Qi Benyu made all the arrangements and decisions himself. At the instigation of Qi Benyu, on the evening of the 18th, more than 300 people in Zhongnanhai criticized Liu Shaoqi and Wang Guangmei and subjected them to personal insults, bending their heads and standing for more than two hours. On the 19th, Qi Benyu again told the people of the "Commanding Office for the Criticism of Liu, Deng and Tao" that "Liu Shaoqi had a good meeting yesterday" and that "the next step is to move on to a small meeting". "Wang Guangmei's meeting can continue. Deng and Tao should be ready to fight in two or three days". On the 20th, Qi Benyu said to the people at the "command headquarters", "Liu's small meeting can be held, and a general meeting can be held against Wang Guangmei." On the 21st, Qi Benyu again called the "command" and said, "Tao Zhu's meeting can be held, and the size of the meeting is 100 or 200 people." On the 23rd, Qi Benyu again instructed some people to struggle against Deng Xiaoping. Under the specific direction of Qi Benyu, some people from the Zhongnanhai organs criticized Tao Zhu and Zeng Zhi twice on the 19th and 21st, Deng Xiaoping and Zhuo Lin on the 29th, and Wang Guangmei on the 24th, 26th and 2nd of August. They also raided their homes one after another during the criticism.

Thirdly, on 12 January 1967, Qi Benyu called a meeting at Diaoyutai with some members of the Secretariat of the Central Office and falsely accused Chairman Zhu De of being "anti-Mao", a "great warlord" and a "great ambitious person". "He instructed them to oppose Zhu De and Kang Keqing. Someone suggested, "We don't know anything about Zhu De and Kang Keqing." Qi Benyu said, "Cao Quanfu was originally Zhu De's secretary, you can ask him to expose them." After the meeting, some people from the Secretary Bureau rounded up Cao Quanfu, and that night, they stormed the residence of Chairman Zhu De and rounded up Kang Keqing, who was saved from persecution because Zhu De was not at home. The next day, some people from Zhongnanhai went to the All-China Women's Federation to "light a fire" and put up big posters falsely accusing Kang Keqing, and put up big posters and slogans falsely accusing Chairman Zhu De at Zhongnanhai's West Gate, Fuyu Street, Tiananmen Square and other places.

Not only that, at the end of the same month, Qi Benyu himself went to Renmin University of China and incited people, saying, "Sun Yang has worked for Zhu De as a secretary, you can engage Zhu De's problems through Sun Yang, don't have any worries." As a result, some people from Renmin University, overnight, posted big slogans and big-character posters on the streets of Beijing, such as "Down with Zhu De" and "Zhu De is a big ambitious and conspiratorial person". Afterwards, a cynical "Liaison Station to Seize Zhu" was set up with the participation of a dozen units, including Renmin University, Beijing University, Qinghua University, Beijing Geological Institute and the PLA Logistics Institute. This "Liaison Station" also sent people around to collect so-called "materials" and

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<sup>428</sup> "To hit the dog when it has fallen into the water" is an idiomatic expression quoted by Lu Xun in his essay "'Fair Play' Should be Put Off for the Time Being". Some Westerners have equated it with the English expression "to hit a man when he is down", but it is not an act of random cruelty, but a policy for proletarian dictatorship to continue to be exercised over the reactionary classes. It was highlighted in Yao Wenyan's speech commemorating the 30th anniversary of Lu Xun's death in October 1966. It was given added significance by Mao Zedong's statement that Lu Xun was the "chief commander of China's cultural revolution". Although this was written prior to the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution (in *On New Democracy* in 1940), it ensured a central place for Lu Xun's writings and views at the start of the GPCR.

fabricated leaflets and tabloids to slander Chairman Zhu De, which were widely distributed. Half a million copies of the newspaper Xinbei Daxue alone were published and sent throughout the country.

It has now been thoroughly ascertained that the false accusations against Chairman Zhu De that emerged in society during the Cultural Revolution were mainly instigated by Qi Benyu at the behest of Jiang Qing.

Fourthly, on 16 June 1966, Qi Benyu, together with Guan Feng, wrote a letter to Jiang Qing, Kang Sheng and Chen Boda falsely accusing Peng Dehuai of "still actively carrying out improper activities after his arrival at the Third Front" and that he was "still a black flag of revisionism until now", proposing that "This hidden danger must be completely removed". By December of the same year, Qi Benyu instructed Zhu Chengzhao of the Beijing Geological Institute and Han Aijing of the Beijing Aviation Institute to send men to Sichuan to hold Peng Dehuai hostage. On 26 December, Qi wrote to Jiang Qing, "Peng Dehuai has now been captured by the Red Guards and will be escorted back to Beijing within a day or two. The students in Beijing have already made preparations for the struggle." Later, Kang Sheng, Chen Boda and Qi Benyu called a meeting of some people from Beijing's higher schools at the Great Hall of the People and instructed Nie Yuanzi, Kuai Dafu, Han Aijing, Wang Dabin and Tan Houlan to organize a meeting to fight against Peng Dehuai. After this meeting, Qi Benyu instructed the staff of the Central Cultural Revolution Office to inform Han Aijing and Wang Dabin that the Beijing Aviation Institute and the Beijing Geological Institute would join together to criticise Peng Dehuai. It was due to Qi Benyu's incitement and instigation that Han Aijing and others were emboldened to carry out serious physical persecution against Peng Dehuai. On July 19, 1967, Han Aijing was the first to hit Peng Dehuai at the so-called "interrogation meeting" held for the first time at Beihang, followed by a group of thugs who swarmed over him, punching and kicking him, knocking him down seven times in succession, bleeding from his forehead, injuring his lungs and breaking two ribs. Peng Dehuai was sent back to his residence with unbearable chest pain and difficulty in breathing. On 26 July, the Beijing Aviation Institute and the Beijing Geology Institute jointly held a "10,000-people meeting to criticise Peng Dehuai", despite the fact that he was so seriously injured. The meeting was also a "jet session". After the meeting, Peng Dehuai was put on a truck for a parade, with two men holding his ears, one holding his head, wrenching his waist, punching and kicking, from the Beijing Aviation Institute to Tiananmen Square via Xijiekou. By this time, Peng Dehuai's hands and arms were all twisted and bruised, and he could no longer walk, so he was carried off the truck.

Qi Benyu bears unshirkable responsibility for the persecution of Peng Dehuai, one of the creators of the Chinese People's Liberation Army and a highly decorated veteran proletarian revolutionary, in such a serious manner.

From the above facts, it can be clearly pointed out that Qi Benyu's false accusation and incitement to persecute President Liu Shaoqi, Chairman Zhu De, Vice-Premier Deng Xiaoping, Vice-Premier Tao Zhu and Peng Dehuai, members of the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee, including his false accusations and persecution of Party and State leaders such as Peng Zhen, He Long, Lu Dingyi, Luo Ruiqing and Yang Shangkun, were entirely part and parcel of the criminal conspiracy of Jiang Qing's counter-revolutionary group. All these crimes of his were in the service of Jiang Qing's counter-revolutionary collective to achieve their counter-revolutionary aim of usurping the Party and seizing power.

Article 90 of the Criminal Law of the People's Republic of China provides that "Any act aimed at overthrowing the regime of the dictatorship of the proletariat and the socialist system and which

endangers the People's Republic of China is a counter-revolutionary crime." The facts are sufficient to prove that Qi Benyu has committed a counter-revolutionary crime by actively carrying out acts to overthrow the regime of the people's democratic dictatorship and the socialist system and seriously endanger the People's Republic of China.

Article 102 of the Criminal Law also stipulates that it is a crime of counter-revolutionary propaganda and incitement to overthrow the dictatorship of the proletariat and the socialist system by means of counter-revolutionary slogans, leaflets or other methods with the aim of counter-revolution. In the criminal activities of Jiang Qing's counter-revolutionary group in framing and persecuting the leaders of the Party and the State, Qi Benyu's direct criminal acts were mainly propaganda and incitement. Therefore, the Court affirmed that the defendant Qi Benyu was guilty of counter-revolutionary propaganda and incitement and must be prosecuted in accordance with the law.

Secondly, the defendant Qi Benyu was the person primarily responsible for the serious consequences of the false accusation and persecution of the Minister of Coal Industry, Zhang Linzhi.

Immediately after Jiang Qing had falsely accused "Zhang Linzhi of being a sworn follower of Peng Zhen" at a meeting in the Great Hall of the People on 14 December 1966, Qi Benyu went to the Beijing Mining Institute and incited the whole university to say that "Zhang Linzhi was a sworn follower of Peng Zhen" and that "Zhang Linzhi was the number one enemy of the Ministry of Coal Industry". He said that "Zhang Linzhi is the number one enemy of the Ministry of Coal Industry" and that "we should concentrate our bombardment and strike hard". Subsequently, Zhang Linzhi was severely persecuted, with one criticism meeting after another, hitting him more viciously than another. At the 28th December meeting, Zhang Linzhi was kicked to the ground and a large wooden sign was inserted behind his neck, causing blood to flow down his neck. After the struggle, Zhang Linzhi was forced to freeze in the courtyard at a temperature of more than minus 10 degrees Celsius. At the struggle meeting on 12 January 1967, Zhang Linzhi was not only beaten and scolded, but also had a large iron hat of over sixty pounds specially made and placed on his head, which was crushed with blood marks. During a torture session, Zhang Linzhi was forced to stand at a ninety-degree bend by pulling him by the hair and even by the neck, and then he was knocked to the ground, shouting "one, two, three", and forced to stand up within three seconds. After one fight, Zhang Linzhi was forced to stand on an iron chair and bend over to "repent", with a bunk roll around his neck and a large sign saying "Zhang Linzhi is a counter-revolutionary revisionist" held in both hands. Zhang Linzhi could not stand it any longer and simply said "I'm tired", but was beaten again, and then he was forced to stand on a stool and hold up the sign. For a month, Zhang Linzhi was subjected to almost daily torture and died of persecution on 22 January 1967. According to a post-mortem examination, Zhang Linzhi's body was covered in bruises and swelling, with more than 30 streaks and wounds alone. Clearly, Zhang Linzhi's death was the result of Qi Benyu's false accusations and incitement to persecution. Qi Benyu also made false accusations against Wan Li, Chen Kehan and Zhao Fan, the secretaries of the Communist Party of China Beijing Committee. This clearly constitutes the crime of false accusation and frame-up. Therefore, I propose that the court hold Qi Benyu criminally responsible in accordance with Article 138 of the Criminal Law and give him the punishment he deserves in accordance with this article, which stipulates that a state employee who commits the crime of false accusation shall be punished severely.

Furthermore, the evidence presented by the court has proved that Tan Houlan and others brought people to Qufu to gather and beat, smash and rob them, entirely at the behest of Qi Benyu, and that the consequences were very serious. According to statistics, Tan Houlan and the others destroyed more than 6,000 cultural relics, burned more than 2,700 ancient books, more than 900 scrolls of various calligraphies and paintings, and more than 1,000 stone steles from the past generations, and

among the destroyed cultural relics, there were more than 70 national protected cultural relics and more than 1,000 rare edition book containers.

Article 137 of China's Criminal Law stipulates that it is strictly forbidden to gather a crowd to "smash and grab". If a person destroys or steals public or private property as a result of a "fight, smash, or robbery", the prime mover shall be punished for robbery. Qi Benyu was the instigator of Tan Houlan's mob hitting, smashing and robbing. Therefore, I would like to bring to the court's attention this offence by Qi Benyu. In accordance with the provisions of Article 137 of the Criminal Law on the crime of gathering a crowd to "beat, smash and rob" and Article 150 on the crime of robbery, the court will decide on the punishment for Qi Benyu.

The court's findings show that the facts of the crime charged in the indictment against Qi Benyu are clear and that the evidence is solid and sufficient.

### **Defence brief for the defendant Qi Benyu**

Counsel Fu Zhiren

Presiding Judge, People's Jurors.

I have been instructed by the defendant Qi Benyu to act as his advocate. Now, based on the facts and evidence in this case and the relevant legal provisions, I would like to present the following defence views.

First, the indictment accuses the defendant Qi Benyu of participating in the criminal activities of Jiang Qing's counter-revolutionary group. In terms of legal responsibility, "participation in criminal activities" necessarily entails a distinction between master and subordinate and a distinction between levels of responsibility. Therefore, it is necessary to conduct a specific analysis to correctly determine their respective responsibilities.

Jiang Qing's counter-revolutionary group's frame-up and persecution of the Party and State leaders was premeditated. This was clearly established in the verdict of the Special Court of the Supreme People's Court against the ten main criminals of the Lin and Jiang counter-revolutionary group. Jiang Qing directly controlled the Liu Shaoqi and Wang Guangmei task force, arrested innocent people and forced them to give false confessions, falsely accusing Liu Shaoqi of being a "traitor" and a "spy". Zhang Chunqiao instructed his student Kuai Dafu to incite the society to "down with Liu Shaoqi" and "down with Deng Xiaoping", and it was Zhang Chunqiao who first instructed his student Kuai Dafu to "beat up the dogs in the water". The first time that Zhang Chunqiao gave his advice was to Kuai Dafu. It was Jiang Qing, Kang Sheng and Chen Boda who decided to criticise and raid the families of Liu, Deng and Tao. The false accusation that He Long was a "bad man" and a "great executioner" also came first from Jiang Qing. Jiang Qing directly interfered with Luo Ruiqing's task force, falsely accusing him of being a "great counter-revolutionary." Jiang Qing also falsely accused Lu Dingyi of being a secret agent and Peng Dehuai of being a "traitor". The indictment accuses the defendant Qi Benyu of falsely accusing Party and State leaders in three speeches on 16, 18 and 19 July 1967, against the background of a series of false accusations and persecution by Jiang Qing, Zhang Chunqiao, Kang Sheng and Chen Boda. The content of his false accusations was basically the same as that of the main culprits, such as Jiang Qing, Zhang Chunqiao, Kang Sheng and Chen Boda, and in some cases, a repetition of the same false accusations. This shows that Qi Benyu's false accusations were subordinate and that the relationship between the principal and the subordinate is clear. It is certain that Qi Benyu's activities were in a secondary position and played a minor role.

Second, the indictment accuses the defendant Qi Benyu of inciting the persecution of Party and State leaders. In this regard, according to the evidentiary materials on file, the following circumstances should be taken into consideration by the court.

1. It is true that Qi Benyu arranged for some people to "set up several battle groups, some of them against Liu Shaoqi, some against Deng Xiaoping, and some against Tao Zhu .....". However, Qi Benyu's action was taken after Jiang Qing, Kang Sheng and Chen Boda had given clear instructions to criticise Liu, Deng and Tao and to raid their homes.

2. Qi Benyu instructed the students to take Peng Dehuai back to Beijing from Sichuan, and it was Jiang Qing who first proposed to "get Peng Dehuai back", after which Qi Benyu assigned the students to act. As for the serious consequences of the physical persecution of Peng Dehuai by students Han Aijing and others, which resulted in serious injuries to Peng Dehuai, Qi Benyu was responsible for this, and Han Aijing and others, who directly committed the assault and beat Peng Dehuai, also had an unshirkable responsibility.

3. In relation to Zhu De, Qi Benyu had stopped some people's attempts to stage a 10,000-strong congress to criticise Zhu De. This is proved by the relevant evidential material in the volume. The defendant Qi Benyu's behaviour showed a certain change in his ideological understanding, which objectively prevented the occurrence of more serious consequences and was a sign that he had stopped continuing with his crime.

In my view: to properly judge the responsibility of the defendant Qi Benyu, a thorough analysis must be made of the specific circumstances of his involvement in the commission of the crime. The above circumstances show that Qi Benyu committed the crime under the specific instructions of Jiang Qing, Kang Sheng and Chen Boda, and was essentially an executor. In the course of committing crimes against Zhu De, Qi Benyu's subjective understanding changed and his objective actions were manifested, which should be acknowledged.

The indictment accuses the defendant Qi Benyu of "slandering and inciting the persecution" of Party and State leaders. According to Articles 138 and 102 of the Criminal Law, both slander and incitement are separate offences. Therefore, the juxtaposition of the two charges of "slander" and "incitement" requires careful study. The facts and evidence in this case show that Qi Benyu's criminal activities against the Party and State leaders were carried out with one subjective purpose and one act. The words of the false accusations existed as a means or content of incitement. In this way, although it can be said that two objects were violated, they are in fact implicated crimes, and one crime should be established in accordance with the principle that a felony absorbs a misdemeanour.

4. On 14 December 1966, Jiang Qing falsely accused "Zhang Linzhi of being a member of Peng Zhen's party", which led to Zhang Linzhi being illegally detained by some people at the Beijing Mining Institute, and illegal acts of physical persecution against Zhang had already taken place. On the 24th, at a mass meeting at the Beijing Mining Institute, Qi Benyu also said that "Zhang Linzhi, the Minister of Coal, is a member of Peng Zhen's party". The indictment charged that "at the instigation of Qi Benyu, some people from the Beijing Mining Institute and the Ministry of Coal repeatedly criticised, tortured and beat Zhang Linzhi. Zhang Linzhi was persecuted to death". The following two points should be made in response to this allegation:

First, the main reason for Zhang Linzhi's persecution came from Jiang Qing's false accusations and incitement. Jiang Qing's false accusation that "Zhang Linzhi was a member of Peng Zhen's gang" was made in public when he met with the head of the Red Guards of the Beijing Mining Institute. Qi

Benyu's speech came after Jiang Qing's incitement, and the content of his false accusation did not go beyond the scope of Jiang Qing's accusation.

Secondly, before Qi Benyu's speech, Zhang Linzhi had already been illegally detained, criticised and beaten. It is true that after Qi Benyu's speech, the physical persecution activities became more serious. But the brutal torture and beating of Zhang Linzhi was carried out directly by some people from the Beijing Mining Institute and the Ministry of Coal. The main murderers were Wang Yechun, Gang Shoutang and others. The iron hat of more than sixty pounds was deliberately created and brought to Beijing by some people from a coal mine in Shanxi. This means that the murderers, who were cruel and vicious at heart, also bear direct legal responsibility for the serious consequences of Zhang Linzhi's persecution and death.

The above two episodes show that Qi Benyu's speech strengthened the effect of Jiang Qing's false accusations against Zhang Linzhi, and had considerable influence on some people in the Beijing Mining Institute and the Ministry of Coal, and had an inescapable responsibility for the consequences. However, as far as the main responsibility is concerned, it should firstly be borne by Jiang Qing, and secondly by those who directly committed the murder, who also bear serious culpability.

5. The indictment alleges that "the defendant Qi Benyu, together with Guan Feng, wrote letters to Jiang Qing, Kang Sheng and Chen Boda in June 1966, falsely accusing Wan Li, Chen Kehan and Zhao Fan of being bad people" and that "they would plot and sabotage if they were still sitting in the Beijing Municipal Party Committee's secretariat". It should be noted here that the responsibility of Qi Benyu and Guan Feng in this matter is not equal. Guan Feng confessed on 21 November 1982 that the joint letter written by him and Qi Benyu was written by Qi Benyu, while the false accusations against Wan Li, Chen Kehan and Zhao Fan were written by Guan Feng. There is no doubt that Qi Benyu and Guan Feng were jointly responsible for the false accusations in their letters. However, in terms of the actual process of forming the false accusation letter, when comparing the two, Guan Feng should be held primarily responsible, while Qi Benyu should be held secondarily responsible.

6. The public prosecutor proposed in his public opinion today that "Tan Houlan's visit to Qufu to gather a crowd for vandalism and robbery was carried out entirely at the behest of Qi Benyu. The consequences were very serious, destroying more than 6,000 cultural relics, burning more than 2,700 ancient books, more than 900 scrolls of various calligraphies and paintings, and more than 1,000 stone monuments from the past", etc. For this crime, Qi Benyu was mainly responsible. However, the material in the volume proves that Tan Houlan brought her people to Qufu on 9 November 1966, and that Chen Boda had intervened in the matter on the 12th, when he had instructed that "the Confucius tomb could be dug up." This means that Chen Boda also had some responsibility. The material in the volume from the Qufu County Cultural Relics Management Committee proves that it was not entirely Tan Houlan who was responsible for the serious consequences described above. Tan Houlan returned to Beijing on 7 December 1966, and a year and a half later, in the second half of 1968, Wang Zhengdao of Qufu County "removed all the things that had been stored in the Confucius Mansion", causing yet another destruction and loss of these things. As far as the consequences are concerned, Wang Zhengdao should be held responsible for his part in the destruction.

The court is invited to consider the above defence arguments and to give the defendant Qi Benyu a lighter sentence in accordance with the law.

#### **Statement on the rebuttal of the defendant Qi Benyu**

Sun Chengxia, Public Prosecutor

(20 May 1983)

Presiding Judge and People's Jurors.

I agree with the defence of the defendant Qi Benyu that he should be distinguished from Jiang Qing, Kang Sheng and Chen Boda in terms of responsibility, and that Qi Benyu cannot be held fully responsible for the frame-up and persecution of Peng Dehuai and Zhang Linzhi.

The defendant Qi Benyu's arguments in court centred on his denial that he had committed counter-revolutionary crimes, saying repeatedly that "I did not invent any of my own activities" and that "I did everything according to the instructions, speeches and arrangements of Kang Sheng, Jiang Qing and Chen Boda". This defence not only does not exonerate him, but also proves that the indictment of this court accuses him of being involved in the criminal activities of Jiang Qing's counter-revolutionary group.

He also said, "Some of the things were done by their underlings and I didn't know about them." This is pure shirking of responsibility and must also be exposed.

First, in its criminal activities of plotting to seize the supreme power of the Party and the State, Jiang Qing's counter-revolutionary group was most notably seeking to overthrow the people's democratic dictatorship by premeditatedly framing and persecuting the Party and State leaders. Following the orders of Jiang Qing, Kang Sheng and Chen Boda, Qi Benyu personally instigated and organised the physical persecution of President Liu Shaoqi, Vice-Premier Deng Xiaoping and Vice-Premier Tao Zhu, and personally incited the campaign to slander Chairman Zhu De in society; he personally instigated and instigated Han Aijing and others to persecute Peng Dehuai, a member of the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee. It is very clear that Qi Benyu's criminal acts were entirely in the service of Jiang Qing's counter-revolutionary group's overthrow of the People's Democratic Dictatorship and the socialist system. When Qi Benyu incited the persecution of the Party and State leaders, he said, "First of all, we must criticize Liu Shaoqi, not only Liu Shaoqi, but also Deng Xiaoping, Tao Zhu, Peng Dehuai, Peng Zhen, Lu Dingyi, Luo Ruiqing and Yang Shangkun," "If you don't stink him up among the masses, he will be a scourge and a hidden danger." "Once such a person comes to power in the future," "what with Nie Yuanzi's faction, what with the Shi Da faction, what with the geological Wang Dabin, what with Tan Houlan, they will all be killed." It is clear that Qi Benyu was well aware of the nature of their criminal activities, not to mention that he had said in unmistakable terms during his counter-revolutionary propaganda and incitement that "we must have the strength to kill" and "we must not be afraid of the king of heaven". "We must turn the world upside down". In a socialist country under the people's democratic dictatorship, "to turn the world upside down" is exactly the same as what Zhang Chunqiao, the main culprit of Jiang Qing's counter-revolutionary group, said about "changing the dynasty"! With all the facts and evidence, Qi Benyu's attempts to deny the counter-revolutionary nature of his crimes are, of course, unsuccessful.

Secondly, during the Cultural Revolution, the political life of our country was plunged into an extremely abnormal state. The Jiang Qing counter-revolutionary group was able to use the power and status they had gained to employ counter-revolutionary double-crossing tactics, using legal and illegal, overt and covert, literary and martial means, in a premeditated attempt to slander and persecute the leaders of the Party and the State, in a vain attempt to achieve their goal of usurping the Party and the State and overthrowing the people's democratic dictatorship. This is exactly what

Qi Benyu did in his involvement in the group's criminal activities. In his defence, he deliberately avoided the specific criminal facts and the conspiratorial means used to engage in the criminal activities with which he was charged by this court, and tried his best to cover up his illegal activities with some veneer of legality in his means, methods and forms of activity. But facts speak louder than words. Some people in the Central Office wrote a letter proposing to "criticise Liu Shaoqi", but the letter was clearly addressed to Wang Dongxing for onward transmission to Premier Zhou. The battle plan that Qi Benyu instructed the "Zhongnanhai Command to Criticize Liu, Deng and Tao" to formulate also explicitly stated that Qi Benyu, as acting director of the General Office of the CPC Central Committee at the time, had the responsibility to present the letter to Premier Zhou in a timely manner under any circumstances, and was in a perfect position to do so. Instead of sending the letter to Premier Zhou, Qi deliberately sent it to Jiang Qing, Kang Sheng and Chen Boda and asked them to decide. After Jiang Qing's group decided to "criticise Liu, Deng and Tao" without permission, when Qi Benyu instigated the face-to-face criticism of President Liu Shaoqi, Vice-Premier Deng Xiaoping and Vice-Premier Tao Zhu, someone said, "We dare not do it casually." But Qi Benyu said, "You are all policy conceptualists, and there are things that the Central Government cannot say, but now that you have done it, the box is broken". Thirdly, in his defence, Qi Benyu also tried to shirk his responsibility by saying, "I only said something at that time", "it was done by the lower side" and "I didn't know". It was precisely during Chairman Mao's visit to the South that Qi Benyu instigated the personal persecution of Liu Shaoqi, Deng Xiaoping and Tao Zhu in Zhongnanhai. The plan was: 'Secrecy must be kept well, and strict attention must be paid to secrecy outside Zhongnanhai; if anyone asks about it, just say that it was a back-to-back mass criticism.' This plan Qi Benyu personally circled and said: 'This mission must be kept secret, don't talk to the outside world, don't make phone calls, this is discipline, I am responsible for any problems.' When Qi Benyu was inciting the false accusation of Chairman Zhu De, he told some people at Renmin University in no uncertain terms, "You must not say that I told you to do it; once you tell me that I told you to do it, you will not be able to do it." Isn't it very clear that these "inventions" of Qi Benyu were not conspiracies or illegal? The Resolution on Certain Historical Issues Since the Founding of the People's Republic, adopted at the Sixth Plenary Session of the Eleventh Central Committee of the Party, clearly states that because our Party made mistakes during the historical period of the "Cultural Revolution", it inevitably gave some opportunists, ambitious elements and conspirators an opportunity to take advantage of the situation. The facts of history relentlessly reveal that Qi Benyu was just such an element.

It is common knowledge that Qi Benyu stole important positions and was unstoppable. It is true that Qi Benyu only said a few words when he instigated Tan Houlan to go to Qufu to "fight, smash and rob", but these few words destroyed a large number of cultural relics and monuments in Qufu. Moreover, Qi Benyu did not just "say a few words" about many things. In the persecution of Liu Shaoqi, Deng Xiaoping and Tao Zhu, Qi Benyu had incited one after another. What is more, the degree of guilt does not depend on the number of words, but on the substance and content of the words, which is a matter of common sense. It is too much of a stretch for Qi Benyu to make such a defence.

Article 11 of China's Criminal Law states that "A person who commits a crime knowing that his or her actions will have socially harmful results and hoping or allowing such results to occur, thus constituting a crime, commits the crime intentionally and is criminally liable for the crime intentionally." In the days when Jiang Qing's gang and Qi Benyu were running amok, there were many cases of people being killed and confessions being extracted by torture. Qi Benyu, who was a member of the Cultural Revolution Group, was well aware of these fascist atrocities. When he incited and persecuted Peng Dehuai and Zhang Linzhi, he was very clear about the harmful

consequences of his actions. Qi Benyu's attempt to shirk his criminal responsibility by saying, "I did not know what was done underneath me", is, of course, untenable.

That concludes my statement.

### **Beijing Intermediate People's Court Criminal Verdict**

(1983) Zhongxingzhi No. 629

Public Prosecutor: Zhao Yunge and Sun Chengxia, Procurators of the Beijing Municipal People's Procuratorate Branch.

Defendant: Qi Benyu, male, aged 52, native of Weihai City, Shandong Province. He was formerly the head of the history section of the Red Flag magazine, a member of the Central Cultural Revolution Group during the Cultural Revolution, and deputy director of the Secretary Bureau of the General Office of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China. He is currently in custody.

Advocate: Lawyer Shifu Zhiren, Beijing Law Yanqian Office.

The Branch Court of the Beijing Municipal People's Procuratorate brought an indictment against the defendant Qi Benyu for his active participation in the criminal activities carried out by Jiang Qing's counter-revolutionary group. The Court held public hearings in accordance with the law, heard the public prosecutor's statement in support of the prosecution, interrogated the defendant, heard the defendant's confession, defence and final statement, listened to the defence, verified the evidence directly related to the case, and found that the defendant Qi Benyu had committed the following crimes:

I. Incited the persecution of such Party and State leaders as Liu Shaoqi, President of the People's Republic of China; Zhu De, Chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress; Peng Zhen, Vice-Chairman of the Standing Committee; Deng Xiaoping, Tao Zhu, He Long, Lu Dingyi and Luo Ruiqing, Vice-Premiers of the State Council; Peng Dehuai, member of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China; and Yang Shangkun, Alternate Secretary of the Secretariat of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China. On 12 January 1967, the defendant Qi Benyu called a meeting with certain members of the General Office of the CPC Central Committee at Diaoyutai and instructed them to round up Liu Shaoqi, Deng Xiaoping and Tao Zhu. That night, 70 to 80 people from the Secretary Bureau of the General Office of the CPC Central Committee broke into the residence of Liu Shaoqi, Deng Xiaoping and Tao Zhu and rounded up Liu Shaoqi, Deng Xiaoping and Tao Zhu. On the 16th, 18th and 19th of July of the same year, Qi Benyu falsely accused Liu Shaoqi, Deng Xiaoping, Tao Zhu, He Long, Peng Zhen, Peng Dehuai, Luo Ruiqing, Lu Dingyi and Yang Shangkun of "betraying the country and seeking glory" at three meetings with Nie Yuanzi, Kuai Dafu, Han Aijing, Wang Dabin, Tan Houlan and certain people from newspapers and radio stations in Beijing as well as the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China, and incited: "Do not be kind to them". On the 14th of the same month, certain people from the Secretarial Bureau of the CPC Central Committee wrote to Wang Dongxing and Premier Zhou Enlai requesting a meeting to criticise Liu Shaoqi in person, but Qi Benyu sent the letter to Jiang Qing, Kang Sheng and Chen Boda. Jiang Qing, Kang Sheng and Chen Boda took the liberty of deciding to criticise Liu Shaoqi, Deng Xiaoping and Tao Zhu, and Qi Benyu immediately deployed and personally organised and directed certain people in Zhongnanhai to carry out numerous criticisms and raids on Liu Shaoqi, Deng Xiaoping, Tao Zhu and their wives, and to carry out physical persecution.

In January 1967, the defendant Qi Benyu falsely accused Chairman Zhu De of being a "black commander". At the instigation of Qi Benyu, some people from the General Office of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China and some students from Renmin University of China put up large slogans and large-character posters in the streets of Beijing saying "Down with Zhu De".

In July 1967, the defendant Qi Benyu instructed Han Aijing, a student of the Beijing Aviation Institute, and Wang Dabin, a student of the Beijing Geological Institute, to persecute Peng Dehuai, a member of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China, causing him to suffer broken ribs and serious injuries.

2. Falsely accusing Zhang Linzhi, Minister of the Coal Industry, and Wan Li, Chen Kehan and Zhao Fan, Secretaries of the Beijing Municipal Committee of the Communist Party of China. On 24 December 1966, at a mass meeting at the Beijing Mining Institute, the defendant, Qi Benyu, at the behest of Jiang Qing, falsely accused Zhang Linzhi, the Minister of the Coal Industry, of being "a member of Peng Zhen's party" and incited them to "concentrate their bombardment and strike hard". At Qi Benyu's instigation, Zhang Linzhi was severely beaten and tortured by certain people from the Beijing Mining Institute and the Ministry of Coal Industry. Zhang Linzhi was persecuted to death.

On 16 June 1966, the defendant Qi Benyu, together with Guan Feng, wrote to Jiang Qing, Kang Sheng and Chen Boda, falsely accusing "Wan Li, Chen Kehan and Zhao Fan of being bad people".

3. He instigated the gathering of people to "smash and grab". In October 1966, the defendant Qi Benyu, through Lin Jie of the Red Flag magazine, instructed Tan Houlan, a student at Beijing Normal University, to bring people to Qufu County, Shandong Province, to "create a revolt against Confucianism". On 9 November, Tan Houlan brought more than 200 people to Qufu and conspired with some local people to destroy a large number of cultural relics in the Confucius Temple, the Confucius Mansion and the Confucius Forest, causing serious damage to state property.

This court investigated and argued seventy-four pieces of various evidence after the court investigation. A large amount of documentary evidence and witness testimony fully demonstrates that the facts of the above-mentioned crimes of the defendant Qi Benyu are clear and the evidence is solid and sufficient to be found. The defendant Qi Benyu confessed to most of the crimes, but did not admit to committing the crime of counter-revolution.

The court held that the defendant Qi Benwei had actively participated in the criminal activities of Jiang Qing's counter-revolutionary group during the Cultural Revolution, incited the persecution of Party and State leaders, falsely accused the leaders of the Ministry of Coal Industry and the Beijing Municipal Committee of the Communist Party of China, and instigated the gathering of people for "vandalism and robbery". This constitutes the crimes of inciting counter-revolutionary propaganda, falsely accusing and framing the leaders of the Ministry of Coal Industry and the CPC Beijing Municipal Committee, and inciting the gathering of people to "smash and grab". In order to uphold the socialist legal system, consolidate the people's democratic dictatorship and defend the socialist system, in accordance with the facts, nature and circumstances of the crime committed by the defendant Qi Benyu and the degree of harm to society, and in accordance with the provisions of Article 9 of the Criminal Law of the People's Republic of China, Article 90, Article 102, Article 138, Article 137, Article 150, Article 64 and Article 52, the verdict is as follows The verdict is as follows:

The defendant Qi Benyu is sentenced to 18 years' imprisonment and four years' deprivation of political rights.

The term of imprisonment shall be calculated from the date of execution of the judgment, and the date of detention prior to the execution of the judgment shall be commuted to one day of imprisonment for each day of detention.

If you do not accept this judgement, you may appeal to this court within ten days from the second day of receiving this judgement, to the Beijing High People's Court.

Beijing Intermediate People's Court, Criminal Trial Division

Tang Genfa, Presiding Judge

People's Judges Gao De'an

People's Judges Ma Weixie

November 2, 1983

This copy is the same as the original

Clerk Li Jing

## Postscript

16 May 2016 marked the iconic date of the 50th anniversary of the Proletarian Cultural Revolution launched by Chairman Mao. 8 May 2016 marked my 85th birthday. And on 24 February 2016, the University of Hong Kong Shenzhen Hospital diagnosed me with advanced adenocarcinoma that had metastasised and spread. But I am happy to see that "the years have left their mark" and that my Memoirs, which took five years of hard work and repeated revisions, was published in Hong Kong on the good day before 16 May with the help of the China Cultural Revolution History Publishing Company Limited in Hong Kong.

In January 1986, shortly after I had completed my 18-year sentence in Qincheng prison and settled in Shanghai, I was approached by an American publisher who had first paid US\$400,000 in royalties to my personal bank account to buy the rights to my memoirs. Knowing what they wanted me to write, I did not hesitate to refuse and immediately returned the US\$400,000 they had already wired to my account.

Over the years since then, many people, with all sorts of motives, have come to me, persuaded me, and asked me to write my Memoirs. I have politely declined. I will write it, of course, but I will not be swayed by the ideas of others' opinions. I am also thinking and waiting. The heavy work of writing, coupled with what is described in the Memoirs, has taken up almost all of my time. This task, which I had to complete before I was born, has just been put off until now, and it has come to this.

The Memoirs is my final work left to history. My position, my views, my values, as expressed in the Memoirs, are clear. The reader will understand them all when they read it. But I value even more the authenticity of the historical facts I describe in the Memoirs. The authenticity of historical information should be of utmost importance to those who study history. I take responsibility for the historical veracity of what I describe in the Memoirs. However, for reasons known to all of you, I no longer have the means to verify archival materials, or the ability to interview other relevant parties, and it is inevitable that there are inaccuracies, incompleteness, or omissions based on memory alone. If there are any inaccuracies or errors, I invite those in the know to correct them. However, I hope that when the Cultural Revolution archives are unfrozen and made public in the future, there will be relevant archival materials to support the objectivity and truthfulness of all the events and facts described in my Memoirs. I believe that one day, even those who disagree with my position and views will acknowledge that all the things I have said are true.

Finally, I would like to thank all the friends who have helped me to complete this Memoir. Special thanks to China Cultural Revolution History Publishing Ltd. and to my friend Peng Wei in Dujiangyan for his care and help over the past five years! To my comrades Meng Fanhua, Guo Yafu, Gao Haiqing, Feng Guozhi and Wang Hui, who have successively participated in and helped me to compile the manuscript, I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude!

Qi Benyu

Shanghai Ward, March 21, 2016

## Chapter 5: Continuing the Revolution

### Chapter One: Shanghai librarian

In January 1986, I was released from Qincheng prison after having served a full 18 years in prison. The prison authorities told me that, according to the Central Government's regulations, I could not live in a big city. They were going to arrange for me to go back to my hometown of Weihai in Shandong Province. I disagreed because I had left my hometown a long time ago and now there was no family left in my hometown. And as my wife lives and works in Shanghai, I was going to go there. Since I was sentenced to eighteen years' imprisonment by the Special Court in 1983 for counter-revolutionary crimes, my wife had thus become a family member of a counter-revolutionary and could not continue to work in Zhongnanhai, and it was arranged for her to work as an accountant for the Shanghai Fruit Company. As I had a good reason, it was arranged for me to go to Shanghai. When Guan Feng was released from prison, even though he had not been sentenced, they wanted to arrange for him to go to his hometown of Dezhou, Shandong Province. Guan Feng said no because his wife had been working for the Red Flag magazine. Guan Feng then continued to live in Beijing until his death in 2005.

As I was not yet of retirement age when I was released from prison, I was put to work in the Shanghai Library as a librarian. I worked in the Shanghai Library for a total of over five years.

In the first four years, I was placed in the Antiquities Department of the Shanghai Library, where my main job was to collate Tang Shaoyi's historical archives.

Tang Shaoyi was the first Premier of the Republic of China. Chairman Mao once mentioned him in one of his speeches. He said that he was able to move up and down, and that after he was no longer Premier, he went on to become the governor of Guang Zhongshan County and even made it a model county. Chairman Mao said, "Are our Communist Party cadres still inferior to Tang Shaoyi, who can only go up but not down?"

Tang Shaoyi was eventually killed by a military intelligence agent sent by Dai Li<sup>429</sup> during negotiations with the Japanese, and he was always said to have surrendered to the Japanese and become a traitor. But in fact, it was an unjust case. I found out in the archives that the contact he went to have with the Japanese was arranged by Chiang Kai-shek. In the archives, there is a personal letter from Chiang Kai-shek to him as evidence. Later, the Guomintang in Taiwan also rehabilitated him.

By my fifth year, I was working mainly on classifying modern newspaper abstracts. As the work was not very stressful, the environment was more relaxed. I co-authored a book with a colleague from the Shanghai Library called Gao Hongxing, entitled *The Psychopathic Psychology of Great Figures in History*. According to the rules, I could not publish the book under my real name of Qi Benyu. When I was released from prison and settled in Shanghai, I was denied the right to be called "Qi Benyu" under some legal requirement, and I had to use the alias "Qi Wen", which I had used during my time

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<sup>429</sup> Dai Li (1897- 1946), was the head of the Guomintang's Military Bureau of Investigation and Statistics of the National Government Military Commission. As such he was a feared assassin and torturer, and responsible for the White Terror that was imposed on Communists and democratic personages opposed to Chiang Kai-shek. He was deputy director (but the actual leader) and the director of the Sino-US Special Technical Cooperation Institute which killed and persecuted dissidents opposed to the Guomintang. Western press correspondents compared him to the Nazi Heinrich Himmler. Dai Li died in a plane crash in 1946.

in the Shanghai underground, to obtain an identity card. The book had to be signed as "Qi Wen" before it was allowed to be published. The first edition sold out very quickly, but the second edition was not allowed to be published.

In 1991, when I reached the age of 60, I retired from the Shanghai Library. I was told that as I had been sentenced to 18 years' imprisonment with the additional sentence of four years' deprivation of political rights, I had only one year and three months' full service. The time I had worked before I was imprisoned and the four years of deprivation of political rights after I was released from prison could not be counted as my service "by law", and I was only entitled to one and a half years of post-retirement service at that rate.

## Chapter 2: Continuing the Revolution on the Cultural Front

1. The consensus between Guan Feng and me: Continuing the revolution on the cultural front
2. Compiling the Chinese Dictionary of Yi Studies
3. Compiling a translation of the Analects and a Critique of Confucius
4. Compiling a collection of treatises on Chinese historical figures
5. Guan Feng's Writings and My Other Writings
6. Some of Guan Feng's correspondence with me

### 1. The consensus between Guan Feng and me: Continuing the revolution on the cultural front

In 1981, Guan Feng was released from Qincheng prison after he was sentenced to be exempted from criminal punishment, and was reunited with his wife, Zhou Ying, who settled in Beijing. After Guan Feng was released from prison, he and Zhou Ying asked around for news of me while I was still serving my sentence in Qincheng, trying to get in touch with me. I soon contacted Guan Feng after I was released from prison, and soon after that I went to Beijing and met him at his home. It had been nearly 20 years since we met again, and we both had mixed feelings.

Guan Feng and I discussed what else we could do in this world.

Chairman Mao had said, "Today's China is a development of the historical China; we are Marxist historicists and we should not cut ourselves off from history. From Confucius to Sun Yat-sen, we should give a summary and inherit this precious heritage."

Guan Feng and I soon agreed that we would continue the revolution on the cultural front. We were both originally engaged in culture, Guan Feng specialising in philosophy and I in history. Now people who deny the Cultural Revolution are attacking us, the Central Cultural Revolution Group, for destroying all culture and for denying traditional Chinese culture. Now the two of us should join hands and work together to study Chinese history and Chinese culture from Confucius to Sun Yat-sen, as taught by Chairman Mao, and to critically inherit all the precious heritage of our ancestors. We should use the results of our research to prove with facts that we are not only the critics and destroyers of the dross in Chinese traditional culture; but also the protectors and promoters of the essence of Chinese traditional culture.

### 2. Compiling the Chinese Dictionary of Yi Studies

After discussion, Guan Feng and I agreed to start our research work with the Yi Jing.

Guan Feng had been studying the Yi Jing for a long time. In prison, I also thought and studied the Yi Jing over and over again using the method of "mindful reading".

Because of its profound content, the Yi Jing contains very rich and profound ideas. Over the centuries, many scholars have explored and studied it in depth, and have made considerable achievements. On the other hand, it has been used by many people to tell fortunes. Therefore, we have discussed the compilation of a "Dictionary of Yi Jing" to bring together the historical research findings and to lay the foundation for further research in the future.

The amount of work involved in this project was too large for a few people to accomplish. We agreed to set up an editorial committee and invited famous scholars such as Cai Shangshi, Hu Daojing and Su Yuanlei to join us.

Cai Shangshi was the Vice President of Fudan University at the time. At first, when I went to him, he had some misgivings, probably because Guan Feng and I were both "people who had been sentenced to imprisonment". But Mr Cai's son-in-law was very trusting and supportive of us. He told Mr Cai that Qi Benyu and Guan Feng had been sentenced and imprisoned because of political struggles, and that they were not criminals who killed or set fire to people. Only then did Mr. Cai agree to head this editorial board.

Mr. Hu Daojing is the greatest authority on Daoism in China, and the Yi Jing is the basic theory of Daoism.

Mr. Su Yuan Lei was already a well known scholar in the 1930s. Mr. Su was a good drinker, and he always started with a drink no matter who he interacted with. I could not drink, but I drank three glasses with him anyway.

After years of hard work, the Chinese Dictionary of Yi Studies was finally published and released by the Shanghai Ancient Books Publishing House in 2008. During his lifetime, Guan Feng wrote a dedication to the dictionary, except that like me he could not use his real name, Guan Feng, and had to use a pseudonym - Gu Di.

In the midst of the "Chinese cultural fever" and in the preparation of the Chinese Dictionary of Yi Jing, we saw that there were some backward things that had become fashionable from dregs, and that the superstition of misinterpreting the Yi Jing to tell fortunes had become one of the hot spots in the so-called propagation of traditional culture. In the early 1990s, editor Peng Weiguo of the China Bookstore joined us in planning and publishing the book *Ten Days on the Zhou Yi*, in order to compile a booklet that would give people a full understanding of the essence of the book's ideas, but would also enable them to reject the superstitious content of divination, with a view to making a small contribution to the spread of good Chinese culture. Mr Hu Daojing, a renowned scholar, wrote the foreword for the publication of this book.

Published nearly twenty years ago, *The Ten Days of Zhou Yi* has been welcomed and encouraged by a wide range of readers. First, second, third and fourth editions have been published, with tens of thousands of copies distributed. It has also been published and distributed in Taiwan and Hong Kong under the title "Ten Talks on Zhou Yi", and included in their "Modern Humanities Library" and "Humanities History Series". In 2003, when the book was published by the Century Publishing Group as a supplement, we adopted the title "Ten Lectures on Zhou Yi".

### **3. Compiling a translation of the Analects and a Critique of Confucius**

Confucius and the Analects are undoubtedly the most influential thinkers and writings in China for over two thousand years. If we are to inherit this precious legacy of Chinese history and culture, we must not fail to study Confucius and the Analects carefully. In the 1950s and 1960s, two schools of thought were formed in the history of Chinese philosophy that had a profound influence on the study of Confucius: one school, represented by Feng Youlan<sup>430</sup>, was known as the "abstract school of

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<sup>430</sup> Feng Youlan (1895-1990), was a philosopher and educator. In 1918, he graduated from the Philosophy Department of Peking University. In 1924, he received a Ph.D. in philosophy from Columbia University, under the tutelage of John Dewey. The author of "History of Chinese Philosophy", "A Brief History of Chinese

inheritance", while the other, represented by Guan Feng, was known as the "critical school of inheritance". The commentary on Confucius is one of the focal points of the debate between these two schools. Feng Youlan argued that Confucius was a revolutionary school, which was in line with the trend of the times. The two schools of thought were still at peace with each other at the Confucius Symposium held in Qufu in 1962.

This academic debate, we believe, is perfectly normal and necessary to promote cultural prosperity and progress. Unfortunately, during the Cultural Revolution, this normal academic debate turned into a political conflict. Against that backdrop, we supported the revolt led by Tan Houlan in Qufu against Confucius, and criticised scholars and experts who held different views, which was totally wrong. We have our share of responsibility, and we take this opportunity to apologise to them.

During the later stages of the Cultural Revolution, Feng Youlan wrote an article abandoning his original views. Guan Feng and I were both imprisoned in Qincheng prison and deprived of any right to speak. After the Cultural Revolution, there was a new wave of respect for Confucius, advocated by modern Neo-Confucianism. What attitude do we still hold towards Confucius, and towards the Analects of Confucius? We think we should have our voices heard, we want to make our attitudes known, and we should return to academic controversy. To this end we co-edited A Translation of the Analects and a Critique of Confucius, which in China we could only publish under the signatures of Gu Di, Zhou Ying and Qi Wen. In September 2012, the China Cultural Revolution History Press in Hong Kong published and released the book under our real names: Guan Feng, Zhou Ying and Qi Benyu.

We believe that in order to study Confucius and the Analects of Confucius, it is first necessary to understand the original meaning of the Analects with a correct grasp. Over the past two thousand years, there have been more than two thousand books of commentaries on the Analects by scholars of all generations. The most influential one in China at present is Mr. Yang Bojun's Translation and Commentary on the Analects, which has been distributed in upwards of 600,000 copies and is regarded as the best commentary and has been chosen as a school textbook. After careful examination and research, we have concluded that there are 317 inaccuracies and errors in Yang Bojun's translation of the Analects, and we have corrected them and proposed what we believe to

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Philosophy", "New Compilation of Chinese Philosophy History", "The Six Books of Zhenyuan", etc., these became important classics in the 20th century, and had a profound impact on modern and contemporary Chinese academic circles and even foreign academic circles. On 1 October 1949, Feng Youlan attended the founding ceremony of New China and listened to Mao Zedong proclaim the founding of the People's Republic of China from the Tiananmen Square. On October 5, 1949, Feng Youlan wrote a letter to Mao Zedong. The letter said: "I have helped the Guomindang by speaking on feudal philosophy in the past, but now I am determined to correct my mistake. .... I plan to rewrite the History of Chinese Philosophy, which I wrote twenty years ago, with a scientific and historical perspective, within five years, as directed by the CPPCC Common Programme, as a new edition. It is true, as you say, that we must know not only China today, but also China yesterday." Chairman Mao quickly wrote a letter to Feng Youlan. "Mr. Youlan: The letter of October 5th has been received. We welcome people to make progress. People like you have made mistakes in the past and are now ready to correct them. If they can be put into practice, it is good. There is no need to rush for results. It can be changed slowly, and it is always advisable to adopt an honest attitude. This is the answer. Best regards! Mao Zedong, October 13th." In the 1973 Criticise Lin and Criticise Confucius Movement, he was part of the Liang Xiao writing team and successively published articles such as "Criticism of Confucius and Self-Criticism of My Past Thoughts of Respecting Confucius" and "Restoration and Anti-Restoration is a Two-Line Struggle". In October 1976, the Gang of Four lost power, Liang Xiao's writing team was disbanded, and Feng was also detained for review. From 1977 to 1979, he was listed as a member of the counter-revolutionary group and was criticised, and asked to "clarify" his relationship with the Gang of Four. In 1979, he was allowed to participate in a seminar on the history of Chinese philosophy and publish articles.

be the correct commentary. The correct interpretation of the Analects must first distinguish between the original meaning of the Analects and the commentaries added to it by later generations, which are contrary to the original meaning. Academic debates on the exegesis of ancient texts are now rare. The Analects, however, is an extremely important work in traditional Chinese culture, and scholarly debate on its original meaning should have its significance.

On the basis of the translation of the Analects, which strives to accurately grasp the original meaning of the Analects, we have sought to use the Marxist perspective as a guide to provide a factual analysis and evaluation of the life and thought of Confucius. In this book, we have once again maintained and made clear our attitude: we uphold our claim to a critical succession of Confucius and do not agree with the current practice of some people who want to make Confucius a god again.

#### **4. Compiling a collection of treatises on Chinese historical figures**

My expertise is in the study of history. And I owe my interest and study of history to following Chairman Mao's side as I read and listened to his teachings. Chairman Mao's study and emphasis on history and his knowledge of ancient and modern history is, in my opinion, unmatched by anyone in the Party. Chairman Mao saw the study of history, together with the study of Marxism and the current situation, as the three main guarantees of revolutionary victory. Chairman Mao said, "Without the theory of the revolution, without knowledge of history and without a deep understanding of the actual movement, it is impossible to achieve revolutionary victory." And R. Trier, Mao's biographer, said of Chairman Mao: "The sword of military power leans on the side of the history book."

Following Chairman Mao's reading of history and his books, I saw that Chairman Mao had commented directly and indirectly on most of the influential historical figures in China's more than two thousand years of history. The idea of writing a collection of commentaries on Chinese historical figures came to me. I wrote part of it in the early 1960s, and when I was sent to Qincheng prison in 1968, I wrote it retrospectively from my memory, even though there were not many reference materials. After I was released from prison, I looked for references to correct and continue writing, and wrote about 200 historical figures in total. My project began with the Yellow Emperor, the Great Yu, and ended with Hong Xiuquan and Sun Yat-sen, including emperors and generals, reckless heroes, saints, philosophers and scholars, and about two million words in six volumes. Among them, the treatise on the characters of the pre-Qin dynasty, the treatise on the characters of the Qin dynasty, the treatise on the characters of the two Han dynasties, and the treatise on the characters of the three kingdoms have been published in a single volume. I hope to see these books in my lifetime, too. And these books can only be published and distributed in China under the name Qiwen.

#### **5. Guan Feng's Writings and My Other Writings**

Guan Feng is an expert in philosophy, with a deep and sophisticated study of Laozi and Zhuangzi in particular. Guan Feng's publication of *Understanding Laozi (Laozi Tong)*, in its first and second volumes, with 1.4 million words, won the first prize of the Jilin Changbai Mountain Academic Award and the first prize of the 1996 Social Science Award of the World Taiji Society of Belgium. Guan Feng

and Zhou Ying have also published Hui Shi<sup>431</sup> Thought and Pre-Qin Nomenclature, and Law and Jurisprudential Genesis.

Over the years, I have also published, on my own, and in collaboration with others, the following books:

*Sun Chengzong*, published by China Books.

*Commentary on Li Xiucheng*, published by Hong Kong Tiandi Books Ltd.

*The Perverted Psychology of the Great Man*, published by Times Literary Publishing House

*The Dictionary of Sun Tzu's Art of War*, published by Shanghai Science and Technology Publishing House.

*Ten Lectures on Mozi*, published by Shanghai People's Publishing House

*Ten Lectures on the Art of War by Sun Tzu*, published by Anhui Literature Publishing House.

*The First Series of Ten Discourses* (in eight volumes).

*Ten Schools of Thought on Yi*, published by the Shanghai People's Publishing House.

*Ten Schools of Thought on Guan*, published by the Shanghai People's Publishing House.

*Ten Schools of Thought on Lao*, published by the Shanghai People's Publishing House.

*Ten Schools of Thought on Sun*, published by the Shanghai People's Publishing House.

*Ten Schools of Thought on Mo*, published by the Shanghai People's Publishing House.

*Ten Schools of Thought on Zhuang*, published by the Shanghai People's Publishing House.

*Ten Schools of Thought on Buddhism*, published by Shanghai People's Publishing House.

*The Continuation of the Modern and Ancient Curiosities*, published by Jiangxi Baihua Publishing House.

*The Three Kingdoms Illustrated*, published by the Shanghai Science and Technology Literature Press.

There is also a completed edition of Qu Yuan's "Li Sao", which is in the process of being contacted for publication.

## **6. Some of Guan Feng's correspondence with me**

After I was released from prison, I resumed contact with Guan Feng. During our joint efforts to continue the revolution, we often exchanged letters. Some of the correspondence is reproduced below.

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Old Qi.

A friend lent me Mu Xin's memoirs. I read it at once. I immediately ordered two copies from the Central Party History Publishing House, which will arrive in the next few days, and will send you a copy at once. I hope you will read and think about it carefully, and we can study it together when you come to Beijing (I hear that you will come to Beijing soon).

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<sup>431</sup> Hui Shi (370 BC-310 BC), was a famous politician and philosopher of the Song Dynasty, and also a close friend of Zhuangzi. He was the main organizer and supporter of the united anti-Qin war. He advocated that Wei, Qi and Chu should unite against Qin.

Another interesting piece of information: Wang has bought two residences in the suburbs of Beijing, a fancy car, and employs eight car drivers, cooks, typists, nannies and so on. This was told to us by a friend on the phone and is reliable.

I heard Zhou Ying say that you are calling from the hospital. What is the disease? I miss you very much.

Guan Feng  
Late 2/4/95

My body is recovering.

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Lao Qi.

I received a letter on 11 March and replied that evening as follows.

(First) How many letters did you receive, and are there any that you have not found? (1) The registered manuscript was returned, but according to the letter, it was received, but among them were the "General Preface to the Series of Ten Writers" and the "Notes for Publication", which should also have been received, but the letter did not say so. (2) At the same time (your letter of 27 January), three letters were sent, written three times in succession, with different dates at the end of the letters. The first letter is from me to you and to Chen Ningning, my letter to you and Zhou Ying's "Introduction to the translation and criticism of two articles of Zhuangzi", which, judging from the letters, you received; the second letter is more about political scenarios and opinions, including our confused friend Yunnian (you will know who he is when you think about it) and Liu Xiaogang, who says not to tell Chen Ningning about the book, lest it should be passed on to Beijing and cause unnecessary trouble. I am not satisfied with the "General Preface", which can be revised, but not to the right. I also said that in view of the political climate, it seemed inappropriate to use the "General Preface", so I also proposed a "Publication Note", and asked for a choice between the two, or simply not to declare war (i.e. not to have the "General Preface" or the "Note"), and would see when the time came to discuss it. The principles mentioned in the "General Preface" or the "Notes for Publication" can be implemented without the need to hang the signboard first. Have you received this letter? Please look it up (there is a lot in it that is not appropriate for outsiders to say). But you must have received the second draft of the General Preface and the Notes for Publication. I am sending you a copy of the third letter, the unaddressed one, which you have finally found.

(Second) "Ten Schools of thought on Zhuang", you said to follow my opinion, so let me make my opinion clearer.

(1) The list of selected writers - (in chronological order) Hu Shi, Feng Youlan, Lu Zhenyu<sup>432</sup>, Guo Moruo, Hou Weizhai, Yang Rongguo, Li Taiyong, Ren Jiyu, Guan Feng and Zhang Hengshou.

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<sup>432</sup> Lu Zhenyu (1900-1980), a Marxist historian who had written a large number of papers on the construction of historical theory. In 1955, he was elected as a member of the Chinese Academy of Sciences (academician). His main works include "Prehistoric Chinese Society Studies", "Chinese Society in the Yin and Zhou Periods", "History of Chinese Political Thoughts", "A Concise General History of China" and "A Brief History of Chinese Nation". In 1963, Lu Zhenyu lost his freedom, but insisted on historical research, and wrote a 200,000-character "History Review" and 3,000 poems (collected as "Study Yin Ji Chu Cao"). During the Cultural Revolution, he was imprisoned for eight years.

(2) Zhang Taiyan is not selected. His "Stories of Zhuangzi " and "Interpreting Qiwu" are not only pre-Wang Si's, but also importantly, they have trained in the ancient style, and if they are selected for the thesis series, they will mess up their own examples.

(3) I don't want Chen Gu should be the editor-in-chief, nor do I choose his stuff (his present-day commentary and translation of Zhuangzi is nothing if you remove the commentary and translation) but mainly because this man cannot be trusted and is not with us. He and Chen Ningning were working together to trick us, almost (if I hadn't finally found the letter in the manuscript Chen Ningning sent me, I would have been fooled). How can you work with such people? Propaganda for others, but also being used by others, and even tricking our ghosts, why not put him aside? This is especially true in the current political situation. I think it is absolutely out of the question that Chen Gu should be the editor-in-chief and cited as one of the ten commentators. In the past six months, I also got to know Chen.

(4) Chen Ningning is at your discretion. You can be the editor-in-chief and find an associate editor, and Chen Ningning can also be an associate editor, but the power cannot be given to her. I still have the original idea of grabbing some time and dealing with some things, so there is room for change. You have to be careful with Chen Ningning.

The fake foreign devils<sup>433</sup> are really abominable. Most of the old Chinese and ethnic Chinese are patriotic, and it was the American Chinese who initiated the counter-attack against Li Zhisui's insult to Chairman Mao. In the years after the founding of the country, those who ran away from the mainland to the United States became Chinese Americans, and those who ran away from Taiwan to the United States became Chinese Americans, and they came to the mainland again, either to do business and make money (often ungrateful money), or to act as scholars, to make political and honorary capital, these people have no patriotic heart and are mostly fake foreign devils. You should be very careful when dealing with such people, and it is best not to deal with them. I wonder if this is clear? If the principles are the same, the specific things are not clear, but we can also understand them.

(Third) In Taiwan's "Ten Schools of Commentaries", there is something and there is nothing. There may be several types, and no one can be selected from Taiwan (if it is, there is nothing wrong with it). Regarding the Ten Schools on Confucianism (or On Confucianism), never choose a new Confucian in Taiwan. Consider choosing "The Original Confucianism" by Xiong Shili, who is politically friendly to the Communist Party. Taiwan's new Confucianists praised him, and their academic views have not changed. Unlike Feng Youlan who surrendered to the Communist Party during the Cultural Revolution, criticizing Confucianism, some people criticized him for not fleeing to Taiwan, and staying in the mainland, and surrendering to the Communist Party—the class and party nature of others. Very strong!

(Fourth) The Dictionary of Zhou Yi, you take care of it - it is best to read it yourself and not to change my words indiscriminately, and never to delete them.

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<sup>433</sup> Fake foreign devils refers to Chinese soldiers who speak Chinese but wear foreign military uniforms. The fake foreign devil originated in 1862, when American Frederick Townsend Ward formed the so-called "The Ever Victorious Army", the leading officers of which were true foreigners, while the ordinary soldiers were all Chinese. Since the advent of Lu Xun's *The True Story of Ah Q*, the fake foreign devil, like Ah Q, has become a synonym for certain types of characters. In this work, the author perfectly dissected the soul of the fake foreign devils and showed the world their ridiculous and hateful faces from three main aspects: the reactionary nature of engaging in fake revolutions, destroying revolutions, and suppressing revolutions. At the beginning of the Cultural Revolution, *The True Story of Ah Q* was promoted by Mao Zedong and widely read.

Zhou Ying said she would like to write a few sentences:

Comrade Qi Wen: I want to say a few words, that is, this situation we are in, often cheated by people, we want to do something which is very, very difficult. In society, Lao Guan and I are not capable of doing anything, only you can still get a few things done, but there are many difficulties. The purpose of our work is first of all to propagate the basic principles of Marxism-Leninism-Mao, and academic research guided by those principles, and also to leave behind something that will stand up in history and be beneficial to the people. Because we are in a difficult situation, we have to be flexible about some things. For example, in the ten theories on the selection of people, there must first of all be academic standards, social influence, and at least there should be patriotism, national self-esteem. If there are people of poor academic standards and average character who can help financially (to publish a book), they can also make friends and can be selected for the books we compile. If a businessman is willing to finance the publication of a book, he can also be given the title of advisor to editor-in-chief, etc. Those who are uneducated, who have no name, no influence, and who are not friendly to us, why choose their work? We must also behave ourselves and not be used by the fake foreign devils. Chen Guying<sup>434</sup> is not a good person. He came to China because he wanted to make use of the fame and fortune given by mainlanders like Zhang [Xin] Guanjie<sup>435</sup>, and use it as capital to cheat people in foreign countries or in Hong Kong and Taiwan. Now Xin Guanjie can't take advantage of him. The Confucius Foundation has also been taken over by Shandong. Xin has no money (he can't get the money from his association. He will not give Chen Guying any money from the sale of his books), and he has no name. In this situation, Chen Guying had to find new people to use, and he was going to run for election in Taiwan in order to get these people to repay him in Taiwan. There is nothing famous about Taiwanese scholars (in social sciences) and it is not so easy for them to make a name for themselves in the mainland. Xin has been in crisis since the second half of last year, and this year no longer counts as a Foundation person. That's all for now. I have news for you: Xin Guanjie sued the Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Civil Affairs for the foundation, and published an anonymous article in a Hong Kong reactionary newspaper cursing Gu Mu (Xin's backstage not long ago), which was used by Taiwan's Central Daily News. It's a good show. I'm afraid it's going to end tragically for Xin. Please read this letter and burn it. This letter is sent by registered mail, and I hope you will tell me as soon as you receive it.

Write back if you have anything to discuss.

Guan Feng Zhou Ying

March 11, 1996

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Lao Qi.

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<sup>434</sup> Chen Guying (1935-), a well-known scholar of Taoist culture, studied at the Department of Philosophy and the Institute of Philosophy of National Taiwan University from 1956 to 1963; after graduation, he taught at National Taiwan University and the University of California, Berkeley, Beijing University, etc., and has worked in the Department of Philosophy of Beijing University since 2010.

<sup>435</sup> Xin Guanjie, (1922-) was a researcher and recipient of a State Council Special Contribution Allowance. In his early years, he participated in the revolution, first engaging in the anti-Japanese national salvation movement, as a youth worker, and later engaged in journalism, propaganda, foreign affairs, and academic research. In his later years, he retired from the Institute of Philosophy of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences.

I have received the previous letter and the introduction. I was planning to wait two days to write, but I went out and bought two books unexpectedly. One is Chen Jining's "Mou Qizhong's True Deception, False Deception"<sup>436</sup>, the size of the book is 16 mo<sup>437</sup>, 208 pages, which fully exposes Mou Qizhong's "Nande Company" (it is a magazine, the No. 1 edition of "Author's World" published in Anhui in 1988). It could be said to be a rallying point for private enterprise, not just a Mou Qizhong issue. It seems that Mou must have recoiled as it was not dealt with and is still at large. I hope you will also buy a copy and take a serious look. I also read it in a cursory manner, with few chapters to read in detail. The other book is *Meditations on the Rise and Fall of the Soviet Union*, by Li Zhencheng, published by Reform Press. I had a cursory look and focused on a few chapters. The book provides some little-known information, and the basic position is good, except that the author suffers from a common problem of the times - a fear of the "left". But it is still very enlightening and useful. I am going to read these two books carefully. I suggest you also take a good look at them. The question you are thinking about may find a fundamental answer or useful inspiration in these two books.

In 1986 and a little later, when I was involved in a copyright lawsuit with Xin (I don't know if you know anything about this? Something to talk about in detail later). He wrote the story and I revised it. Later, he said he had published it in the Shanxi Youth Legal Digest, but forgot to bring it with him when he arrived. It was only after a long time that I found out that there was no such magazine in Shanxi. I was cheated by him a lot. I had a long article on "On the Strategic Problems of the Technological Revolution" (for developing countries), which he said he would help me publish, and he borrowed several books from me and copied my "The Triumph of the Intellect - The War of Liberation of the Chinese People" (outline), all of which he never returned and I never saw again. I also took him to see Comrade Liu Geping ..... This is a bad man. He seemed earthy, like a peasant from a peasant background, not trying to be very good at pretending, very good at deceiving people. Later someone took the so-called reportage he had written before meeting me (at the beginning of the "Cultural Revolution") and made vicious rumours and curses against me. Over the years, he had published several books on the Cultural Revolution at Chen Yushu's publishing house in Hong Kong, and Chen Yushu had given Guan Chenghua a set. He did not know Chen Yushu, but probably heard his name from me and knew that there was a prosperous publishing house, which he had broken into on his own, and was taking advantage of it (Chen Yushu is also an opportunist and a bad capitalist who has victimised our country). Recently a book was published in Beijing, "The Short Spring and Autumn", about the "era" of Hua Guofeng, published by Beijing Red Flag Publishing House and written by Shi Dongbing<sup>438</sup>. The publisher is an impostor and has nothing to do with the

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<sup>436</sup> Mou Qizhong (1941-), former Chairman of Nande Group. He was a controversial figure who once held the titles of China's "richest man" and "first deceiver" at the same time. His first job was a boiler worker in a local glass factory. He started with 300 yuan and did three major things: aircraft bartering, satellite launch, and development of Manzhouli, a city in the Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region which experimented with capitalist reforms. He was sentenced to life imprisonment in 2000 for the Nande Group letter of credit fraud case. Later, because of his good behaviour, this was changed to 18 years imprisonment. He was released in 2016.

<sup>437</sup> A technical publishing term referring to a book with a page size of 10 x 17 cm.

<sup>438</sup> Shi Dongbing (1950-) a former teacher and member of the Communist Party of China, member of the Chinese Writers Association, and director of the Shanxi Dramatists Association. At the end of July 2009, an incident of "the writer Shi Dongbing's crusade against Xu Zongheng" unexpectedly became the focus of attention. He claims to be an outstanding historian of the Cultural Revolution but the children of several former leaders of the Communist Party of China unanimously raised strong doubts about Shi Dongbing's "documentary literature" and interviews with politicians, alleging that he fabricated the plot of the interview and made fiction. The historical circumstances described by Shi affected the image of these former leaders and interfered with the authority of party history. In 2010, Shi Dongbing was sent to court on suspicion of fraud. He

Red Flag Press. It is said that when the book number was checked, Shi Dongbing did not admit that he had written it. (I reckon this person wrote the article). This person has no upper-level political background; he is the chairman of the literary federation of Houma, Shanxi province (a county-level city), and he published an article during the June Fourth Incident that aroused the disgust of the senior leadership. It is impossible for Shi Dongbing to have seen the secret documents, and to say that he has read the "secret" manuscript is bragging and not credible. What books have you read by him, and who have you heard say that "he could have read so many secret documents"? This man has a very bad reputation in high political circles (and is a bad person from our point of view), and is very good at manipulating, I'm afraid, from hearsay and imagination - that's about all I know.

And then there is the "intellectual development".

I felt that the outlines of those three books, were all off the mark. For example, "The human mind creates the right brain" and "The lifeline of the brain is hope" are extremely one-sided and exaggerated. We could collaborate on a book on "Intellectual Development", but it need not be included in the series published by this society. I have read three syllabi and I think that the authors of the syllabi, who know little and are very one-sided, would find it very difficult to collaborate with authors who use this syllabus to frame their work. There have been significant advances in brain research in the West, but with the limitations of seeing intellectual development as a purely physiological problem (hence the enthusiasm for inventing instruments to develop intelligence - certainly the instruments are not entirely useless, ignoring the social aspect, according to the introduction to Emotional Intelligence (considered a very important book, written by a Harvard professor) it seems to have this same one-sidedness, but I haven't seen the book yet, it was reported as recently published by X Press in Shanghai, so you'd better look for it. There is also a tendency to ignore or belittle the "left brain". If we write a book, we should absorb the knowledge of brain science, avoid its shortcomings and play to our strengths: combining it with epistemology (not only the epistemology of creating new knowledge, but also the epistemology of learning from the knowledge gained by our predecessors), a typical material combining rational and figurative thinking from the Chinese classics. The function and potential of the brain, written by the British (published by the People's University of China Press), is better, and the Super Brain - the results of the latest technology for intellectual development, written by the Americans, is useful, although very one-sided. Published by Hainan in Chinese. Another book, also from Hainan, is "Overcoming the Left Brain", titled "edited by Ansheng". I think it is a "hodgepodge of copied books" and not reliable. It is not clear which is by a brain science researcher and which is by a current one - I am afraid there is nothing at all, and I am afraid that the introduction has been misrepresented. I have read quite a few wrongly, and there is also several outdated knowledge. These are the three books I have read recently. "Intellectual development" is indeed a very important subject. It is not good enough for philosophy to ignore "intellectual development", nor is it good enough for "intellectual development" to leave philosophy behind. What do you think? If we do it, we can do it freely, we can't be tied to the grid required by the publisher.

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was tried in the Beijing No. 2 Intermediate People's Court on the morning of September 13, 2010. In April 2011, he was sentenced to 15 years in prison for fraud in the first instance. Shi Dongbing refused to accept it and appealed to the Beijing High Court. The Beijing Higher People's Court issued a criminal ruling (2011) Gao Xing Zhong Zi No. 137 on February 17, 2012, ruling: "Reject Shi Dongbing's appeal and uphold the original sentence."

Please let us know how the Introduction is being handled. I would also like to know how the two books of the Analects have been dealt with in Hunan (which publisher). I have a few things to talk about, so I will write more in a day or two.

Guan Feng

20 February 98

Ten Schools on Confucius

Please ask Zhou Ying and Guan Tong to be on the editorial board (sharing Kong and Lao), don't forget!

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Lao Qi.

Letter received on the 28th of last month. Beijing, still very hot, at around 35° C-33° C, higher than Shanghai; today it is a little less hot, so I am writing you this letter.

About "Ten Schools of Confucianism".

My opinion: (a) None of the Neo-Confucians will be chosen. The reason is that the title of the book is "Ten Schools on Confucius", but the Neo-Confucians are not on Confucius, but follow on from Song and Ming theories or follow on from Lu and Wang's new studies; some are also mixed with Buddhism (Xiong Shili), while Liang Shuming, on the other hand, is Bergson plus Yangming studies (the above, however, is not my invention). Chairman Mao's critique of Liang Shuming (in five volumes, essentially correct and profound), and as for contemporary Neo-Confucians, they have all claimed to be the third generation of Neo-Confucianism, all in the service of current politics. In a word, they are not studying the historical Confucius, but are creating their own system of thought (and today's celebrities are especially likely to be frying cold rice).<sup>439</sup>

(b) Positive criteria: (1) influence in the academic community at home and abroad; (2) innovation, with its own independent opinion (no one will be accepted who speculates); (2) scientific - not whether the conclusions of the issue under debate are scientific, but (1) the logic of the argument (2) the accuracy of the intellectual information (including historical information) used (3) the value of the lost scholarship (including the value of the counterfactuals that will be proven wrong in the future - in positive terms, i.e. questions of real value are raised, new areas of research are opened up, etc.).

I think there are two items (1) and (2) that would logically remove the so-called Neo-Confucians and ensure that, on the whole, Marxism-Leninism prevails (it seems inappropriate to say this publicly at the moment). I think these two items can be written in the introduction to Ten Schools of Confucianism - a book proposed to be edited by you (nominally, if you are the deputy editor, in fact, you are also the editor-in-chief of the work, I can help you write an introduction (I certify) to the Ten Schools of Confucianism, I wonder if there is still one? (I think some of the ideas in (i) and (ii) above could be written in the introduction to The Ten Schools of Thought .....).

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<sup>439</sup> "Frying cold rice" is an expression for repeating what has been said or done, there is no new content, like just serving up old ideas.

I have no comment on the fact that the list of the Ten Schools of Confucius has already identified six schools. --I have no comment on Feng Youlan's selection of the chapters on Confucius in his History of Chinese Philosophy and his New Compilation of the History of Chinese Philosophy, as well as his controversial articles on Confucius in the 1950s and 1960s, to the total exclusion of his so-called Five Sections of Zhenyuan. Cai Lao, who selected his book Confucius Writing the Li System and his essays on the treatise on Confucius, and did not select his General Critique of Traditional Thought (positive sequel), may be given a higher rating by mentioning the positive sequel in the narrative of Cai Lao's section.

Of the other four, I would choose Hu Shih, Zhao Jibin, Yang Rongguo and Kuang Yaming (just as Cai Shuzhi's). Zhao Jibin chose his New Inquiry into the Analects of Confucius (using the People's Publishing House book from the late 1950s or early 1960s), his other essays on Confucius (from his Records of National Culture, Second Records of National Culture) and On the Issue of Confucius' Execution of Shao Zhengmao (published in a single volume by the People's Publishing House in 1973) - I have re-read this booklet in the last two days. I found the book to be a serious text of examination, without the extreme tendencies of the criticism of Lin and Confucius at the time, and Zhao's Sinologist credentials are very strong (I am afraid this is the only scholar among CCP members, and this book plays to his strengths). It is not necessary to select Yang Rongguo's essay on the criticism of Lin and Confucius (I see that he refers to Xunzhi as a Confucian, and to a history of Chinese thought as a history of the struggle between Confucianism and Legalism - too extreme. (This is the impression I got from reading the article in Qincheng, I wonder if it is accurate).

Preliminary comments on the selected articles in Guan Feng's text are

(1) On Confucius

On Confucius Again

Three Discourses on Confucius - in A Collection of Essays on the History of Philosophy in the Spring and Autumn Period - Guan Feng and Lin Yushi

(2) Chapter 22 and on, Understanding Laozi (slightly abridged) - Guan Feng and Zhou Ying

(3) "Why the Political Thought of Confucius, Representing the Slave-owning Class, Became the Ruling Thought of Feudal Society" - in the unpublished Decameron of the Analects. -- Guan Feng and Qi Benyu

(4) 'A Methodological Approach to the Interpretation of the Analects of Confucius' --- Guan Feng and Qi Benyu. This has more than 40,000 words. This is already too much at this time, so this text is not to be used.

Chen Boda's treatise on Confucius is not to be chosen as appropriate. From a political point of view, it would be better not to push this flaw. According to Ye Yonglie, who has read the archives, Chen Boda did turn himself in. His essay on Confucius and Lao - not much value either.

What Lu Xun says about Confucius is indeed sharp, profound and thought-provoking. But they are all miscellaneous essays, spoken in a certain way in relation to the politics of the time. They are not philosophical historians on Confucius (nor are the ones on Laozi). Therefore, it is appropriate not to select for the Ten Schools of Confucius. As for the writings of Chairman Mao on Confucius, they are the guiding principles of our study of the history of Chinese philosophy, so naturally they cannot be included in The Ten Schools on Confucius.

The Ten Schools of Thought of Guanzi<sup>440</sup> - Comrade Wang Demin is still recuperating, having visited once the year before, and has improved. His son-in-law, Yu Kongzhi, is deputy editor-in-chief of the Guanzi Journal. If you send Wang Demin's letter to the Guanzi Journal, he will be sure to receive it. See if he can do the job. If his health permits, it would be better if he does it. (You may also consider Kong Bao as the deputy editor-in-chief to do the specific work).

The Ten Schools on Laozi does not need to have Ke Xi as an associate editor anymore. His daughter is doing "very well" in the United States, and so he went there for almost six months and is planning to go again soon after his return. He may have to become "Zhou Jingfang". He is no longer interested in the matter. If you are looking for someone to do something in Beijing for the editor-in-chief, Guan Tong can do some assistant work.

What about my choices for the Ten Schools of Laozi? I haven't decided on The Collection of History of Philosophy in the Spring and Autumn Period or Understanding Confucius but I would like to hear your opinion on which ten schools to choose for the Ten Schools of Laozi, and I will tell you after I have considered them. I am now mulling over some opinions, so I hope to hear yours.

It's too hot, so I'll finish here.

There was a letter to you about Zhang Taiyan and the "transfer of flowers to trees"<sup>441</sup>, did you receive it?

Guan Feng

August 4, 2000

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Lao Qi.

I received your letter of 1 September in good time. I am writing to you after a few days because I have come across a matter that needs to be dealt with urgently and with great difficulty (more on that later). Let me now turn to the matter to be discussed in the letter.

You proposed to add "Yi Baisha" to the phrase "on the parallel collection of Chen and Li". I read Yi's essay a few years ago and it was very good. As for Lu Xun, my impression is that there is no treatise on Confucius (I have read the complete works of Lu Xun). A few years ago I saw a pamphlet published during the criticism of Lin and Confucius - I think it was called Lu Xun's Criticism of Confucius, which was a book of quotations, probably copied from miscellaneous articles, and I saw that most of them were criticisms of the "so-called modern Confucius". In order not to disrupt the style of the book, it would be better not to select it.

As for the On the Selection of Confucius, I made a list last time and would like to hear your opinion on it (including a piece you and I collaborated on, "Why Confucius' Political Thought on Behalf of

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<sup>440</sup> "Guanzi Journal" was founded in 1987. It is an academic publication from the Shandong University of Technology and sponsored by the Qi Culture Research Institute to comprehensively study Qi culture and traditional Chinese culture. Qi culture was a culture of the Chalcolithic period, relics of which were first unearthed at Qijiaping, Gansu Province in 1923.

<sup>441</sup> To transfer flowers to the trees, is a Chinese idiom which refers to grafting branches or buds of one kind of flower and tree onto another kind of flower and tree. Its meaning is to stealthily substitute one thing for another.

Slave Owners Became the Ruling Thought of Feudal Society") (in the original Decameron of the Analects). Also, please let me know what the maximum quota for entrants is in terms of words so that I can use my discretion. My opinion is to try not to use excerpts. There is no alternative to abridgement, as in the case of Kuang Zhi's Commentary on Confucius.

About The Ten Commentaries on Laozi.

I see that Guo Zhi still makes the cut. It was still very representative at the time and later. Hu Shih's should also be included, for the same reason. Gao Chong did not need to be selected - the pen evidence and so on had to be left out, because there were many such articles in the ancient history debate, so I had to drop them all. In the letter of a group of names, I think Lu Zhenyu should be selected - is the earliest use of Marxist-Leninist criticism of poison, Cai Shangsi - the article can be combined with other similar selections (can be combined with Cai Zhishang). Ren Jiyu's arguments, the quality is very low, but representative, (a) do not know the ancient meaning of ancient words, do not know the ancient Chinese grammar, quite representative; (b) In fact, it is representative of Laozi's materialism influenced by the Soviet Union's materialism (nature) theory. From the perspective of being representative and reflecting certain characteristics of the times, it should be chosen. The addition of Li Taifen and Chen Guoying (Tai) will suffice. For the others, there is no need to consider them. Chen Boda, need not be considered. For one thing, there is no need to stir up this hornet's nest, and for another, his Laozi materialism is unrepresentative. In the 1930s, it was Ye Qing who spoke of Laozi's dialectical materialism (it is a book which is quite valuable in its examination of Laozi's time). I have here a copy (I don't know the source) of the 1951 Sichuan Chengdu University printing "Selected Writings of Chen Boda", which I see was selected by Chen Boda himself (because he was busy, in order not to disrupt the original corporate body), and not yet officially published, and in which there are no articles on Laozi.

I think we should include the Soviet Union's Yang Xingshun's Ancient Chinese Philosopher Laozi and His Doctrine, which should be selected for inclusion in the appendix (it is too long and can be excerpted), which influenced Chinese academia in the 1950s and 1960s, with some people rising up in a flurry. A great deal of talk and a lot of talk about Laozi's materialism is due to this (not Chen Boda, nor Ye Qing) - it is history, so it should be selected for inclusion. It should also be mentioned in the preface to The Ten Schools on Laozi. (For each of the "Ten Schools of Thought"), is it possible to include a catalogue of the books that can be used to discuss it?

There is still a big question - should the debate about Laozi's person and his books be chosen. It is logical that it should be selected, but it is too large, so just cut it out. Or in the preface, a little in the introduction to each opt-in go. I can't decide, so I ask you to reconsider and listen to the views of the parties concerned.

I would also like to ask you to think about the ones selected in On Laozi, and to choose the best ones for me. If there are too many, it will be difficult to choose.

The most recent one that we have encountered, which has not been dealt with with much effort, is that the Jilin People's Publishing House has printed several parts of Understanding Laozi from the whole without the author's knowledge and published them (as a separate book) under the name of The Laozi Collation (2,800 copies of the 1998-edition and 3,000 copies of the second printing), seriously infringing on the copyright and deleting the author's name Zhou Ying, and seriously violating human rights and making serious mistakes --There are 2,914 typos in the entire book of 520,000 words, which is 56 times more than the limit set by the Press and Publications Department (less than one in 10,000 words, i.e. only one typo in 10,000 words), which in turn seriously tarnishes

the author's academic reputation. We have read the book carefully and spent a lot of time negotiating with lawyers. A letter from the lawyer to the Jilin People's Publishing can be issued about next week - we have authorised the lawyer to negotiate and even sue. --The lawyer came yesterday and signed the power of attorney (this must remain confidential - when it is temporary).

In addition, Jilin also handed over to Taiwan's Repertory Bureau the right to publish Understanding Laozi, which they do not acknowledge as having been published. I see it as a mix-up. Therefore, please try to buy Understanding Laozi from Taiwan, which is the hardest, no-questions-asked evidence. I hope you will hurry. Thank you.

This matter must also be kept confidential.

Guan Feng, Zhou Ying

12 September 2000

See the flip side

The First Premier  
Opposition to Yuan Shikai and the Beiyang Warlords  
Tang Shaoyi's collaboration with Sun Yat-sen  
The Second North-South Talks  
Tang Shaoyi and the New Southwest Warlords  
Tang Shaoyi and Chiang Kai-shek  
The Governor of Zhongshan  
Tang's Later Years  
The Mystery of Death  
Historical Assessment and Lessons

Please see back?

Comrade Qi Wen.

Your letter says that there is a match for Guan Yizhou at Xiaohua's party school, so I hope Xiaohua will do me a favour and if I can make it happen, I will thank you when Guan Yizhou gets married. I wish you and Xiaohua mutual respect and love, and happiness and health!

Zhou Ying

6 August

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Lao Qi.

(a) First of all, your letter - there is only one, which you wrote on 4 June. It contains ① a letter to "Zhou Ying' Guan Lao", signed at the end on 4 June; ② a letter to Guan Tong, also signed at the end on 4 June; ③ a list of six articles in "Guan Feng on Confucius", probably intended to be selected for

my opinion. --In addition, I have not received any letter from you so far (until 15 June). I read your letter of 4 June on Monday, 11 June, and as soon as I got to work on that day, the Old Cadre Office called to say that "there was a letter from you", and we went to pick it up immediately. I waited until today to answer your letter because not only could I not think of it, but I also did not discuss it with Guan Tong to see if he could take on the job you had entrusted to him.

(2) Regarding the ten schools of Confucius, my opinion is that I (1) strongly disagree with the selection of Qian Mu - this person is a great scholar, but he is always anti-communist and has fled to Taiwan, so it is not necessary to select him for academic reasons, but definitely not for political reasons - he cannot be a volunteer for the reactionary bourgeoisie. I strongly disagree with the selection of Liang Shuming, some people have been elevating Liang and cursing Chairman Mao in the past 20 years. His work - especially on Confucius - has no academic value whatsoever. (3) We can consider merging Wu Yu with Hu Shih, such as choosing Zhou Yutong (must include those after the founding of the People's Republic of China), but not Jin Jingfang (whose books I have read carefully) (4) Hu and Wu are both compiled together as Chen Duxiu, which is not possible; Wu Yu is included in Chen, and Hu is also not listed separately. I think that there are two considerations for inclusion in the list: (a) academic level; (b) political considerations, is it poor or favourable?

(3) The Ten Schools of Confucius is mine, and I agree with you, except that I would like to add "Confucius wanted to answer the call of Gong Shan Fushu and Examination and Debate on the Call of Buddha".

--A Testament to the Sūsi Records" (in "Essays on the History of Philosophy in the Spring and Autumn Period")

I will send you a copy of your list with this letter.

(4) Ten Schools on Laozi - I will tell you in ten days what essay of mine to select.

(5) An introduction to Guan Feng's essay on Confucius could be written by Zhou Ying. I don't think we should use commentaries. You probably remember the conflict with Chen Ningning during the compilation and selection of "Ten Essays on Zhuangzi". I objected to the preface or the introduction of the evaluation and criticism of the selected essays, as the editorial committee did not have such authority and it was generally inappropriate. --You probably know that. I have forgotten the title of the book, so please look it up and tell me so that Zhou Ying can write an introduction to my "Confucius Studies".

(6) An introduction to Guan Feng's study of Laozi could be written by Guan Tong. He is unable to take up the other, as he is overwhelmed by the task and has no time to go through the book on Laozi.

(7) I didn't promise to write the introduction to "Ten Schools of Confucius", but you remembered wrongly (I haven't been in the mood for something lately). It's not lost, is it? I hope I can use it, but if I can't, please return it.

(8) Feng Youlan was chosen because, before the founding of the PRC, he had a chapter on Confucius or "Confucianism" in the history of Chinese philosophy (a reaction to the May Fourth Movement), and after the founding of the PRC, he wrote a chapter on the controversy and a new edition of the history of Chinese philosophy. Feng's Criticising Lin Biao and Confucius's "Confucius, the Man" may be selected or not; if not selected, it should be highlighted in the introduction.

Guan Feng

16 June 2001

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Ying Zhou and Guan Lao.

Hello!

The Shanghai People's Publishing House wants the three parts of the Ten Schools of Confucius series now being compiled to be printed and launched together, so the editing work has to be stepped up.

The Ten Schools of Confucianism and the title of Guan's book have been prepared, please review them. The ten have been initially decided: one, Chen Duxiu; two, Li Dazhao; three, Hu Shi, Wu Yu attached; four, Feng Youlan; five, Cai Shangsi; six, Zhao Jibin; seven, Yang Rongguo; eight, Guo Moruo; nine, Guan Feng; ten, Kuang Yaming.

Guan's title for The Ten Schools of Laozi has been prepared, Guan Tong has had a first look: (I have complied with the instructions to hire him as an editorial board member), and he will ask you, for The Ten Schools of Confucius, to ask editorial board member Zhou Ying to write a five or six thousand words commentary, if that it is possible.

I hereby send

Salutations!

Qi Wen

June 4, 2002

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Lao Qi.

The letter of June 12 was only recently received.

I don't have any comments on the letter, but just do what you think and what you can.

A friend from Hong Kong (who has written a report on an interview with me - without adding to it, he is a man of his word) sent me a set of Wang Li's two thick books, "Reflections of Wang Li". At a cursory glance, more than 85 per cent of the issues are disinformation, distortion of facts and glorification of oneself, which is simply shameless. Zhou Ying is taking a closer look. I was not expecting it, and probably you were too. How do you deal with it? When will you come to Beijing and read the fine print.

I'll write to you, and I won't be late, so you can take it away when you come to Beijing.

Please write back soon. Zhou Ying asked to say hello to Hua Zheng.

(I'm afraid he won't receive it)

Guan Feng

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Morning of 23 June 2002

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Zhou Ying and Lao Guan.

Letter received on the 26th.

I have not received Wang Li's book. But I trust your judgement and will study it in detail when I get the book.

As a preliminary comment, we should have a refutation, otherwise posterity will not be able to get to the truth of the matter.

Can you first write a refutation of Wang Li, as Marx wrote about Herr Vogt? There are not many people left who can refute Wang Li, so the most dangerous enemies of revolutions that never come are often from within. These assholes who undermine the revolution from within are the most frightening. Did Wang Li betray the Cultural Revolution or was his revolution a sham back then? Considering his impassioned revolutionary cries during the Cultural Revolution, he does not look like a fake! How did he make such a 180-degree turn? He attacked the Cultural Revolution in this way. What do you think of this great turn of events?

Li Junru<sup>442</sup> (the head of the Party School!), another theoretician from the School of Revisionism, and Wu Jinglian (the former rebel in the Academic Department) and his colleagues have been publishing their books, and Hua Yifang told me that in July Wu was going to publish a big book called "Transitioning China".

What is the situation of Comrade Li Xi? Must he move to the United States? Can you give me his phone number and address in the US? You had a good friend named Xiao at NPC, how is he doing now? The book on the Ten Schools of Thought on Zhuangzi is coming out soon, and the book on Mozi will come out next year, and the book on Confucius and Laozi will probably be published in 2003. I don't want to compile any more books after this series comes out.

Your life lessons have been a great inspiration to me.

I hope Zhou Ying recovers quickly!

Qi Wen

2002.7.3

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Lao Qi.

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<sup>442</sup> Li Junru, member of the Party History Study and Education Central Propaganda Group and former vice president of the Party School of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China published 18 volumes of "Li Junru's Works", among which the "Mao Zedong Study Trilogy" composed of "Mao Zedong and Modern China", "Mao Zedong and Contemporary China", "Mao Zedong and Contemporary China After Mao Zedong". He has published hundreds of papers such as "Deng Xiaoping's "Theory of Governing the Country"", among which "Deng Xiaoping's "Socialism with Chinese Characteristics"" and "Deng Xiaoping's Management Thought and Leadership Art" won the "Mya 1st Project" of the Central Propaganda Department.

Letter received in time. The weather in Beijing is extremely hot and sweltering, and I am afraid to turn on the air conditioning. I went to bed yesterday and turned on the air conditioner only after a ruthless effort, so I did not reply until this morning.

I've been through Mu and Wang's books roughly, and Zhou Ying is reading them carefully. Both of them are very bad. One is shameless; the other has lost its "conscience" (the heart of a child) and is the worst, the worst of its kind I have ever read. Traitors, too, are the enemy, but people hate traitors most of all - and that's the truth. I sent Lao Yan a copy of Mu's book, which I also did not buy. Wang's book, according to Yun is very fragrant, and has been especially imported in large quantities, and reprinted in large quantities immediately, see if you can ask your friend to buy one immediately.

These two, in retrospect, I think went from good to bad, from red to pink to black. They have been consistent, based on their outlook on life, it has always been the case, and I wonder why we (especially me) didn't notice it at all back then?

I haven't been to a bookshop for a while and I didn't even know about the book you mentioned, by Zheng and Wen. Too hot to move. Wait for a cooler day and go look for it. What exactly is Wei Wei's<sup>443</sup> situation? There are several legends that may not be true. Since Huafeng and Wang were long-time friends, you can write and ask. China still has some good comrades like Wei Wei to comfort the spirit of Mao Zedong (Chairman) in heaven.

Li Xi and his wife have returned to Beijing to be hospitalised due to illness, and we have spoken on the phone once, but have not yet met.

The weather is hot and stuffy, and even with the air conditioning on it is extremely uncomfortable, so I probably won't feel better until the eighth month of the lunar calendar. This year is strange, for some reason the temperature is often higher than in Shanghai, but only lower than in Hainan, Zhou Ying sends regards to Xiaohua.

Guan Feng

July 8, 2002

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<sup>443</sup> Wei Wei (1920-2008), was a writer, poet and novelist. He was a representative of the 1st to 3rd National People's Congress, an honorary member of the China Federation of Literary and Art Circles, a consultant of the Chinese Writers Association, a vice president of the China-North Korea Friendship Association, and the president of the Chinese Liberated Area Literature Research Association. Graduated from Yan'an Anti-Japanese Military and Political University and joined the Eighth Route Army after the outbreak of the Anti-Japanese War. During the Anti-US Aid Korea, he went to the front lines of North Korea, lived and fought with volunteer soldiers, and published a large number of literature and art newsletters. Among them, "Who is the loveliest person" about Chinese Volunteers in Korea has influenced several generations of Chinese. This article was published on the front page of "People's Daily" on April 11, 1951. Mao Zedong's instructed: "Print and distribute to the entire army." After reading it, Zhu De praised it: "Writing well! Very good!" Zhou Enlai was present at the Second Congress of Chinese Literature and Art Workers (Second National Congress of Literature and Art) held from September 23 to October 6, 1953. In his speech, he praised this article for "moving millions of readers and inspiring the soldiers at the front", and asked: "Has Wei Wei come? I want to meet this friend", and solemnly said: "I Thank you for taking the title of "the loveliest person" for our soldiers." After the Cultural Revolution, Wei Wei insisted on a leftist stance. In 2001, he and other leftists jointly signed "The "July 1 Speech" Is an Extremely Important Political Error Event", criticizing Jiang Zemin's "July 1" speech, and thus lost his freedom for a time. In 2001, "Who "Who is the loveliest person" began to be excluded from middle school textbooks. Many versions of Chinese textbooks since 2001 have deleted this text. However, in 2021, "Who is the loveliest person" will return to the 2021 revised Chinese textbook for the seventh grade.

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Zhou Ying and Lao Guan.

Letter received on 8 July.

The weather in Shanghai is hot, especially before yesterday. Beijing must be even more stuffy than Shanghai. The reason is that it is continental heat. Especially in recent years, the surrounding areas of Beijing (northwest and northeast) have become very sandy, forests have been destroyed and reservoirs have run out of water, so the temperature is even higher. You must not go out if you have nothing to do, and you must turn on the air conditioning at home, as long as it does not blow on your body, it does not matter. Lao Guan must protect his mind (to avoid his mind from dilatation diseases) in order to leave more good writings to the people. I recently re-read Sun Tzu's Art of War literature because I was writing about the characters of the two Han dynasties (Zhang Lianghan, etc.) and the analysis Lao Guan made of Tai Gong's Art of War<sup>444</sup> and (the Three Strategies) is really of a high standard. Most of this compendium was written by Guan, and it is one of the great works of recent years in the study of ancient military science. The letter from (Three Strategies) alone, which no one from ancient times to the present day has been able to say where it came from, is a clear statement by Lao Guan that it is the work of Zhang Liang, often justified and sent in a way that no one has yet sent. Is the much-vaunted Chen Renxiu of such calibre? Look again at Lao Guan's theoretical analysis, which he states in his thesis (Guangwu Jun), "The laws of history are elastic, not mechanical, and the historical materialist view of socio-historical laws, which incorporates or fuses probabilism, allows for a high degree of unity between subjective human initiative and objective laws that do not depend on people's willpower, so as to prevent both mechanical and non-deterministic, historical idealism." What a good point is made here. Such theoretical statements abound in the summaries of his literature, edited out to make a good Treatise on the Laws of History.

Wang Li's poems, look at them, can they be called poems? Wouldn't it be better to at least refine the poems before publishing them? A poem should give people a sense of beauty!

Please take care of your health again!

Qi Wen

2002.7.26

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Lao Qi.

I received a letter from you advising me to "protect my mind" when the weather was hot, my mind was foggy, and I was having trouble writing, so I immediately stopped writing and rested, and will work again after autumn. It is good to know that I am writing "People of the Two Han Dynasties", which is a step up from "People of the Three Kingdoms". However, I am concerned that the scope of the Two Han People is too broad to focus on the role of prominent figures and the laws of history, and that it is easy to generalise. Rather, I would like to explore the sixteen or seventeen historical figures who performed differently during the relatively short period of the Xiang and Liu disputes

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<sup>444</sup> Tai Gong's Art of War is an important part of China's classical military cultural heritage dating from before the Qin Dynasty.

(which was related to the historical development of the following years - which marked the first half of China's feudal society) - starting with Chen Sheng and ending with Empress Lu. Free from preconceptions, they are explored boldly and objectively. As with Xiang and Liu, it is not necessarily certain that they were leaders of the peasant rebellion (if they are still considered to be such they must be studied independently on their own merits). This history is rich and varied, and as a turning point in history, it is also concentrated. In short, there is much to be said for it. Of course, it is possible to write about the two Han dynasties, and I would like to divide them into a number of key historical periods. But if we were to write in depth about the characters of the early Han or the historical figures of the Liu and Xiang disputes, it would be enough for a booklet of 200,000 or 300,000 words. Do you think so? The idea that you praised me for is just a glimmer of light. It fails to study a series of historical events or a series of historical figures from the perspective of exploring the laws of historical development, and instead summarises them from historical materialism. The poverty of our philosophy is really serious. I see it as dogmatism. We do not study Chinese and foreign history, but pay empty lip service to historical materialism, and even the flesh-and-blood principles we write about have been turned into dogma. The motivation for me to take up the study of the history of Chinese philosophy was to get rid of this dilemma, but after I had devoted myself to it, I gradually "looked into the matter without seeing the public opinion", and as a result, I have not yet come up with anything decent. I have not been able to systematically collate the fragmentary new ideas that have come to light. It's too hot. I'll write more in a few days.

Guan Feng

July 27th afternoon

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Zhou Ying and Lao Guan.

I have received the letter of 4 August concerning the ten schools of thought on Confucius. I have not received the previous letter about Zhang Taiyan, so please check when it was sent.

You have good reasons for not accepting Neo-Confucianism in the Ten Schools of Confucianism. I am not in favour of accepting it either, but I cannot give a good reason. In the syllabus of Hu Shih (History of Chinese Philosophy), there are five chapters on Confucianism.

You advocate the use of Zhao Jibin's book for the 1960s, but his February edition of 1976 has many revisions, and the revisions are reasonable, so can we use the 1976 edition? The new exploration of the Analects of Confucius is a very large book, with 320,000 words and other papers, so it is too many words.

Yang Rongguo intends to include the fourth section of his History of Ancient Chinese Thought on the thought of Confucius and two essays on Confucius written before the Cultural Revolution; the pamphlet Confucius the Slaveholder Thinker<sup>445</sup> and the two essays written after the Cultural Revolution are not to be included.

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<sup>445</sup> This article and one other were published in *Selected Articles Criticising Lin Piao and Confucius (1)* published by the Foreign Languages Press, Beijing, 1974. The same volume contains Feng Youlan's *A Criticism of Confucius and Self-Criticism of My Own Past Veneration for Confucius*.

It would be too large to include all of Kuang Yaming's Commentary on Confucius, but could we include only the preface, introduction, life, benevolence and education sections?

2002.8

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Lao Qi.

I have received your letter. A few days before I received your letter, I received a letter from Mr. Shen Shanzeng and his book "Returning My Zhuangzi". I read the book and decided that he was not a serious scholar, so I did not want to be his friend, so I wrote to him in response to his letter and did not present him with my work.

I don't know what the letter asks for, and I can't offer any advice. Generally speaking, it is not a bad idea not to publish new articles for the time being (you can write them and treasure them), to protect yourself and to take them seriously.

It's not that I've been "too busy writing books" lately. I wrote a manuscript of a book some years ago, "The Dictionary of Characters Adopted to Represent Homophones", more than a million words, which a publisher in Beijing wanted to publish the year before last, and sent me a clean copy before January this year. I don't know if this book will be published this year.

SARS, with all the fuss in Beijing, doesn't seem to be going away any time soon. We don't go out of the gate on a regular basis, so nothing will go wrong.

More on that.

Guan Feng

Late afternoon of May 8 (2003)

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Lao Qi.

I have received the letter dated September 2 and the copy sent to me.

I think the copy is not credible and is a malicious rumour by bad people. If you are not coming to Beijing soon, you can share what you and I knew at the time and study the issue. I can't talk about it in a letter.

Salutations

Guan Feng

September 15

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Lao Qi.

I have not received a letter for a long time and I am very bored. Why didn't Li Yiqiang bring a letter when he came to Beijing? I hope you will write to me to tell me more about your recent developments.

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Mr. Pan Guofan from Guangzhou is going to visit you in Shanghai and has brought you a book entitled Zhou Enlai in His Later Years (published in Hong Kong), which I have read for the first time. It contains several quotations from Wang Li. It is useful for understanding Wang.

Didn't you come to Beijing at the end of autumn? Why no letter from you?

Please write to me soon to let me know how you are. Zhou Ying and I are in good health, so I don't miss it. I hope to hear from you soon.

I hope you will write soon.

Guan Feng

November 16, 2003

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Lao Qi.

How come I have not heard from you for a long time. I wonder why? Didn't you say you would come to Beijing after the autumn?

A few days ago, a friend in Guangzhou called Pan Guofen, a journalist, was introduced to me by Xie Yaozong, a fellow prisoner now living in Guangzhou (an old comrade you can rely on), and we had a few dealings. (He wrote my introduction to the Hong Kong newspaper, and after I read it (reviewed it) it was published, word for word) ..... so I felt that this person could be relied on. So I wrote a letter of introduction for him and he went to Shanghai with it to meet you ..... I wonder if you have met this person? I don't think this is something that you would find objectionable. Why haven't you written to me? I look forward to hearing from you, if you have any comments. If you don't, the bad guys will take advantage of the situation and cause a big misunderstanding. .... Anxiously awaiting a letter.

Guan Feng December 28, 2003 morning

Lao Qi.

I read your letter of December 23rd this morning. I am aware of everything. I sent you a letter yesterday at lunchtime, blaming you for not writing to me, but in the evening Guanzhou came to tell me that you had called her several times and told her to tell me that she had moved to a new house and was not close to me and could not come here often. So she came last night and I saw everything. I blamed you for what you said and I am sorry.

It would be great to have you in Beijing for the Spring Festival. I haven't seen you for many years and would love to see you.

I am still in good health (I am 85 years old), I read and write every day, and my mind is still focused and active. I probably have another ten years or so to live. You advised me to exercise, which is very true. I am too inactive - from today I am determined to walk 2000 steps in my room every day. Someone, Mu, is as bad as Wang Li and has created many rumours. "Mu Xin said: Jiang Qing had pointed her finger at Zhou Enlai's nose in '67 and cursed Zhou ..." etc., which was absolutely nothing. My memory is still quite strong, if there is such a thing, I will not forget ..... nearly is not even a word

from Mu Xin Yun. This is Mu's malicious instigation, and anyone who understands things, will know it is fabricated. "Sturdy grass withstands the high winds", sincere words.

I hope that when the Spring Festival Association [brings] his wife to Beijing, she will stay at my house - although, compared to a hotel, the conditions are too poor, but the conversation is convenient. Zhou Ying says you are equally welcome.

For the sake of receiving this letter as soon as you receive yesterday's letter, I will finish here and perhaps write another letter tomorrow.

Salutations

Guan Feng

29 December 2003

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Lao Qi.

I received your letter on 15 February in time. As Zhou Ying is seriously ill in hospital and her three children are taking turns to watch over her, I was very anxious, so I did not reply in time. According to the doctor's analysis, it is estimated that she will be discharged from hospital in a week's time, and I will write to let you know then. I hope to come to Beijing with my wife in late spring, when the flowers will be in full bloom and Zhou Ying will have regained her health. Brother Pan does not have person called Yu Ruxin<sup>446</sup>, I think it is someone else. I asked Li Yiqiang to look for it on the Internet, but he said it was blocked and could not be opened. Hong Kong and Macau do not block such things. If you have friends over there, please check to find the "Interview" published by Yu Ruxin from the internet, it is not difficult.

The material sent to me was interesting and I read it carefully. And pondering.

Guan Feng

March 1

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Lao Qi,

The first thing mentioned in the letter: Yang Chengwu's memoir said: "Lin Biao wrote to me ("I"-Qi Benyu... Guan Feng's note) to discuss the 520 incident, and I am looking for you again." Why can't I remember? I remember the situation was urgent. We went directly to Lin Biao for the meeting. It was impossible for Lin Biao to find you again etc etc. Is my memory broken, or is Yang's nonsense? I hope you will sue me after you read it. ——I remember it more clearly: Yang Chengwu was pure

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<sup>446</sup> Yu Ruxin (1950. - ) Research scholar on the history of the Cultural Revolution. Author of more than 100 research articles on the Cultural Revolution and "Hong Kong, 1967"; edited and annotated "The Rise and Fall of the Red Guards", "September 13", "Luo Ruiqing Case", "Ding Sheng's Memoirs" and has just published "Storm: The People's Liberation Army in the Cultural Revolution" in Hong Kong.

nonsense. I did not expect this person to be so bad. It was beyond my expectation. Back then, I thought this person was better.

I have an idea: I still have various opinions about this period of history (to inform each other), and I devote myself to research (including memories). Regarding some important issues, you think and I also think, you analyze and I also analyze, and find opportunities to meet and discuss-recalling historical facts, we also need to inspire each other. Think about it separately, discuss it in person, find a period of time to communicate, and organize it into words (including our analysis of course), and leave it to future generations. This is also our unshirkable responsibility. Otherwise, it's just that we communicate and talk about it, and it won't work. You see, what do I think? ——Of course, the first step is to tell each other all kinds of nonsense they have seen.

On the matter of the "Ten Family Theory..." mentioned in the letter, Li Yiqiang can start after returning to Beijing. It's also a very time consuming matter, so we don't need to be too rushed.

Zhou Ying and I are in good health, so don't worry.

Guan Feng

July 14

## Chapter 3 Public Refutation of Disinformation and Slander against Chairman Mao

### Appendix: The Imperial Pen's Painful Criticism of the Imperial Doctor

I wrote in my Memoirs that I had asked Chairman Mao for advice in person about whether Mao Zedong's Thought could be divided into two. Chairman Mao himself often said that he would also make mistakes. Regarding the Cultural Revolution Movement, Chairman Mao himself assessed it as seven points of achievement and three points of error, not affirming everything. But after the Cultural Revolution Movement, many critics of Chairman Mao, instead of criticising in good faith and reflecting scientifically to sum up the lessons of the Party's history, launched malicious attacks and denied everything. There were even people like Li Zhisui who used his past position and connections to hoodwink the uninformed, going out of their way to slander and smear Chairman Mao, selling their souls and throwing themselves at the mercy of the anti-Mao and anti-communist forces abroad in exchange for their handouts of dollars. I despise these villains who sell out and betray their past vows and beliefs. Whenever I have the opportunity, I will make my attitude clear and publicly refute the rumours and slanders against Chairman Mao by Li Zhisui and his ilk. Here is just one example, a copy of my article refuting Li Zhisui, published in Hong Kong's Ming Pao Monthly magazine under the title "Imperial pen criticises imperial doctor", as follows:

Appendix.

#### **The Imperial Pen's Painful Criticism of the Imperial Doctor**

**-- Qi Benyu's memoir criticizing Li Zhisui**

**Interview: Dallas Times, USA Edited by Lu Yuan, compiled by Zhong Zhilin**

Qi Benyu, once Mao Zedong's "imperial pen" and a former central figure in the Cultural Revolution, has been living in seclusion in recent years. He does not meet with journalists, does not talk about politics and does not write about his past memories. The father of Lu Yuan, editor of the American newspaper The Farrar Times, was a close friend of Qi Benyu. Not long ago, when Lu Yuan went to mainland China on official business, they met and talked about the past. During the conversation, Lu Yuan sought Qi Benyu's opinion on the memoirs of Mao's personal doctor written by Li Zhisui. Qi Benyu firmly refuted Li Zhisui and revealed many historical secrets about the Cultural Revolution and the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party.

Lu: Not long ago, a memoir written by Mao's personal physician, Li Zhisui, was published in Taiwan and the United States, and it was a sensation overseas.

Qi: I've read it, a friend brought it back from Japan. Before talking about it, I have to learn from Confucius to "correct the name". Mao Zedong did not have a personal doctor. Mao's doctors, nurses and secretaries were all surnamed "Gong". Li Zhisui was a doctor at the Zhongnanhai Clinic in Beijing. When I joined Zhongnanhai in 1950, he was responsible for treating the cadres and workers in Zhongnanhai. He was a "foreign doctor" who had come back from studying abroad, and his medical skills were better than those of the local doctors trained by the People's Liberation Army at that time. He was also a good doctor to Wang Dongxing, the chief of security at Zhongnanhai at the time,

who liked him and introduced him to Mao Zedong for health care work. At first, he did not have a name, and it was probably before the Rectification Campaign in 1957 that he was officially appointed as Mao's health care doctor. I remember when I went to a meeting in the evening of 3 May 1958 at the Juxiang Study House where Mao lived, I saw him on duty in the duty room next to Mao's bedroom with Mao's confidential secretary Xu Yefu and his chief guard Li Yinqiao.

### **Mao Zedong was not a "feudal emperor"**

Lu: Li Zhisui said that Mao Zedong was not a leader of the proletariat, but an authoritarian and dictatorial feudal emperor whose rule brought endless disasters to the Chinese people, and that his memoirs were "a historical record of the suffering of the common people under Mao's totalitarian rule". What do you think of this?

Qi: Although Li Zhisui had worked beside Mao for many years, he was exclusively a health care doctor and was relatively poor in political common sense, so that when he wanted to attack Mao for certain purposes, he could only pick up the pieces and follow the fashionable style of attacking Mao as a feudal emperor, which is not surprising. What does it mean to be a feudal emperor? A feudal emperor is a hereditary ruler who oppresses the peasants and maintains the rule of the landlords. Who was Mao Zedong? He is the only great figure in Chinese history who successfully led hundreds of millions of peasants to finally overthrow the landlords. He was called the "Peasant King" when he was a young man and spent his whole life rebelling against the landowning class. He was the greatest nemesis of the feudal emperors and the biggest rebel in feudal society for over 2,000 years. To say that Mao was a feudal emperor is even more absurd than calling a stag a horse or black as white. To say that Mao was a "dictatorship" is also a lie! Li Zhisui has probably never seen how the Beiyang warlords, Japanese traitors and the Guomindang government used guns to suppress peasants, workers and students. It was to fight against these despotic dictators and traitors that Mao Zedong brought weapons to make revolution. In the course of the revolution, Mao Zedong established the Soviet Red Government, the anti-Japanese democratic government and the democratic government of the liberated areas, which even the American journalists Snow and Strong acknowledged to be the unprecedented democratic governments in Chinese history. After the victory of the Chinese revolution, Mao Zedong established the government of the People's Republic of China, which is still the most democratic government in Chinese history, despite its many flaws in building democracy. Except for the extraordinary period of the Cultural Revolution, all the major decisions of this government were discussed and approved by statutory meetings; even during the Cultural Revolution, when the regime was paralysed at all levels, the major affairs of the Party and the State were still discussed and decided by statutory meetings of the Party Central Committee and the State Council. Since it was passed in a legal form, you cannot say that it was an authoritarian dictatorship! Although, during that period, many decisions were passed according to Mao's wishes because of his prestige, you cannot say that it was a personal authoritarian dictatorship since certain legal procedures were passed. You can fault democracy for being imperfect, unsound or even against the rules, but you cannot simply equate it with the dictatorship of the emperor in feudal times. Mao Zedong was not without fault in the theory and practice of democracy in the Party and the country, but he was still a seeker and a forceful practitioner of the theory and practice of democracy in the Party and the country. He could have had a thousand faults and mistakes, but throughout his life he always loved and cared for his people. During his lifetime, Mao Zedong was more appreciative of the bourgeois democracy practised in Britain, France and the United States. He once told us that we would rather follow the British and American paths of democracy than the fascist and Beria paths. Fascism refers to the dictatorship of the National Socialist Party as practised by Hitler, and Beria refers to the rule of the secret service which was

exercised by the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the former Soviet Union, which arrested and killed people indiscriminately. Feudal emperors were hereditary monarchs, but we do not see Mao Zedong passing his presidency to his wife or children. Despite how keen Jiang Qing was for power, Mao proposed and the Political Bureau of the Party Central Committee discussed and confirmed Hua Guofeng as his successor. Nor were his children privileged. Before his death, his only surviving son, Mao Anqing, was an ordinary translator, his two daughters, the eldest an ordinary scientific and technical cadre, and the youngest a leading member of a party organ. Mao Zedong held the wealth of the whole of China, but his children received no share of property except a small share of manuscript fees. Is there such a feudal emperor in the world?

### **It's not easy to get things done in "Cao's camp"**

Qi: I came into contact with Mao Zedong in the 1950s and left him in the 1960s. From my dealings with him, I did not feel that he lacked democracy more than any other leader I had met. Take the case of the Eight Secretaries Incident that Li Zhisui talked about. At that time, many leaders of the Central Committee thought that young people (i.e. the Eight Secretaries of Departments) criticising the leaders of the Central Office was anti-party, but Mao Zedong said that young people could criticise the leaders of the Central Office. "If that is anti-party, then I am also anti-party, and I am willing to be flogged together with them". The "Eight Secretaries Incident" who had been criticised and struggled for months at that time all bawled when they heard Mao's words! Even Li Zhisui had to admit that Mao respected him, spoke to him as an equal (although he attacked this as superficial and hypocritical), and apologised to him on a few occasions when he had wronged him. He says of Mao's apology to him, "It's hard to get things done in Cao's camp, isn't it!" Absolutely true in the plot. Mao often said this when apologising to his own men, meaning that like Cao Cao, he had gone back on his word and blamed the wrong person. Li Zhisui's attack on the General Line, the Great Leap Forward and the People's Commune Movement advocated by Mao Zedong was that they had brought disaster to the Chinese people, and it would take a monograph to clarify the historical criticism of the creation and development of the General Line, the Great Leap Forward and the People's Commune, then known as the Three Red Flags, and their achievements and mistakes. Indignation and attacks are not conducive to the knowledge of history, nor are they conducive to the advancement of history. Of course, it would be impossible to ask Li Zhisui to speak clearly on this issue, given his level and experience. I only hope that the world will not forget that Mao Zedong spent no less effort in correcting the errors of the "Three Red Flags" than he did in advocating the "Three Red Flags", being the first to propose stopping the boastfulness, the first to suggest that the whole Party should be calm, the first to demand that the truth be told at the lower levels. Mao Zedong was the first to oppose the premature entry into communism, and so on. It was also Mao Zedong who wept at the suffering of the people and punished himself by not eating meat. It is well known that Mao Zedong's daily life was far less than that of a small business owner today, he did not eat much good food, a bowl of red meat was his greatest enjoyment, how else could he punish himself! Under the leadership of Mao Zedong and his Party, the economy of the countryside was finally fully restored in the mid-1960s, and as Ye Jing says, "He who is free from blame is also good at mending his faults." Mao Zedong was at least a "good mender of faults"! In Li Zhisui's writing, China was in a state of mourning during the Great Leap Forward and the People's Commune, with countless starving people dying. The shortcomings and mistakes of the Great Leap Forward and the People's Commune, as well as the natural and man-made disasters at that time, had indeed caused suffering to the Chinese people, but it was not as dark as Li Zhisui had described. Why should we exaggerate? Since the late 1950s, China has had an annual population count, which is basically accurate, and by the time of the Cultural Revolution China's population was nearly 800 million.

Perhaps they were all the dead souls of Gogol's writing. Then wouldn't China have solved its population problem long ago and still be advocating family planning?

### **Cultural Revolution secrets copied wrongly**

Lu: The third chapter of Li Zhisui's memoirs is about the Cultural Revolution, which foreigners consider to be a credible history of the Cultural Revolution.

Qi: Li Zhisui describes the Cultural Revolution as a mere power struggle between Mao Zedong and Liu Shaoqi. With this vulgar opinion, one cannot write a credible history of the Cultural Revolution, a movement that lasted ten years and involved the fate of hundreds of millions of people, which could not have been rooted in the power struggle of one or two people, although in all major historical events, the struggle between two ideas and two concepts is again often concretely reflected in the struggle between their representative figures' "power struggle". It can be said that with regard to the far-reaching historical roots of the Cultural Revolution, the exploration of its historical inevitability and contingency and all the historical mysteries associated with it, Li Zhisui has not even crossed the doorstep yet. I was arrested in January 1968 and did not take part in the whole process of the Cultural Revolution, but I personally took part in the historical activities of the early period of the Cultural Revolution and I know this period of history better. As far as I understand it, Li Zhisui's job at the beginning of the Cultural Revolution was only to see Mao Zedong, Jiang Qing and a group of people, he was neither a member of the Cultural Revolution Group nor did he hold any position in the office of the Cultural Revolution Group. In my opinion, apart from the leftist activities he personally participated in, most of his memoirs were cobbled together from existing newspaper sources and from what others had written. In putting together the memoirs, he faked the scene in order to make people believe that he was involved in core secrets, thus making the memoirs full of mistakes. Take the first thing he wrote about the Cultural Revolution, the February Outline, he said that he attended the meeting of the five-member Cultural Revolution Group held in Wuhan on 8 February 1967 and that Mao Zedong spoke at the meeting, but as we can see from the book he wrote, this speech was copied in its original form from the speech of Mao Zedong on 21 December 1966 compiled by Guan Feng and Ai Siqi. Since you attended the high-level meeting on 8 February, is it not ridiculous that Mao's speech at this meeting should be copied from the minutes of the meeting several months ago! Then Li Zhisui wrote: "Peng Zhen said, 'Shouldn't we write a central approval and ask the chairman to read it and send it to the whole party?' Mao said, 'You go write it, I won't read it. I knew immediately that the big disaster (of Peng Zhen and Lu Dingyi) was coming and that Mao had set a trap.'" In fact, at that time Mao, Jiang Qing and Kang Sheng were not yet aware of Peng Zhen's intentions, nor had they studied the February Outline carefully; Mao and Jiang Qing still wanted to rely on Peng Zhen to open up the Cultural Revolution; Jiang Qing also explained to Peng Zhen before he returned to Beijing the leftist forces in Beijing that she had contacted and asked him to find Qi Benyu, Guan Feng and Li Xifan when he returned to Beijing, so when Peng Zhen returned to Beijing for the meeting, he made sure that Guan Feng and Qi Benyu would be present. It was only after the incident of suppressing leftist writings in Beijing that Mao Zedong went back to study the February Outline and realised that it was a document to suppress academic criticism.

### **Li Zhisui is too insolent**

Qi: Li Zhisui's "push-back" was not only this, he also "knew three years in advance", that is, he knew three years before that Mao was setting up a trap against Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping. Other fabrications, such as the claim that the list of the Central Cultural Revolution Group was proposed by

Lin Biao, or the claim that the Central Cultural Revolution Group had set up a plan to defeat Wang Dongxing at the end of 1966, are all nonsense! The reader has only to compare his recollections with those written by the parties concerned to see the flaws. The organs of the CPC Central Committee, especially Zhongnanhai, had strict working discipline. The duty of the health care doctor was to protect the health of the chief, and he could not be involved in party and state secrets. Not only the Communist Party, but also the American Republican and Democratic Parties, which claim to be democratic, would probably not allow a health practitioner to be involved in their core secrets! Moreover, Mao's general attitude towards doctors, and towards most intellectuals who drank "foreign ink", could be described as "respectful and distant". This was one of Mao's weaknesses, and it was well known in the world, which helps one to deduce Li Zhisui's position in Zhongnanhai. In his memoirs, however, Li Zhisui is not ashamed to say that not only did he often participate in Central Committee meetings that were of central importance to the Party and State, but he could even attend meetings that only a few members of the Central Politburo attended, and he sat in the same room with Mao Zedong, Peng Zhen and others, which was really scary! In fact Mao Zedong's health care doctor is not only you Li Zhisui, before Li Zhisui, there have been at least five or six people, they include Mao Zedong's most trusted veteran cadre of the Red Army, Minister of Health Fu Lianzhang, none of whom have ever participated in the Central Politburo meetings which are the core secrets of the Party and the state. Not to mention doctors, even Mao's secretaries and guards, including his most trusted chief of the confidential office, Ye Zilong, and old party members like Wang Dongxing, the chief of guards, were not allowed to attend the meetings of the Central Politburo, and they were all Long March cadres! When the Central Politburo was in session, Ye Zilong and Wang Dongxing occasionally came over to take care of things, but they could only stand on the sidelines and watch. It was not until the Cultural Revolution when the Central Committee asked Wang Dongxing to attend the meetings of the Central Cultural Revolution Group, at which time the Central Politburo met, that Wang could have a seat at the back. A doctor, a new member of the Party, was allowed to sit at a meeting attended by a few members of the Central Politburo, together with Mao Zedong and other leaders of the Central Committee. Not only was Li Zhisui not allowed to attend the central meetings where party and state secrets were discussed, but he was also not qualified to attend the general meetings of the central government. Li Zhisui said that he had attended a meeting convened by Mao Zedong to investigate the "Eight Secretaries" case, and had taken notes. In fact, all the participants in this meeting were leaders of the organs directly under the Central Committee, the lowest-ranking of whom was me. There is no record of this meeting, except for a brief summary of the meeting by Lin Ke and Peng Dazhang (one of the leaders of the Central Office). Li Zhisui did not attend this meeting at all. Li Zhisui's "records" are mostly based on hearsay, and his statement that "Mao said that eight people, Wang Shuwen and Liu Zongyuan, changed the law and sought to strengthen the country during the reign of Tang Shunzong" and so on is incorrect. The two kings were Wang Shuwen and Wang Pi, and the eight sages were Liu Zongyuan, Liu Yuxi and others. Mao Zedong, who was well versed in history books, certainly would not mix up the two kings and the eight sages, but Li Zhisui, who claimed to have read the Twenty-four Histories, dared to make a statement on behalf of the sages without even having a clear understanding of this general knowledge. The "little monk" can really "stretch his legs"<sup>447</sup>.

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<sup>447</sup> This refers to a tale in which a common monk shared sleeping quarters on a small boat one night with several students. He lay crouched up, not daring to stretch his legs for fear of disturbing the students. However, he heard them say some things that were wrong, and interrupted them with two questions about historical personages about whom they displayed their ignorance. His awe of the scholars then disappeared and he said "If this is what you say, then you will have to allow this little monk to stretch his feet." This short

### Mao Zedong had extra-marital affairs

Lu: Li Zhisui said that Mao Zedong "indulged in sex and lust" and "led a rotten life", "always used women as his playthings" and "an adherent of Daoist sexual practices". He recruited a large number of beautiful and young girls to join him. In the palace, "women take turns to pay tribute like serving dishes." Several people share a big quilt, covered in rain and dew"<sup>448</sup>. Are these all facts? If you can't answer, keep silent. I want to get the facts right, so don't be a "man of honour" and speak out of turn!

Qi: Mao Zedong was my mentor and my difficult star. My eighteen years of revolution were guided by Mao; my eighteen years in prison, even though it was Jiang Qing and Wang Dongxing who sent the false accusation materials, it was also Mao who made the final decision. "Success is also Xiao He, and defeat is also Xiao He"<sup>449</sup>. In fact, I have a responsibility to clarify the facts on these issues, and it is not in my character to remain silent. In fact, long before you asked these questions, I had already explained to many people that Li Zhisui's accusation of Mao's womanizing was a lie and a fabrication. But most of those who have read Li Zhisui's memoirs believe Li's lies and fabrications rather than my explanations. Only one American physician, Miss Hu Dingyi, believed my explanation. She said that Qi Benyu was imprisoned by Mao Zedong for 18 years. If there are such facts, he doesn't need to hide them for Mao Zedong. Ms. Hu's only reservation is that maybe Qi Benyu has never heard of these things, although it is unlikely because he had lived by Mao Zedong's side for many years. If there are these facts, it is unimaginable that he has not heard about them at all. It's a pity that there are too few people like Ms. Hu who maintain rational thinking. Many people are preconceived and partial to Li Zhisui. Instead, they think that I am trying to write for Mao Zedong. This is really sighing! Kind-hearted people are easily deceived. If a writer makes up a story, he can earn their tears and defraud them of money. How can they deal with a person who deliberately forges history there! Soon after the liberation of Beijing, I was promoted to the Political Secretary Office of the General Office of the CPC Central Committee. By the way, Li Zhisui said that the director of the Political Secretary's Office was Chen Boda, but he was wrong, Chen Boda was never the director of the Political Secretary's Office, the first director of the Political Secretary's Office was Shi Zhe, and the deputy directors were Jiang Qing and Tian Jiaying. After Shi Zhe, Tian Jiaying became the director, and the deputy directors were Peng Yuanchang, He Zai, Chen Bingzhen and so on. In April 1966, the Political Secretariat was incorporated into the Central Secretariat Bureau, with Tong Xiaopeng as Director and me as Deputy Director. The Central Political Secretariat was also Mao Zedong's secretary's office, so I had a lot of contact with Mao's group of people during my time in office. I knew Ye Zilong, Jiang Ying, Xu Yefu, Lin Ke, Wang Dongxing, Wang Jingxian, Li Yinqiao, Shen Tong, Wang Yuqing, Gao Zhi, Wu Xujun, etc. I knew them all well and had a good relationship with them, but I had never met or heard anyone say that Mao had played with women. Mao Zedong lived a simple life, and there is no such thing as "indulging in sex" or "being a rotten person". Great people have ordinary desires, and I know that many great people have made the same mistakes as ordinary people in having extramarital affairs, and although I believe that everyone should limit their private life to what is socially acceptable, I do not consider such matters to be "rotten to the core". So if I had seen or heard of Mao Zedong doing such things, I would have said yes, but I really did not see or

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story satirizes the kind of scholars who are not really talented but like to show off, and who are finally despised because they reveal their flaws and become a joke.

<sup>448</sup> This expression means treating things and people equally. It is a very old expression for not overly favouring just a few people.

<sup>449</sup> This is a Chinese idiom from the Western Han Dynasty. Han Xin, the founding hero of the Western Han Dynasty was recommended by Xiao He to become a general; his killing was also Xiao He's strategy. It is used as a metaphor for things that are caused by the same person.

hear of Mao Zedong doing such things while I was in office, so I can only say no. I do not need to perjure myself on this issue for Mao Zedong, because perjury in front of the court of history would be damaging not only to history but to him. The perjurer of history, like the forger of history, not only loses the character of reality, but also has the legacy of history. In fact, on the question of private life, what can be blamed on Mao is not the pile of lies concocted by Li Zhisui, but his marriage to He Zizhen on Jinggangshan, since Mao's marriage to Yang Kaihui was still in existence at the time of the Mao-He alliance. To be honest, I asked Zhou Enlai about this bit of history in the summer of 1966, and Zhou's reply was that the people at Jinggangshan had heard at the time that Yang Kaihui had been killed by the Guomindang reactionaries. General Zhu De had a similar situation, and at that time the Central Government had explained these issues.

### **A bed that is not too spacious even for one person**

Qi: In the 1950s, Mao Zedong lived in three large houses on the north and south of the Juxiang Bookstore. The east and west houses were more than 30 square meters each. They were divided by Mao Zedong and Jiang Qing. The middle house was less than 20 square meters. They were guards, secretaries, and nurses, and the waiter's duty room. In Mao Zedong's house, there was a big bed in the middle, half a bed with books. Later, Mao Zedong lived at the swimming pool. The house also had one bed and half a bed with books. These beds are not spacious enough for one person to sleep, how can several people sleep together, rain and dew! Li Zhisui's disinformation is outrageous! Mao Zedong was the leader of the whole nation and was extremely prestigious. He took great care to maintain his image, a fact that Li Zhisui also admitted. It is a commoner, right, who has to keep his extramarital affairs a secret. Mao Zedong, who is very careful to maintain his image, has no qualms about disclosing his secrets to Li Zhisui, and even discusses his illicit sexual affairs with him, can this be true? Mao Zedong had so many subordinates and secretaries, how come he did not open up his secrets to others, but had to confess to you, Li Zhisui! Mao Zedong's apartment was not locked and was never locked. Outside the door was the duty room for the guards, secretaries, nurses and attendants. This duty room was all-weather, staffed 24 hours a day, and all activities were recorded. In such an environment, how did Mao Zedong "use the art of the room to control the women"? And how could women be "served like a dish in turn"?

### **No secret discussions between Mao and Jiang**

Qi: Soon after the Cultural Revolution began, I was designated as Mao's secretary, and when Mao was away, I was the chief steward (acting director of the Central Office) who stayed behind in Zhongnanhai. I often went to Mao's place during this period, sometimes late at night, but how come I never saw in Mao's place the kind of secret play in the room that Li Zhisui painted for us! On the contrary, I saw Mao Zedong treating his female comrades with extra respect. Including Wu Xujun, a nurse with whom he was in contact day and night, whom Mao treated with great respect. Because I had been in Zhongnanhai for a long time, I was familiar with the attendants of Zhongnanhai, and there were indeed beautiful and extraordinary young girls among them, who were most willing to bring water and hot towels to Mao, and they often said to me that "the Chairman was really great, not only politically great, but also simple in life". Mao Zedong also treated them with respect, sometimes asking them their names and families and saying a few words of encouragement. Some of the girls also cleaned my office for me and talked to me about everything. They were aggrieved and came to me to complain, and sometimes when someone said or did something indecent to them, they also came to me to complain. They told me about several people's indecent acts, the most serious one being done by Li Zhisui's good friend, but they never told me about any indecent act by Mao. What Li Zhisui's best friend did, Li Zhisui later learned about, but with a twist of his pen he went so far as to press it hard on Mao's head. It is understandable that the party should be

attacking the same person, but what is the point of distorting the truth? Li Zhisui's dirtiest rumour was that Mao had reached a secret compromise with Jiang Qing, that Jiang Qing had allowed Mao to have sex with women and that Mao had allowed Jiang Qing to participate in the Cultural Revolution. Moreover, Mao and Jiang Qing are not simple individuals. Everything they do is under the scrutiny of the Party, the masses, and especially the many Chinese and foreign political enemies, and it is impossible for them to make such a compromise. In the decades of revolutionary history, no one has ever found Mao Zedong trading party principles for personal gain. For all her faults, Jiang Qing's spirited character is hard to change, she is a Nora<sup>450</sup> and Qingwen<sup>451</sup> type of character, she was so jealous of even the dead Yang Kaihui, how can one imagine that she could reach any secret compromise with Mao on such issues! I think that calling Mao Zedong an "autocratic and dictatorial feudal emperor" and identifying the Cultural Revolution as the "Mao-Liu controversy" only shows Li Zhisui's ignorance and vulgarity in his political perceptions. As a doctor who stayed abroad and lived for a long time in the centre of political power in a big country, even though he had millions of self-righteous "insights", it was difficult for him to speak up. Once he found an opportunity to vent his long-suppressed desire for political expression, he suddenly burst out and thought he had become a political commentator overnight. It is inevitable that when one is pleased with oneself, one can easily forget oneself and exaggerate and distort. I think this is understandable. But what cannot be tolerated is Li Zhisui's use of his position as Mao's health care doctor to fabricate Mao's "false privacy" and deceive the world. This is no longer a normal human psychological need, but the catharsis of a morally corrupt person. The yellow and nasty things written by Li Zhisui are actually copied from the yellow tabloids on the street stalls. The difference is that apart from a few well-known figures such as Jiang Qing, Zhang Yufeng and film stars, the yellow tabloids could not reproduce the names of many women. Li Zhisui will still brag about himself and describe himself as being at Mao Zedong's side. This important person pretends to frighten people, trying to convince people that all the lies he fabricated are facts. These are two of the most thought-provoking rumours of the past and present: that Zeng Shen killed a man<sup>452</sup> and that Mao Zedong played with women.

Lu: There are seven or eight references to you in Li Zhisui's memoirs. He says that you went to Shanghai in March 1966 to help Chen Boda and Jiang Qing draft the "Five ..... (garbled)?"

Qi: I don't need Li Zhisui's defence. It was with the enthusiasm of building an ideal socialist state in China that I took the initiative, actively, consciously and unreservedly to join the Cultural Revolution led by Mao Zedong, although it lasted only a year and a half, but I was responsible for everything in

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<sup>450</sup> Nora is the central character of Ibsen's play *The Doll's House*. At the start, she is happy with her life as the pampered wife of Torvald, but comes to realise that she is not a "silly little girl" but an intelligent and capable woman. Looking after her husband when he becomes ill requires skills that rise above those of merely being a wife and she increasingly rebels against society's patriarchal standards.

<sup>451</sup> Qingwen is a minor character in the great Chinese classic *A Dream of Red Mansions*. The story follows the fortunes of a noble family in decline. Qingwen is one of a number of maidservants attached to the Jia family's heir, Baoyu. She has a hot temper and easily offends people, but she is alone among the females in the Jia Mansion to refuse to accept that she is destined to be a slave, and that the master must be unconditionally obeyed. Of all of Baoyu's maids, she is the only one who dares to argue with Baoyu when reprimanded, but is also extremely devoted to him.

<sup>452</sup> "Zeng Shen kills people" is an idiom from the Warring States period. It arose from a story in which someone with the same name of Zeng Shan killed a person in Zeng's hometown. Zeng's mother was sitting outside her home using a shuttlecock to weave her clothes when someone came up and said "Zeng Shen killed someone". Zeng's mother ignored him. Not long after, a second person ran up to her saying "Zeng Shen really killed someone". She said, "My son would never kill anyone." But after a while, when a third person reported the alleged killing by Zeng Shen, his mother suddenly became nervous, threw away the shuttle, grabbed a ladder and escaped over the wall. Although his mother trusted him, three people spreading the same rumour caused her to no longer believe in her son.

this year and a half of work. What happened to me during the Cultural Revolution was a matter of chance, but the Cultural Revolution was inevitable under the historical conditions of the time, and no one could escape it. You may not get up tomorrow, but the sun will still rise, there is no way out. Our unprecedentedly huge ethnic group can reach maturity only through the process of suffering, and history can only sigh deeply about this! But Li Zhisui's recollections of me were also copied from irresponsible so-called "documentary literature". In March 1966 I was the head of the history section of Red Flag magazine, not the head of the Secretarial Bureau of the General Office of the Central Committee, which I became later. In August 1967 I was still working in the Central Cultural Revolution and was not arrested. You, Li Zhisui, who lived in Zhongnanhai and supported Lin Ke and me during the "Eight Secretaries Incident", and who often dealt with us, can be considered my friend, so how can you copy and write indiscriminately?

### **The early conspiracy against Liu Shaoqi is too bizarre**

Lu: In his memoirs, Li Zhisui said that Mao Zedong treated him well at that time, so why did he write such a memoir?

Qi: I heard from a friend who returned from a family visit outside that Li Zhisui's memoirs were not originally like this, but were later changed to this form after the publisher offered a heavy sum of money in request for the changes. If this rumour is true, then this book, like other pamphlets against communism produced in response to political needs, is the product of some political agenda, and Li Zhisui is nothing more than a Judas who sold out his mentor for thirty pieces of silver. But I am not content to simply caricature Li Zhisui as a vile Judas. He was never a true disciple of Jesus. He was a descendant of a feudal imperial physician and later a freelancer nurtured by the consciousness of the Western liberal tradition. Communist consciousness was alien to him and his decision to return to his country was a mistake in his life. It was the opposite of his philosophy of life, his values and his worldview system. These analyses are, of course, my judgement based on his actions; Li Zhisui himself could not have had such a clear understanding of himself. In terms of philosophical thought, he is shallow, extremely shallow, just as my medical knowledge is shallow compared to his. It is ridiculous to dress up such a character as an "insider's knowledge" and have him shouting "private secrets" in people's ears in a mysterious manner. It cannot be said that Li Zhisui's memoir does not contain any facts, no, he writes some facts, especially things that he directly experienced and that do not conflict with his creative intentions. For example, Mao's attitude towards his illness, the secret placement of a wiretap around Mao, Mao's persistence in fighting the Yangtze River and the waves, and his portrayal of the character and style of Jiang Qing, Wang Dongxing and others are not only true as a whole but also true to the plot. But as soon as political reporting or analysis is involved, he turns away from it, and historical truth and his political orientation become mutually incompatible enemies. Even in the case of life events, as long as they were tied to politics, his pen would be distorted. For example, his rumour that Mao Zedong attempted to cancel Liu Shaoqi's health care as early as the early 1960s, leaving him to die of illness, is bizarrely fabricated! Li Zhisui says his memoirs are a "historical record" of "the suffering of the common people" in China. Ironically, while Li Zhisui's memoirs were making the rounds overseas, the ordinary Chinese people spontaneously started an unprecedented "Red Sun Fever". Thousands of old workers, old peasants and young people who went to the countryside yesterday devoutly remembered their long-dead leader, singing Mao's praises over and over again.

### **Seeing one's moral character through plagiarism**

Qi: The millions of "living souls" whom Li Zhisui considered to have been "charred" by Mao Zedong, without any public opinion guidance or any organisational directive, started the "Red Sun Fever"

which spread across the land of China. What is Li Zhisui's explanation for this phenomenon? In his preface, Li Zhisui is very proud of all the lies he has created, but these lies are no longer new to the Chinese people! Various publications attacking Mao had been in vogue for some time before this. Li Zhisui's book is very similar to Lin Qingshan's book Jiang Qing's Confidential Secretary, not only similar but with traces of the former book being copied from the latter, the difference being that Lin Qingshan had not been Mao's health care doctor and could not invent his own "personal experience", so he had to impersonate Qi Benyu and Yan Changgui to attack Mao as a feudal emperor. Qi Benyu himself was so outraged by the book that he solemnly filed a complaint with the Beijing Municipal People's Court, but the Beijing Municipal People's Court ignored my complaint. No one believed Lin Qingshan's lies after they were exposed by Qi Benyu and Yan Changgui, but unlike Li Zhisui, who had been Mao's health care doctor, who could have imagined that he and the lie-maker Lin Qingshan were first-class people! Li Zhisui not only attacked Mao Zedong, except for individuals such as Peng Dehuai, he was no good person in the Grand View Garden. Even Zhou Enlai, respected by the Chinese people, was Mao Zedong's "slave" and "loyal dog". Li was deeply "disgusted" seeing Zhou Enlai kneeling in front of Mao Zedong and reporting work. Oops!! I have seen Mao Zedong and Zhou Enlai discussing state affairs dozens of times, but I have not been able to see this scene once. In addition, Deng Yingchao was a "loach-like character", "extremely selfish and self-serving", and he was deeply "disgusted", not to mention the others, who were corrupt from top to bottom! ..... Is it only Mao Zedong that Li Zhisui is attacking?

**[Note: This record has not been read by Qi Benyu before publication and is compiled under the sole responsibility of the compiler - Chung Chi Lam]**

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