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THE AGRARIAN REFORM IN CHINA

By Kim

The most profound and universal change which has taken place in China during the course of the past few years has been the agrarian reform. It has a two-fold content: nationalization of the land and the transfer of private property from the landlords to the peasants.

In the suburbs of the large cities, land belonging to the landlords has been confiscated; the land belonging to business men and industrialists has been expropriated, as has that of the rich peasants, as a consequence of the "Law on Agrarian Reform." All these confiscated and expropriated lands have been nationalized and can neither be bought nor sold. Until the State requires these lands for expansion of the cities, they have been made available to the poor peasants who have to pay only the agricultural tax but no land rent.

The large forests, sandy plains, great lakes and marshes, as well as lands adjoining the railroads, have likewise been nationalized. These lands are now either directly managed by the State, or managed jointly by the State and private individuals, or leased by the State to private individuals.

There are 30 State farms in northeast China (Manchuria). They include a total cultivated area of 173,600 hectares (428,966 acres). Cultivation there is mechanized. In the rest of the country there are 15 State farms: 10 in northern China, 3 in eastern China, 1 in southern China and 1 in the Chinese Northwest. The total area of these 15 farms is 37,000 hectares (91,427 acres) and they employ 4,200 functionaries and workers. The Chinese collective farms are still in a very backward and very primitive stage, especially those situated outside of Manchuria, both as regards their limited scope and their low technical level. They have no weight in national agricultural production.

Apart from these nationalized lands, the entire Chinese countryside can be divided into four important categories:

1. The regions in which agrarian reform was carried out in 1947-1948 in conformity with the "Agrarian Law" proclaimed in October 1947. These embrace 145 million men and women, 36.25% of the total Chinese rural population, and extend over all of Manchuria, the old liberated areas of northern China and a part of central China. In addition certain villages in the Yellow River valley, although liberated after proclamation of the "Temporary Interruption of Agrarian Reform in the Newly Liberated Regions" in May 1943, did obtain agrarian reform after their liberation, thanks to their proximity to the old liberated areas. These villages must therefore also be included in category 1.

2. The regions in which agrarian reform was carried out in the main during 1950-1951. This agrarian reform was based on the "Law on Agrarian Reform" proclaimed in June 1950. These regions were liberated after the autumn of 1948. They extend over the Yangtse valley, the Pearl River valley and the southwest provinces, taking in a population of 165 million people, or about 41.25% of the total rural population. The lands included in this category can be subdivided into two groups: (a) Those which have not only been subject to redistribution, but also to "reexamination" (the last stage of agrarian re-

form); (b) those which have been redistributed but not reexamined.

3. The regions where agrarian reform has been started but where it has not yet reached the stage of expropriation and of redistribution of the land. Here also are involved regions liberated after the autumn of 1948 and located in the same part of the country as those in category 2. They hold some 90 million inhabitants or 22.5% of the total rural population of the country.

4. The regions inhabited by national minorities, where agrarian reform has not yet been undertaken and where the government has not even proclaimed it, because real living conditions of the peasants there are unknown. For the most part this has to do with the most peripheral and isolated regions of the country, where labor productivity is very low and the population represents less than 2% of the entire rural Chinese population. We will therefore not deal with this category in our study.

1. The Regions In Which Agrarian Reform Was Completed Prior to 1948

In the old "region of the Chinese Soviets," where the land had been distributed before 1937, the kulaks grew strong during the war of resistance against Japanese imperialism, and the land again became concentrated in a few hands. In the regions liberated in the course of the war of resistance, there had been no land distribution at all. The revolutionary peasant movement made its appearance there right after the war. On November 6, 1946, a Communist author Hua Kang wrote: "Following upon the war's end," the peasants "revived. They could only be satisfied by being guaranteed ownership of the land. Once this awakening had occurred, the government* could never suppress

*of the Communist Party.

it again." The same year Liu Chao Chi admitted to an American: "We did not intend to change our policy, but several million peasants have risen and are demanding agrarian reform!" Mao Tse-Tung himself has given a special explanation: "In certain places the peasants went into action so fast that they left the Communist Party behind." The American adds: "The conversation with Liu Chao Chi also gave me additional information: many Communists came from landlord families and their lands were occupied by the peasants." This pressure compelled the CP to proclaim the "May 4th Directives" (1946) allowing the peasants to expropriate lands in a partial way. But this expropriation was highly restricted in its scope. In certain places, the lands of landlords were not touched if they had not been traitors (during the war against Japan). In other places, landlords were allowed to keep land two or three times as large as simple peasants. Nothing of the landowners was touched except the land, that is to say, neither the houses, working equipment, nor furniture, etc. The kulaks could keep all of their property.

On the other hand, as a result of a prolonged class-collaborationist policy, many landlord and kulak elements penetrated into the party and apparatus of the regime, setting up obstructions even to this very partial reform and organizing "protection" for the landlords and kulaks. Members of the CP tried to profit personally from the agrarian reform, appropriated larger sections of land and even seized

or stole the material gains of the masses. They took the major portion of the best lands, houses, clothing, cattle, furniture, etc. In addition, there were no few "comrades" who set themselves above the will of the people, abused their power, refused to follow the majority opinion, ordered the masses about as if they were servants, acted in arbitrary fashion and completely patterned themselves after the Kuomintang bosses. Many party members and cadres set up small groups against the people, like "dangerous wasps' nests." "They oppose the poor peasants, show hostility to the people and draw away from the masses..." (Open letter of the Central Bureau of the CP of the Shansi-Hopei-Shantung-Honan region to members of the party -- January 1948.)

Not only have the peasants felt that the policy of the CP was not one favoring a deep-seated agrarian reform; not only have they gone beyond it by violating the property rights of the landlords and kulaks; they were also highly incensed at these bad members of the CP. Liu Chao-Chi stated in February 1948: "The masses are rising spontaneously in order to fight the bad members and cadres of the party. In many places party members and cadres have been arrested and beaten. This has caused anxiety among members and cadres of the party." (Liu Chao-Chi: "The model example of agrarian reform in Ping-chan and of cleansing the party.")

It is precisely under this pressure of the peasant masses, that the CP center "proclaimed agrarian reform on October 10, 1947...in consideration of this situation" to quote the words of Liu Chao-Chi in May 1950. This law decreed the complete expropriation of the lands of landlords and rich peasants, as well as of all other property in their hands, except commercial and industrial property. These lands were to be handed over to landless peasants or to those possessing very little land. The local peasant committee was to be the organ of expropriation and of redivision of the lands. In fact, the Associations of Poor Peasants had become the moving element in this campaign. The CP and the newly established Peasant Associations openly acknowledged that "certain 'corrections' made in the past had been erroneous. The CP has examined and discussed these errors." (Letter of the provisional peasant Committee of the Shansi-Siuyan border region to the peasants.)

An agrarian revolutionary movement embracing a population of 100 million people was thus unleashed. The profound character of this movement can be demonstrated simply by the following fact: The CP stated to the peasants: "We have confirmed that these mangy sheep (reference is to the bad cadres) are not really our cadres...(and that they) have been liquidated in all spheres. The people can fight these bad men according to its desire and punish them if it wishes." The CP opened its village organization to the public. "It first asked the poor peasants who were non-members of the party, then the middle peasants, to participate in them; there were only 20 to 30 members present at meetings whereas there were 70 to 80 non-party peasants..." (Liu Chao-Chi: "The model example of agrarian reform in Ping-chan and of cleansing the party.") The CP adopted this method as the principal method of cleansing the party in this period. In this kind of party meetings, all the members of the village organization of the party were in effect submitted to examination by the peasant masses. The members who were criticized by the masses were

immediately punished by the party. Those whom the masses did not consider as qualified cadres but who were active, were received as members. If there were several members in the village enjoying the confidence of the masses, they were charged with the cleansing on the original basis. If all the members were corrupt, the superior organ dissolved the entire party organization and rebuilt the party. We can thus see that in the movement for agrarian reform the village organizations of the party went through a thorough-going reform, and rural power was similarly reformed, as we have already indicated in chapter 2.*

*Not published in this bulletin.

The army went through a reform on a smaller scale: landlords and rich peasants were not eligible for enlistment in the army.

This is a genuine peasant revolutionary movement from top to bottom. The old land relations have been completely destroyed by this movement. The land has been transferred from the status of private property of landlords to that of peasants. The rich peasants have met the same fate as the landlords and their lands were likewise redistributed. In the Northeast where there is more land and a relatively smaller rural population, the peasants have received larger parcels which secures their livelihood, whereas elsewhere the land obtained by the peasants varies in size and some of the farms are inadequate for a living.

In the regions of this category, the middle peasantry has become the main stratum in the countryside, making up about 50 to 70 percent of the rural population and in certain regions, such as the Wuhsian district in Shansi province, 80%. The land, cattle, tools and food products which the middle peasants possess are percentagewise practically in the same proportion as the population figures, but always slightly higher. For example, according to an inquiry based on six typical villages in the Wuhsian district, the middle peasants constitute 80% of the population, possess 88.7% of the land, 84.6% of the cattle, and produce 86% of the food products; in three villages of Pei-chen (Northeast), the middle peasants make up 63% of the population, own 75.7% of the land and 87.5% of the cattle, and produce 76.8% of the food products. The poor peasants are in inverse proportion to the middle peasants: they are relatively less numerous in the Wuhsian district of Shansi province, and more numerous in the Northeast. According to the census of these six typical villages, the poor peasants represent not less than 28.6% of the population and maximum of 48.8% of the population. On the other hand, according to a census taken in 28 villages of the three provinces Shansi, Hopei and Chachar, out of 1650 peasant families considered as poor peasants prior to agrarian reform, 1439, or 80%, have been changed into middle peasants.

Agricultural production has greatly increased in quantity in these regions. In the district of Wuhsian of Shansi province, for example, production in 1949 had already surpassed that of 1936 by 8%. If we take as the index base 100 the maximum production figures for the Northeast reached during the years 1943 or 1944, production in 1950 reached the 122 mark in certain regions, in certain others 119, or 113.19. However, for the entire Northeast, production in 1950 was

only 99.8% of that of 1943 (other sources place it at 93%). After 1951, the figures rose slightly. In general, it is very possible that production in this region has attained the highest level of the pre-war years.

In the past there has been a shortage of labor in the countryside. Today there is already a certain surplus of labor. The losses in cattle during the war were extremely high. In the Wuhsian district, for example, two thirds of the cattle were lost, but in 1949 the pre-war figure was already surpassed by 18%. The number of model villages in the Northeast has increased slightly. The quantity of working tools has likewise reached the pre-war level.

There is also a certain improvement in the living conditions of the peasants; a part of them is already able to save a surplus of provisions. In the Wuhsian district, 47.2% of the population has enough to eat and to spend (for non-food needs), 6.5% does not have enough to eat; the balance has enough to eat but not enough for other expenditures. 45% of the houses destroyed during the war were rebuilt in 1949-1950. According to the census of several northeast villages, the tax on surplus food varied between 47% and 18%; but this surplus was unequally divided among the peasants. Two peasant families possessed about 100 catties of surplus food, whereas 286 families each had a surplus of only 3 to 5 catties. In several villages, 56.53% of the total population had a surplus of food whereas in other villages only 27% had surpluses. These statistics point up the class differentiation taking place in the countryside.

There has been a growth in purchasing power of the peasantry for industrial products. According to an official release, this buying power was 67.9% higher in 1951 than in 1950, and 223% higher than in 1949. According to a census taken in 5 villages of the Yangtse valley, after the agrarian reform, purchasing power increased 32% for textiles, 10.3% for matches, 7.9% for oil, 6.5% for salt, and 7.9% for soap. Average annual consumption of the middle peasants has increased slightly in comparison with pre-war years.

According to the census of the Wuhsian district, the sale of land has already begun. In these six villages, 11.8% of the population sold their land in 1948 and 1949; the sold land represented 2.8% of the total acreage. The indicated causes for this sale of land were: need for coordinating production (exchange of bad land for good land; land further away as against closer land; land exchanged for cattle, etc.) for 46% of the sold land; change of occupation or of residence for about 10% of the sold land; sickness, death, economic trouble, etc., for about 44% of the sold land (by 4.32% of the total population). Some peasants have even "sold all their land and become homeless; others sold half the land which had been distributed to them (for example, Wang Chin-wei received 10.3 mou of land and sold 7.1 mou of it because of sickness." New China Monthly, vol. 3, n. 1).

A similar situation has come about in the Northeast, in fact, it is universal in all regions where agrarian reform has been carried out. According to a typical piece of information, of the peasants who have sold their land 73% are (tenant) farmers, 12% poor peasants and 15% middle peasants. The reasons for these sales were: a) Return to China proper (the Northeast represents Manchuria!); b) Lack of

working tools and inability to cultivate the land; c) Exchange for better land; d) Change of occupation.

The sale of land is accompanied by concentration of land. In the course of the years 1948-1949, the new kulaks in the district of Wuhsian possessed two, three or four times the average land holding. This situation is the same everywhere; only in the Northeast is the rhythm of concentration comparatively slower.

The rich peasants have similarly begun to hire labor. In most of these cases, however, only one, two or three agricultural workers are used, because the new kulaks are still cautious and timid.

As a result of the concentration of land and the shortage of labor for hire, which is inadequate to meet the needs of the new kulaks, they must seek other outlets for their capital. Usury has consequently reappeared. According to the census taken in the Northeast, a peasant "who loaned over 4,000 catties of wheat in the spring of 1950, earned over 2,000 catties of wheat as interest on this loan in the autumn." Another rich peasant "used the money earned by the sale of 700 catties of wheat in order to buy 1,500 catties by the system of pee-ching (sale of the crop before harvesting*)." The

*The pee-ching system is one of the oldest and crassest forms of exploitation in China. It means that before the crops are ripe they are bought on the spot at a price which is only 50% of the market price. When the crop is harvested it belongs completely to the purchaser. In the above-mentioned example, the kulak had made an on the spot purchase of the crops of a peasant which amounted to 1500 catties of wheat at a price equal to 700 catties.

usurer stated that "the interest obtained from the loan of wheat is greater than the money earned by raising hogs," "earning interest by lending wheat demands less physical and mental effort," etc. (New China Monthly, vol. 4, n. 1.) Another outlet for this capital is commercial speculation.

In general the social movement of the peasantry is already ebbing in these regions. The president of the peoples' government of the Northeast (Manchuria), Kao-Kang, declared at the first representative conference of the CP of the Northeast region:

"The party is in agreement on giving peasants and their families, who have become rich peasants by their labor and production following the agrarian reform, and who wish to leave the Party voluntarily, permission to do so. Those who show passivity toward the Party will lose their status as members, in conformity with Party statutes. But we hope that they will be good citizens politically, and in the meantime we have no intention of intervening in their commercial operations."

It is evident that the elements who played an active role in the movement for agrarian reform are now in retreat. Their situation may also mirror the general condition of the peasantry. It is not surprising that a peasant turns conservative after having received his share of the land. Today "production" is his number one task in

this region, and the government encourages him to get rich. The most urgent need of these peasants today is to be able to effect quick purchases of good quality working tools, fertilizer and lumber for the building of homes. The peasants are asking the State to grant them slightly higher prices for the sale of their agricultural products, above all for industrial raw materials; to reduce the number and variety of agricultural taxes, to pay for its purchases of agricultural products in money and not in kind, to grant loans at moderate interest rates, etc.

Up to now the government has neither had the means nor the will to confront the problems posed in these regions by the concentration of land, the new social polarization, etc.; on the contrary it continues to encourage the rich peasants. The CP has violently denounced the idea of "waiting for socialism" before living comfortably, as counterfeit propaganda by "those meddlers who do not take an active part in work." In July 1950 the People's Journal published an editorial declaring that "the enterprises of the rich peasants are protected by the laws of the peoples' government," that "the government's decree protecting the private property of the people must always be applied, that every illegal attitude of sabotage towards executing this policy, every attempt to encroach on the rights and land property of the people, must be resolutely corrected, and that those who violate these laws must be properly punished." On April 19, 1951, the North-East Daily also published an editorial commenting on "the rise in the level of development of rural economy in the Northeast region." There the "readjustment in distribution of the land" (that is to say, the new concentration of land) is considered as "favorable to the development of production." Attention is concentrated on the problem of technical aid to be given to the rich peasants, on "fixing reasonable prices for goods, food and industrial raw materials." There is not even a single word on aid to be granted the poor peasants or on the suppression of speculation and usury practiced by the rich peasants.

2. The Regions In Which The Land Was Distributed In 1950-1951

When the Army of Liberation extended its offensive from northern China towards the south, the peasant movement developed in an uneven way in the Yangtse valley and the Pearl River valley; in most of the regions the peasants received the CP with some trepidation. Only in the districts closest to the old liberated regions or in those where CP partisans had been operating previously did the peasants show themselves comparatively more active. Even after the regime of Chiang collapsed completely and the Army of Liberation occupied the whole country, the peasant movement had not as yet spread throughout the provinces of central, southern and southwest China. Nevertheless, rural society was beginning to undergo a transformation. The peasants in general refused to pay their debts. Peasant committees, controlled by "ragged" elements, appeared. In certain special places, the peasant movement attained a higher level of development, but in general it was uneven and neither universal nor profound.

In February, 1950, the department of Administrative Affairs published its "Directives" decreeing "that there must be no reform whatever in distribution of land before the harvest of the autumn of 1950, and that reform would be undertaken only in specially selected regions after this harvest. "Prior to putting distribution of land

into practice, a reduction in rent must be universally applied," and only such reduction in rent. "Prior to the effective redistribution of land and after the reduction of rent in conformity with this decree, landlords have the right to receive their (new) rent from the peasants, and the latter have the duty to pay, and the land of the landlord continues to belong to him." (Dispatch of the New China Press, February 28, 1950.) It was obvious that the new government had no intention of unleashing a universal and profound agrarian movement for rapidly smashing the landlords but that it was endeavoring to place agrarian reform as quickly as possible within a "reasonable, legal and just" framework, to be imposed in an orderly way and gradually.

On June 30 of the same year, the Central Government of the People formally proclaimed the "Law on Agrarian Reform of the People's Republic of China," for application in the regions where agrarian reform had not yet been carried out (with the exception of the regions inhabited by national minorities). In comparison with the "Land Law" of October 1947, this law on agrarian reform presents the following differences:

1. The law of October 1947 proclaimed the expropriation of all properties of landlords with the exception of his commercial and industrial properties. The new law only ordered the expropriation of land, cattle, working tools, food surplus, and surplus of rural houses; his movable property (clothing, furniture, etc.) remains entirely in the landlord's hands.

2. The law of October 1947 decreed the expropriation of surplus land and other property of the rich peasants above the average granted by the general sharing of the land among the peasants. The new law declared that "the property and land of the rich peasants must be protected whether cultivated by themselves or by agricultural workers, and must not be disturbed."

"All small plots of ground rented by rich peasants to other peasants must be left intact. In certain special regions, a part or all of the leased land may however be expropriated if agreed upon and ratified by authorities higher than the peoples' provincial government."

"Large parcels of land rented out by semi-landlord rich peasants and exceeding in area the parcels worked directly by the peasant and his agricultural workers must be seized. The limit of land held on lease by rich peasants is fixed proportionally to the amount of land leased out by them."

According to a government survey in the five provinces of the south Central region, rich peasants constitute about 5% of the population and own 15% of the land. Consequently, distributable land has in practice decreased 10% in these regions. The survey indicates that after dividing the land, "each poor peasant can obtain about 70% to 80% of the average landholding per village inhabitant." In the Wuhsian district of Shansi province (region of early liberation) the poor peasants generally received 100% of the average landholding per village inhabitant.

3. In the old liberated regions, agrarian reform was applied universally and simultaneously on a great scale. In the newly liberated regions it was executed first in central points (centers of gravity), that is to say, in each province several districts were chosen as centers of gravity, in each district, several villages were selected as centers of gravity, etc., and agrarian reform was thus carried out in successive waves.

4. In the old liberated regions, agrarian reform developed tempestuously; expropriation of the land was already in process of execution when the law of October, 1947, was proclaimed. In the newly liberated regions, agrarian reform was divided into "stages": first, cleaning up bandits in the region, combatting the autocrats, struggling for reduction of rent and interest, and for restitution of inflated rent and interest formerly paid out; then expropriation and distribution of the land. This process often stretched out for two years.

5. When agrarian reform was carried out in the old liberated regions, the peasant movement had already attained a great sweep. The law of October, 1947, of the CP was a direct product of this movement, and the party and its policy were following the movement of the masses. In the newly liberated regions, the peasant movement has never experienced such a sweep. South of the Yangtse, there was not even a mass movement when agrarian reform was started there, except in certain districts, which were bases for old partisan groups, or in some remote districts. For this reason, policy change in these regions often preceded mass action, and the government was compelled to send cadres into the country for mobilizing the peasants.

The regions of which we are now speaking are these "central points" where agrarian reform was completed "gradually" in 1950-1951. They are like the flowers imprinted on cotton cloth, scattered here and there in the vast newly liberated regions, and surrounded by regions in which the agrarian reform has not yet been completed.

Starting with 1950, the governments of the newly liberated regions at varying administrative levels established "Committees of Agrarian Reform" (composed essentially of government functionaries, that is to say, of elements having an urban petty-bourgeois or capitalist origin, not a working class or poor peasant one, and most of whom were CP members), in order to attack the task of agrarian reform in the various regions. Their number one task was to send groups of cadres from the old liberated regions trained in agrarian reform into the south, and to recruit a great number of intellectuals locally and train them. Then the provincial governments selected various districts as "central points"; the selected districts chose various villages as "central points" and sent them cadres to begin the work. The standards by which these "central points" were selected corresponded to the following categories:

- regions close to those which were liberated early
- bases of the old partisan formations
- places more heavily burdened with feudal forms of exploitation

- places where the peasant movement has a deeper tradition
- regions where the peasant movement had moved ahead after liberation
- regions where banditry and autocratism had already been eliminated; where social order is relatively reestablished and the government is already capable of exerting its control, etc.

It is extremely difficult to be a governmental cadre in matters of agrarian reform. First of all very few of these intellectuals are of poor origin, peasant or worker; most of them come from the families of landlords, rich peasants or businessmen, and are ignorant of the living conditions of the poor peasants despite their sincere enthusiasm. Besides, the government teaches them to "base themselves on the masses" and explains to them at the same time that they must not "allow themselves to follow behind the masses" and allow the peasants "to strike or kill without reason." This orientation seems easy to accept in the classroom but becomes impractical when it must be carried out in the countryside. Cadres who dare to mobilize the masses are subject to criticism. And those who were afraid to "march behind the masses" and forbade the masses "to fight or kill without reason," were also criticized because they were entirely incapable of mobilizing the masses, or at least of mobilizing them successfully. During the first period, it was this last criticism which applied in the main to the cadres; consequently, the papers often published denunciations against bureaucratic methods and rarely denunciations against "blows and killings without reason." Besides, many cadres were unable to remain firm in their positions; they protected the landlords, moved away from the masses and thus created a general discontent among the peasantry. The CP was unsparing of its criticism of this kind of cadre. But in the places selected by the government as "experimental centers," it is comparatively easier to mobilize the masses. In fact, it is only a matter of organizing peasants who have already risen and to push the movement in a direction conforming more to governmental policy. For this reason, the period of development of agrarian reform in these places is often greatly shortened. The southern part of Honan province is an obvious example of such a phenomenon, for more than half of its districts has already completed agrarian reform.

After agrarian reform had been completed or was on the road to completion in these "central points," the second group of places was selected, and thus agrarian reform spreads in successive waves "from point to point." In certain regions it is very difficult to mobilize the peasants.

Recently a worker comrade and a member of our organization for 12 years spent a week in his native village. He had long conversations with peasants (old acquaintances of his) and twice attended peasant meetings. He has given us a typical report which conforms fundamentally with information we have received from newspapers and other sources. By means of this report we can gain an understanding not only of the living process of mobilization of the peasantry in certain specific regions but also of the "gradual" development of the

agrarian movement in general. Here is the report:

Report of Comrade Z.

My native village is very backward. It has 300 inhabitants. When the Army of Liberation arrived, the people were extremely frightened. At the same time a group of special elements appeared and constantly intervened in the public affairs of the village. These were the old bad autocrats, semi-autocrats and rich peasants. Several days after liberation, the military committee of the canton or the district authorized them to become the leadership of the village, president of the Peasants' Association, president of the Womens' Association, etc. Thus they became the sole masters of the village. They went off to banquets at the homes of the landlords, and appropriated or borrowed large quantities of food from the rich and from peasants of the village. A part of this booty was passed on to the leader, the rest was divided among themselves. The peasants were very discontented at their haughtiness and their abuse of power. After a year had passed in this manner, during the winter of 1950 the district government sent several young people called a "work brigade" (I call them "cadre members" in the rest of my report). Several days after their arrival, they called the peasants to a meeting, declaring that the peasants were henceforth the "masters." But many peasants did not dare go to the meeting and even those who went were completely silent. These "cadre members" were consequently obliged to leave without having obtained any results. Shortly afterwards another "work brigade" arrived and this time things went differently. Each day they gave 3,000 dollars to the peasants on the order of their leader. They took their meals in the homes of poor peasants or agricultural workers. A case came up where a cadre member was sent back because of eating dog meat with a middle peasant. In another case, a cadre member was obliged to eat bran generally used as hog fodder for two days because the poor peasant in whose house he lodged had no more rice to cook. These cadre members lived in the houses of the poor peasants, slept in the same beds with them, suffered with them from vermin. During the day they accompanied them to the village assisting them in their work; in the evening, they talked with the peasants, asked all sorts of questions. Gradually they established sympathetic relations with the peasants; they explained everything to the peasants, overcame their cautiousness and brought them to the point of expressing their bitterness. Then the cadre members brought the peasants together in small groups to speak up about their suffering (the CP called this: Meetings for the expression of bitterness). After this kind of mobilization and a period of ferment, a general meeting of the peasants was finally called.

The first peasant meetings were all meetings "for the expression of bitterness." The poor peasants and agricultural workers expressed all their grievances concerning the oppression and exploitation which they had suffered in the past. In accordance with the results of these meetings "for the expression of bitterness," the entire village population was divided into classes. With that accomplished, the Peasant Association was reorganized. The poor peasants and agricultural workers were able to join it as members unconditionally; middle peasants could likewise enter after being examined and approved. In the Peasant Association the poor peasant cells were the nuclei of the Association. The committee members and president were reelected and

only poor peasants and agricultural workers were eligible for election. This is the way the peasants were generally mobilized.

As soon as the meetings for struggle began, the first objective was the struggle against the bad autocrats. The final decision was to submit all the local autocrats to trial by the people. The "judges" were designated by the government. They were for the most part government functionaries and members of the Peasant Association. The table placed before the judge was called the "Tribunal of the People." All the poor peasants and agricultural workers participating in the public trial were called "members of the jury." The meeting of this public court of justice was in fact a meeting full of imprecations and blows. The verdict was given by a majority vote of the peasants. The criminals who had blood on their conscience were condemned to death, after confirmation by the district authorities, a confirmation which was rarely refused.

In my native canton, there are 13 villages with a population of about six thousand inhabitants. Up to now there have been three group executions by means of machine guns. The first time four persons were executed, the second time eight, and the third time forty. The executioners were members of the militia. The first village leader and first president of the Peasant Association were executed for having been bad autocrats in the past.

The autocrats who had not committed blood crimes were condemned by the "peoples' tribunals" to life imprisonment and to "reform by labor," that is to say, to forced labor in the labor camp which exists in each district.

Parallel with the struggle against the bad autocrats, the "struggle for the return of profits" was launched, that is:

- a) for the landlords to return all rent payments during the preceding three years which were in excess of the legally set maximum of 37.5% of the harvest;
- b) for usurers to return to the peasants the interest received on loans for the three years preceding liberation;
- c) that the amounts paid out by the peasants to amortize mortgages be returned to them;
- d) that the poor peasants be recompensed for losses sustained by them in their dealings with businessmen and rich peasants about houses or land during the last three years. Unequal exchanges were to be equalized and the losses sustained by the poor peasants were to be repaid by the rich peasants and businessmen;
- e) that exploitation suffered by the poor should be compensated for: landlords or rich peasants who had in the course of the three past years used the unpaid labor of others (corvee) to work the land or build their houses had to pay the agricultural workers their unpaid wages on the basis of the standard of living of the workers' family at the time.*

*The last two points and especially the last were not included in the

regulations set up by the Law on Agrarian Reform and these terms were never seen or heard of elsewhere. Involved here, obviously, are "excesses" in the course of the peasant struggle, which went beyond the official decrees. Nevertheless, the native village of the reporter can be considered as a "normal" example, calmly advancing in the course of struggle. -- Kim.

After having established the "profits" that had to be returned to them by means of these "meetings for struggle," the peasants went ahead. The landlords, rich peasants and usurers were compelled to submit to these decisions. If they did not, they were beaten and even tortured by the peasants, or subjected to the ordeal of a wearing struggle.** The struggle against the landlords and rich peasants

**According to governmental regulations, blows, bodily torture and slaying were forbidden. But when the peasant movement was launched, this regulation was generally ignored. A cadre member of high position in Kwantung province explained this fact in a speech to workers: "The government was originally opposed to beatings and slayings and insisted on rational methods of struggle. But if one does not allow the peasants to beat and kill the landlords, it is difficult to mobilize them. Without mobilizing them, it would not be possible to eliminate a thousand years of feudal exploitation. Once these peasants rise, the government cannot control them and should not do so." Our comrades heard these words when they were in prison. -- Kim.

became a daily routine. It was in the course of this struggle that the entire family of a landlord committed suicide.

All the "profits of struggle" were first stored in the house of the Peasant Association and subsequently distributed.

In addition, the Peasant Association drew up the list of all lands, houses, furniture, working tools, clothing, food stocks, etc., which were to be distributed later when the land was to be expropriated."***

***Comrade Z's report ends here. We present here only part of his story. Other portions are used in other places in this article. Since the report was made orally to the author and written down and sent out in haste, it could not be read over and corrected by Comrade Z. -- Kim.

3. Balance Sheet Of The Situation In The Regions Where Agrarian Reform Was Recently Completed

In the native region of the worker comrade whose story we have just told, the land has not yet been expropriated and divided up because this region is classed in the third category. But let us return for the moment to the regions in which the land was distributed during 1950-1951. How is the passage made from the conditions described by the reporting comrade as existing in his native village to

expropriation of the land? We will answer this question by delving into other sources.

When the struggle for return of excessive rent and interest was concluded, these "profits" were shared, the properties of the landlords were sealed up, the summer or autumn harvest was sold, and then the government sent a new "work brigade for agrarian reform" to the village. On its arrival, it first examined if the division of the population into classes had been correctly made; when this was not the case, a regrouping and redivision was decided upon. Then a census of land was completed, after which the land was immediately distributed. Six months or a year after this distribution, that is to say, after the second harvest, a "verification of the agrarian reform" took place in order to determine if the expropriation had been fully carried out and if the distribution had been fairly made. This was the last stage in the agrarian reform. After this, the government issued official certificates of land ownership.

In the regions where the land has already been distributed, there are several where this "verification" has already taken place, and others where it has not yet occurred. The government has decided that this "verification" must take place for all of these regions in 1952, and that ownership certificates must be issued then.

What is the present situation in these regions?

The most important sections of these regions are the coastal region of eastern China and the south-central region. The population density is greater here, consequently, the amount of cultivated land per family is lower. Moreover since the new Law on Agrarian Reform has relatively reduced the area to be distributed, the acreage obtained by the peasants is smaller than in northern China, especially than in Manchuria. Each peasant family has received a plot of 3 mou, of 2 mou, of one mou or even of less than a mou (1 mou = 1/6 of an acre), which is either barely sufficient or completely insufficient for his livelihood. This has become a very serious problem. The government has consequently made an effort to speed up projects for overcoming natural calamities (for example, projects on the Huai River) and to encourage peasants to work virgin land.

Agricultural production in general has risen above the level prior to liberation, but it has not yet reached the highest level of the year 1936. It has not yet produced an obvious improvement in the living conditions of the peasants.

After receiving land, the peasants in general incline to conservatism. They concentrate their efforts on cultivation of the land and do not take part in politics. In the autumn of 1951, the newspapers in eastern China and above all in the south-central region published daily articles warning "against the prevailing laxity among the cadres." Numerous reports indicate that in the region of this second category, the peasant cadres that appeared during the agrarian reform have become passive. After distribution of the land, some cadre members married and plunged energetically into production; they no longer want to be cadre members; they are often absent from meetings, speak very little, make no effort to learn politics and even ask to be permitted to resign from their positions in the Peasant Associa-

tion, militia, etc. This phenomenon is now becoming universal; it fully reflects the change in the mental state of the peasants. For this reason, it is obvious that the peak of the peasant movement has already been passed in these regions.

In the regions where "verification" has already taken place, the landlords have been exterminated insofar as they constitute a class. Nevertheless, in numerous other regions, especially in the places where agrarian reform has not yet been verified, the influence of the landlord class still persists in a large measure, considering that the peasant movement has still not penetrated deeply there as yet. Even though their lands have been expropriated, they continue to feel their losses and to nourish sentiments of revenge, because the blows they have received from the peasants have not been heavy enough or, to use the language of the CP, the blows have been "insufficiently brutal." In numerous villages expropriation and distribution of the land has not been completed and many landlords have been able to slip through the net. We can conclude from this that half the villages of these regions are only "half re-made" villages, that is to say, villages in which agrarian reform has been carried out only partially because verification has not yet taken place.

Because the landlord class has not yet been completely crushed and because the fighting spirit of the peasants in general and of the village cadres has declined, landlords are beginning to lift their heads. They use all kinds of methods to destroy the victorious achievements of the peasants. For example, they spread rumors that Chiang Kai-shek will launch an offensive on the mainland; they set fire to the farms of peasants; they poison springs; they murder the children of peasants; they try to corrupt active peasants by their pretty daughters or with money. In certain isolated regions there is even a "liquidation in reverse": the landlords take back the houses and foodstocks which had been distributed among the peasants, or exchange their poor land for peasant good land, etc. In the opinion of the author, all these phenomena are due to a too rigid obedience to the government's decrees by the worker cadres, to the restrictions imposed on peasant action and consequently to the inadequate blows dealt the landlords.

On the one hand the CP adopts the method of "education" in order to stimulate activity by the cadres in the village. On the other hand, it is preparing for the development of another mass campaign during the period of "verification" in 1952. Such a campaign is highly probable, but in no way can it surpass in scale the peasant movement of two years ago. This campaign of "verification" will therefore only be a pause on the road to extinction of the peasant movement. The villages of the old liberated regions in northern China and in Manchuria supply the examples for understanding that the newly liberated regions will proceed in the same direction.

The general character of living conditions in these regions is not greatly different from that of the regions in which the land has not yet been distributed. We will describe them later on.

4. Regions In Which The Land Has Not Yet Been Distributed

Of the entire country it is only the regions we are dealing with now that still possess a widespread peasant movement. The rural population comprised by these regions numbers 90 million people. The native country of Comrade Z whose report is included in this article belongs to these regions. The government has decided that agrarian reform must be fundamentally completed in 1952 in these regions: the land must be distributed. At the moment we are writing, tens of thousands of cadre members are mobilized in the cities preparatory to going into the country to "assist" the peasants in changing the agrarian regime. It is highly probable that the governmental project will be carried out on schedule. We have seen that numerous obstacles appeared in the course of the preceding period of agricultural reform completed in 1950-1951, as a result of the shortage of forces used against the landlords. In our opinion, the agrarian reform completed in regions of the third category in 1952 will be more thorough.

We have already reported in the preceding chapter an example of the mobilization and spread of the agrarian movement. We will now give a description of the appearance of the villages in these regions, which has very many aspects similar to the general Chinese countryside. Once again we revert to the story of Comrade Z:

"On my return to the village, I first had the impression of a complete change in the relations between men and women. At home, in the Peasant Associations, in the street, the women behaved in a natural and confident way, completely devoid of timidity and excessive reserve. They were no longer afraid of their parents, their husbands and their parents-in-law.

"Order and customs have similarly changed greatly in the villages. Smoking opium and gambling have disappeared. The peasants go to their fields during the day and leave their tools and their cows there when they return at evening, without fear that they will be stolen. The traditional fights between two villages regarding the conservation of water or other grievances; the fights between families because of ancestral graves, etc.; disputes between farmers: all that has disappeared. The Buddhist cult has declined greatly, although it still survives, particularly among the women. People are no longer concerned and no longer disturb themselves much over questions of "money" in marriages, which are completed with far less of ritual and ceremony.

"The peasants are in the main very industrious in their work in the fields. The government has published a decree with the object of encouraging all (including landlords and rich peasants) to engage in pioneer work on untilled lands: they are completely exempt from taxes for the first three years, and the newly cultivated land always remains the property of the cultivator. As a result of this, there is no longer any land lying fallow in my village. In the past two years, new land cultivated has reached a figure of 400 mous, for an average of more than one mou per person. However, all these newly cultivated lands are either dry ground or rocky soil on which rice, which is the basic food in southern China, cannot possibly be cultivated, but only certain supplementary crops such as sweet

potatoes, etc. That is the reason why production of these supplementary crops has greatly increased. The irrigation system is functioning very well at the village and the dikes constructed to prevent floods are very high. The peasants are themselves making certain that there will be no more floods this year. These dikes were built last year, either by the voluntary labor of peasants mobilized by the government or by special detachments of auxiliary workers. The Peasant Association has bought a pump which is public property. Besides, there is a 'corps for optional tasks' for peasant mutual assistance.

"In my village the life of the peasants is very hard; there are many who do not have enough to eat even now. The reason for this is simply that 1950 and 1951 were famine years. After liberation, the government loaned large quantities of food to the peasants which the latter returned in 1951. In the course of the same year, the government helped them by giving 10 catties of wheat to each person; the government also offered them work on the dikes at wages rather than outright aid; the wage was three catties of rice a day plus a meal; but such offer was made only to the poor peasants and agricultural workers. The tax in kind and agrarian rent, both collected by the government, were collected in 1951 on the basis of the year's harvest and not in proportion to the average harvest of preceding years. Those who had to decide the amount of these taxes were elected by the peasants. In 1952, in order to show its concern about the losses of the peasants resulting from the floods of the two preceding years, the government raised the basic rate for exemption of taxes to the fifth category. It loaned seed to the peasants (40 catties of wheat to each cultivator as well as 5 catties for each supplementary harvest). At harvest time, the peasants must return 1 cattie 3 ounces for each cattie received (equal to an interest rate of $\frac{3}{16}$ or 19%). The Peasant Association now possesses a large stock of food (the 'profits of struggle!'). Before distribution of this stock, each poor peasant or agricultural worker may borrow 40 catties of wheat which will be deducted from his share when distribution of the stock is made.

"Not only have the landlords been required to return excessive rents and to pay compensation for past exploitation of the poor peasants and agricultural workers, but they have also been compelled to reimburse excessive taxation. All sorts of contributions extorted by the Kuomintang in the course of the three years preceding liberation must be repaid to the poor peasants and agricultural workers by the landlords and rich peasants on a proportional basis to the lands they own. Besides, if the landlord cultivated parcels of land separately from those he leased to others, he must continue to work his land, and the total harvest from it must be given as a contribution to the government without holding back an ear of corn!*

*This method is in complete opposition to governmental decrees. According to these regulations, the harvests gathered by the landlord before distribution of the land, continue to belong to him, and he has to pay the State only the tax in kind. -- Kim.

"The other peasants (rich, middle and poor, as well as agricultural workers) must pay two kinds of taxes to the State: the land

rent, which is 37.5% of the harvest* and the tax in kind, which is

*This is most astonishing: a) According to governmental regulations there must be a reduction in rent prior to agrarian reform, but the landlords continue to receive this rent. In Comrade Z's village this stage of reduced rent seems to have been completely eliminated. b) Such a practice represents a severe blow not only to the landlords but to the rich and middle peasants as well. Thus the family of Comrade Z owns 8 mous of land and his father is the sole cultivator. He is considered as a middle peasant. Formerly his father did not have to pay rent because he worked his own land. Now, however, he must pay rent to the government. We can say that the State thus becomes owner of the land before it is partitioned. From this example we can draw a supplementary explanation of why the government tends to postpone the distribution of land for several years: the reason for it is the retaining of financial resources during these most difficult years of transition. If the land was distributed to the peasants, it would be difficult to ask them to still pay rent.

-- Kim

set proportionally to the harvest as a progressive tax (the rates will be indicated later on. -- Kim). The peasants feel the pressure of these two taxes very keenly, but the poor peasants are not so discontented, for the total of both these contributions is still less than the rent formerly paid the landlords, not to speak of the numerous extortions, and because they know that the land will soon be distributed to them.

"Everybody in the village now talks of 'classes.' Everybody clearly understands what a poor peasant, an agricultural worker, a middle peasant, a rich peasant or a landlord is. Since I belong to the working class, I am highly regarded. The poor peasants and agricultural workers, as well as industrial workers, have free entry into the 'Exposition of Products of the Native Soil.' The landlords and rich peasants cannot participate in the Peasant Associations. There are seven members in the Association Committee, all elected, and serving without any compensation. The cantonal administration has ordered the village to send seven men into the militia; these were elected by the Peasant Association and each of them received a rifle from the government. The poor peasants and agricultural workers are the real masters in the village. I also took part in a meeting of the Peasant Association, which occupied itself mainly with determining how the landlords were living, if they were submissive or not, etc. A woman stated there: 'Yesterday I saw so-and-so greet a rich peasant. His position is not very firm; we must criticize him.' This woman, a peasant, could even use so advanced an expression as 'not to have a firm position!' The landlords have now become the most pitiful people. Around their necks has been hung a white cloth with the inscription: 'LANDLORD' or 'RICH PEASANT.'

"If there is any possibility whatever to pay for relief work, only the poor peasants and agricultural workers are eligible for it; the rich peasants and landlords are subjected to the hardest kinds of 'voluntary' labor. People of the different classes wear armbands of different colors. There is a regulation forbidding landlords and

rich peasants from eating meat. Their freedom of action is restricted. Nobody dares speak to them. Although the decrees of the government forbid touching their reserves of food, money and clothes, they really have nothing left after the struggle for the return of excessive old rent and interest and compensation for former exploitation. They (especially the landlords) live at present from the supplementary products of unworked land which they have begun to till. During the day they work in the fields; at night, if they are lucky enough not to be drawn out of their homes by poor peasants in order to be brought to a 'meeting for struggle,' they shut their doors as soon as darkness falls and young and old gather together to bewail their misfortunes. In conformity with government regulations, a landlord retains a parcel of land. But the village peasants have told me that landlords will not be considered citizens for five years following division of the land, and only at the end of five years will they be granted their part of the land. Evidently these peasants are still committing 'excesses!' Once they have risen, they really are indefatigable."

This report of Comrade Z conforms fundamentally with information we have received from other sources. The newspapers have published little on the tragic situation of the landlords, and above all, on the lot of the rich peasants. This is not surprising because all these actions go beyond governmental decrees, and the government is a "coalition government of workers, peasants and bourgeoisie!"

* * * * *

We will deal elsewhere with the tax in kind. From the preceding material it is clear that the greatest part of the Chinese countryside has undergone a fundamental transformation and that another part is in the process of transformation. We now have to face completely new problems. However important has been the control exercised by the CP in all this movement -- a control which is unique in the history of all revolutions -- nevertheless the transformation of the Chinese countryside has in the last analysis been the work of the peasants themselves.

Certain Chinese comrades state that agrarian reform is a "subjective desire" of the CP, and that it has been carried out by "purely administrative" means. This point of view is not only contrary to the facts but in complete opposition with the ABC of Marxism. It was possible to rely mainly on military power for the overthrow of the Chiang Kai-shek regime. It is absolutely impossible to transform a social structure -- even if it is only the agrarian system -- by purely military means. Marxist theoretical analysis made it possible for us to affirm, in the light of the transformation of the Chinese agrarian system, that a peasant mass movement existed outside the military struggle. Today we know the concrete conditions of this movement thanks to all the documents and facts reported in this article.

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SOME SUPPLEMENTARY REMARKS AND CORRECTIONS TO "THE REPORT ON
THE CHINESE QUESTION"

By S. T. Pang

Having analyzed the most recent facts relating to the development of the Chinese situation and after a study of the evolution of Yugoslavia and the Eastern European countries, I deem it necessary to make some supplementary remarks and corrections to the analysis and the appreciation of the character of the CP and of the regime in my previous "Report on the Chinese Situation" so that the next IEC has more concrete material on this question and can arrive at the most correct conclusion.

* * *

On The Problems Of The Nature Of The Chinese CP

On this question, in view of the fact that after the defeat of the second Chinese Revolution, the CP completely abandoned the workers' movement in the cities, turned toward the countryside, absorbed a great number of peasants in the party and concentrated on the peasant guerrillas, Trotsky and the Chinese Trotskyists had once declared that this party had gradually degenerated and had become a petty-bourgeois party based on the peasantry. But some comrades in the International have their doubts on this point and say that even if Trotsky had given his opinion he was wrong. That is why I think that it is necessary first to give some explanations in the context of certain facts.

In judging the nature of a party, we Marxists base ourselves on two fundamental factors: the composition of the party and its political tendency. If the workers comprise the majority of the party, and the party truthfully represents the fundamental interests of the working class, this party can be called a really healthy or revolutionary worker's party. If the workers comprise the majority of the party and its political leadership is of a petty-bourgeois or opportunist, reformist type we still call it a workers' party, but it is a deformed or degenerated workers' party. If the petty bourgeoisie predominates in its social composition and if the leadership is also opportunist, even if it pretends to be a workers' party, we can only denominate it a petty-bourgeois party.

Regarding the evolution and the composition of the Chinese CP, the number of members in the last period of the Chinese revolution was approximately 60,000 according to the report to the fifth congress of the party held in April, 1927 (not including members of the Communist Youth whose membership surpassed that of the party), and the workers of the big industries accounted for some 58% of these. But after the disastrous defeats of this revolution and several adventurous insurrections, particularly after the great defeat of the Canton uprising, most of the workers were sacrificed or automatically left the party so that the percentage of workers decreased to 10% in 1928 and to 3% in 1929 ("On the Organizational Question" by Chou En Lai), fell to 2.5% in March, 1930 (Red Flag, March 26, 1930) and to 1.6% in September of the same year (Report to the Third Plenum of the CC of the Party by Chou En Lai). The Bolsheviks of

October 10, 1931 openly admitted that "The percentage of workers had already fallen to less than 1%. After most of the workers' branches of Shanghai were won over to the Left Opposition "Trotskyist Group," Red Flag complained on October 23, 1933 that in Shanghai, the largest industrial city of the country, "There is not a single real workers branch." But in the same period they said that the number of members had risen to over 300,000. This was adequate proof that the CP had an almost exclusively peasant composition. Precisely because of that, Trotsky drew the conclusion: "The Chinese Stalinists...in the years of the counter-revolution have gone over from the proletariat to the peasantry. They had assumed the tasks of the revolutionary party at the time when they were still a revolutionary party."... "The party has been divorced in fact from its class"... "The causes of conflict between the army which is of peasant composition and under the leadership of the petty bourgeoisie, and the workers have not been eliminated but have been made extremely possible and even inevitable by all the conditions...Consequently the content of our tasks is not only not to permit the petty-bourgeois democrats resting on the armed peasants to politically and militarily command the proletariat, but should prepare us to assure the leadership of the proletariat over the peasant movement and especially its 'Red Army'." (Trotsky, in a Letter to the Chinese Left Opposition, and postscript to this letter, September 22 and 26, 1933.)

When the Chinese CP was obliged to flee from the south to the north, to Yen-an because of the fact that conditions were still more backward there, the number of its worker members dropped still further because the only possible recruitment of worker elements came from village artisans. Consequently the petty-bourgeois peasant atmosphere dominated the entire party and was formally crystallized in "the theory of the revolutionary peasantry." Mao Tse-tung in the theses on "The New Democracy" openly declared: "Comrade Stalin said that the problem of the colonial and semi-colonial countries was virtually a peasant problem," i.e., that "the Chinese revolution is in fact a peasant revolution...The policy of the New Democracy is in fact the transfer of power to the peasantry. The new three principles, the real three principles (Mao pretends that his new democracy contains the "real three principles" inherited from Sun Yat Sen so as to distinguish them from the "false principles" inherited by Chiang Kai-shek) are nothing else than peasant revolutionism. These words of Mao Tse-tung completely established that the Chinese CP was not only a petty-bourgeois party based on the peasantry in its composition, but that it also manifested itself as a petty-bourgeois peasant party in its ideology.

Consequently during the entire anti-Japanese war, the Chinese CP by supporting the leadership of the Kuomintang not only insisted on the need for class collaboration in its propaganda but declared openly in practice that "the workers should increase production to aid the government in the common resistance against Japan," and rejected the "exorbitant demands" presented by the workers to the national bourgeoisie, charging that "the policy of class struggle" of the Trotskyists was a "policy of betrayal to aid the enemy" thus slandering the Trotskyists as "traitors." Naturally in the real struggles of the workers the Chinese CP was always on the side of the national bourgeoisie against the reasonable demands of the workers,

even sabotaging them. At the same time it did everything possible to have the most positive elements of the working class leave the struggles in the cities and join the workers on the countryside. It was precisely because of this that this party, although considerably augmenting its armed peasant forces during the war of resistance had an extremely weak influence among the worker masses of the cities.

Finally when the Chinese CP was obliged to carry on a general counter-offensive against the Chiang government and to occupy the big cities, not only did it not make any appeal to the worker masses to carry on some form of struggle, but it did its best to curb their activities. Its only appeal was to call upon them "to protect production and to watch Chiang Kai-shek's bandits who are sabotaging it." When it occupied the cities, it imposed severe restrictions on all activity or spontaneous organization of the worker masses. When the workers went out on strike to demand increases in wages or to resist oppressive conditions it was brutal in its repressions, going to the point of massacres. For example, the strikers in several factories in Tientsin were arrested and executed. The workers of Sun Sin factory #9 (where 6,000 workers were employed) were attacked with machine guns because they refused to leave the city with the factory and there were more than 300 casualties. In the coal mines of Chin Sin, when the workers revolted against the cruelty and arrogance of the Soviet advisers and specialists* the

*Since this mine produces a better quality coal which can be utilized in the making of steel the Soviet Union had sent advisers and specialists to control the mine so as to appropriate all the production for the U.S.S.R. This arrangement has probably been regulated in the Sino-Soviet agreement and mutual aid and assistance.

Chinese CP sent numerous troops to repress the revolt and there were more than 200 dead or wounded workers and more than a thousand expelled and exiled to the northeast and to Siberia. (This happened in May 1950.) All this demonstrates only the attitude of this petty-bourgeois party towards the working class, one of distrust, hostility and even massacres. That partially confirmed the prediction and the warning made by Trotsky 18 years ago. If the worker masses of the cities had been more united and under the leadership of another revolutionary force (the Trotskyists) it is very probable that the CP would have had recourse to civil war to beat down the workers. As Trotsky said, "They would have utilized the armed peasantry to attack the advanced workers." (See postscript of the letter mentioned above.)

From these historic facts the question of whether Trotsky and the Chinese Trotskyists were right in their estimation of the nature of the CP can be left to the re-examination of those comrades who have doubts on the matter. If the comrades have adequate facts and correct theoretical reasons to demonstrate that the estimation of the CP made by Trotsky and the Chinese Trotskyist was "incorrect" we are ready to abandon our estimation and to adopt the new one.

But on the other hand I should emphasize that after the defeat of the second revolution, and although the CP on the basis of its composition, gradually degenerated into a petty-bourgeois party based on the peasantry and had postulated in its ideology Mao Tse-tung's theory that "the Chinese revolution is practically a peasant revolution...power should be transferred to the peasants," however, because of its historic origin (as a section of the C.I.) because of some working class traditions remaining from the second revolution and because of its close relations with the international Stalinist party (which as degenerated as it is, still remains a workers' party) and because of its general support of Marxism-Leninism, of the dictatorship of the proletariat and of the perspective of Communism, etc., we have to admit that even when it had degenerated into a peasant party there remained a certain inclination in the party towards the workers. But this tendency was curbed and repressed during the long years of peasant guerrilla war. When this party entered the cities and came into contact with broad worker masses, and especially when it was an urgent need of the support of the working class to resist the threats of the bourgeoisie and imperialism, the worker tendency, long hidden and repressed had the opportunity to emerge and to exercise its pressure on the leadership of the party, to demand the transfer of the base of the party from the peasantry to the working class and to demand that certain concessions be made to the demands of the worker masses. The events of the last two years and particularly of the last six months have clearly reflected this tendency.

The CP decided to stop the recruitment of peasants in the party and emphasized the need of a rapid recruitment of workers. The editorial in the Peoples' Journal, July 1, 1950 on the 29th Anniversary of the CP especially insisted on a reform of the composition of the party, i.e., on the absorption of workers into the party. It also said that in the recent period among the 6,648 new members in Tientsin 73% were workers, and out of 3,350 in Peking more than 50%.

To sum up, according to these concrete facts, there have been quite a considerable number of workers recruited by the CP in the last two years in the large industrial cities and in the mines in the Northeast, in Shanghai and in Wuhan. Of course if consideration is given to the composition of the entire party (according to the same editorial of the Peoples' Journal, there are some 5 million members of the party) the number of workers is still very small. (Kao Kan, secretary for the northeastern district admitted in a speech made on January 10 to the heads of the party that "working class elements are still not very numerous in our party," as the principal reason to explain the serious crisis of the right-wing tendency and the corruption in the party. But this turn of the CP in insisting upon working class recruitment for the purpose of changing the composition of the party, has indubitably had an important effect on the class nature of the party.

This "turn" is more or less reflected in the process of carrying out the agrarian reform. According to the plan for agrarian reform adopted by the Political Consultative Conference or the CP and other organizations and parties in May 1950, special emphasis is placed on "the protection of the commercial and industrial property of the landed proprietors and the rich peasants." The decree of the Minister of the Interior severely prohibits "excessive actions" of the

poor peasants toward the landed proprietors and the rich peasants. Consequently, at the start of the execution of this project, not only were the industrial and commercial properties of the landed proprietors and the rich peasants generally protected, but in numerous areas they obtained the best and the largest share of the land, and even preserved local power (such as head of the Peasants Association or of the village, etc.). But then, when the masses of the poor peasantry gradually awakened in the course of the movement, the lower cadres, under the demands and the pressure of the poor peasants, considerably altered the agrarian reform project and even upset it. That is to say, that a great number of industrial and commercial properties of the landed proprietors and the rich peasants were transgressed, and the landed proprietors and the rich peasants themselves were subjected to severe penalties from the poor peasantry (recent reports on the agrarian reform in Chinese newspapers often reveal these facts). In face of the "left" tendency of the lower cadres to upset the guiding line of the party and to automatically place themselves at the disposal of the interests of the masses, the leadership of the CP not only has not expressed any reproach or taken reprisals, but on the contrary it has acquiesced in general. Although the CP has not fundamentally changed its policy of "protection" of the industrial and commercial properties of the landed proprietors and the rich peasants, there is nevertheless a tendency to defend the interests of the poor peasants, which manifests itself strongly in the lower cadres and in the ranks of the party. This is particularly worthy of our attention.

In the campaign of recent months carried on against corruption, waste and bureaucratism, an anti-bourgeois working-class tendency is clearly being revealed in the ranks of the CP. The principal reason for this campaign is that an extremely serious phenomena of corruption, waste and bureaucracy is manifesting itself among the responsible cadres of the CP in the state institutions, the army, the mass organizations, and particularly in the industrial and commercial sections and cooperatives dealing with finances and the economy. These cadres not only fatten themselves by pilfering state funds which are in their control or wasting public funds to assure a comfortable life, but in addition they associate with the bourgeois elements "to sell commercial information, state resources, and raw materials, to cut the working force and to raise costs (of production -- Tr.) in order to assure supplementary profits to the capitalists. The capitalists do not hesitate in providing necessary sums to corrupt these corrupted elements." (See Kao Kan's report cited above.) On the one hand, this situation has caused enormous financial and economic losses to the various state institutions, and on the other hand it has aroused the discontent of the masses, especially of the workers in the ranks of the party. (See Comrade Ping Shan's report on this campaign.) In order to maintain itself, the leadership of the CP is obliged to organize this campaign to exclude certain rotten cadres and to attack certain bourgeois elements as a means of appeasing the discontent of the ranks of the party and especially of the worker masses.

The corruption and degeneration of the cadres of the CP on various echelons is due principally to the opportunist policy of class collaboration and to bureaucratic practice in violation of

workers' democracy. This campaign against corruption, waste and bureaucratism does not fundamentally alter the opportunism and bureaucratism of the CP; it is carried out by bureaucratic methods. Naturally, the tendency toward corruption in the party will not be eliminated in this way. Nevertheless, the anti-bourgeois working-class tendency within the CP is strongly fortified in this campaign. Because of this movement they do not insist, only verbally, on "the necessity of recognizing the corrosive influence of bourgeois ideology on the party and the harm caused by the right-wing tendency in the party" and on the fact that "to base oneself on the bourgeoisie signifies only to abandon the working class, the popular masses and the role of the party and the country." (See Kao Kan's report cited above.) In fact, they have more or less accepted the appeal and the demands of the working masses. For example, they now publish in all newspapers the conditions of the oppressed and exploited workers in the state enterprises through the medium of the cadres of the CP within recent years, as well as various methods of exploitation and oppression employed by private capitalists under the pretext of "violation of decrees." Such things were rarely mentioned previously and it was prohibited to denounce them openly. Public opinion of the CP recognizes that and considers that it is necessary to make certain improvements.

From the facts cited above, we can say on the social composition of the CP that, although the peasants and other petty-bourgeois elements still predominate in their majority (more than 90% of the 5 million members), the worker elements have gained in number in the last two years and the working-class tendency has been strengthened during the agrarian reform and the campaign against corruption, etc. That is why up until now the CP has a dual character. From the point of view of the tendency in its composition, keeping in mind the systematic acceleration in recruitment of workers and the halting of peasant recruitment, this party is in a transitional stage toward a workers' party.

From the point of view of ideology, we can see three different tendencies in the CP: The right tendency representing the upper strata of the petty-bourgeoisie of the city and the rich peasants; the left tendency representing the workers and the poor peasants; the centrist tendency between these two tendencies represented by the top leadership. Naturally these three tendencies, notably those of the right and of the left are still obscure and are far from having been crystallized. But in the subsequent developments of the class struggle, these tendencies toward the right and the left will gradually crystallize and will lead to an organizational differentiation. Finally, when the international national situation reaches a serious, decisive stage, this party will tend toward a split which will be inevitable.

On the Character of the New Regime

If we re-evaluate the character of the party as being of a dual nature, this duality naturally affects the nature of the new regime which is controlled by this party. In view of the important factor of the nationalization of the enterprises, the dual character of this regime is even more manifest.

Of course, the new regime under the control of the CP is quite different from the dual power referred to by Lenin after the February Revolution and the classic form of dual power. It is a special kind of dual power created by exceptional conditions. This duality is analogous to that of the transition period in Yugoslavia and in the countries of Eastern Europe. Consequently, the new regime established by the CP can only be of a transitory form which will either move in the direction of the dictatorship of the proletariat (normal or not) or will move backward to the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. But in view of the present tendency, it is moving in the direction of a deformed dictatorship of the proletariat. Therefore, so far as its perspectives are concerned, I retain my previous position.

May 10, 1952.

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THE CHINESE CP AND ITS REGIME IN PROCESS OF DEGENERATION

By Pin-Shan

The Chinese CP has recently launched a campaign against corruption, waste and bureaucratism, a campaign that is still continuing. The disclosures are constantly increasing in number. This is quite a rare phenomenon in the hypocritical policy, inherited from the Stalinist bureaucracy, of dissembling all faults. Although the disclosures are still incomplete and insufficient, and restricted by censorship, they have considerably enriched our understanding of the CP and its regime and have verified the correctness of our previous Marxist analyses and estimates. Since this problem is of great theoretical and political importance, a complete analysis must be made of it. We must point out, however, that since these facts are not easy to get at and are undeniably confirmed by the words of the CP itself, this article does not attempt more than to cite references. In order not to burden the reader we have been compelled to omit a great deal of other interesting material.

The Extent and Depth of the Degeneration

The tendency of the CP and its regime toward degeneration does not date from the present; it began immediately after the entry into the cities and the taking of power throughout the country. (If we take into account the transformation of the CP from an originally proletarian party into a peasant party, this process of degeneration had begun even after the defeat of the Second Revolution.)

At the beginning of August 1950 the Inquiry Commission of the Central Government, in its "Preliminary Conclusions after six-months' work," reported: "According to incomplete and inexact statistics, over 6,100 infractions of varying importance occurred in different governmental institutions and territorial administrations between the end of last year and the month of May. The losses revealed by statistics dealing with only a part of the infractions may be estimated at 680 million dollars and 450,000 tons of grain."*

*In that year one million dollars of the Peoples' Republic was equal, on the official exchange, to 25,700 Hong Kong dollars, and on the black market the rate was about 20,000. At the rate of the Hong Kong dollar one million dollars of the Peoples' Republic is roughly equal to one million French francs. -- All figures in this article are in dollars of the Peoples' Republic.

Following upon the decision of the CP leadership in 1950 to conduct a purge campaign, the directives of the Ministry of Public Security in August of the same year stated: "The phenomenon of corruption is serious. Several members of the Public Security have shown evidence of corruption in their conduct. According to June statistics of the Peking Municipal Bureau, 7.5 percent of the police force of the city were revealed as guilty of corruption. In the city of Yingkow there are eight officers above the rank of police commissioner implicated in affairs of corruption. In Tientsin the statistics for two months show that out of 214 officials in seven departments, 84 were involved in affairs of corruption, 17 in debauchery and 21 in illegal trade."

In the same period the headquarters of the South-Central region announced the purge to its troops in these terms: "Among some of the middle and upper cadres and leading organisms there has been an increasing expression of arrogance and vanity; there has developed a desire not to mix with the lower ranks, and habits of extravagance and waste. And among the lower cadres the usual thing is that they miss their wives and want to go home soon and have some fun. Some of them are even involved in cases of corruption, of violation of party policy and discipline, of indifference to the life of a militant and to the difficulties of being a militant... The vain conceit of being a master-builder of the country comes chiefly out of the narrowness of spirit of the backward peasants who, having seen some victories, immediately want a part of the fruits, and each wanting a larger share."

A month later the authorities of eastern China likewise published their directives in which it was emphasized: "Numerous party members and cadres have become conceited, considering themselves the master-builders of the country. They fight among each other for pleasures and festivities -- but not for progress; they fight vulgarly for posts and personal favors, look down on the new members and cadres, on the masses and the ex-members of the party. In our area this is not merely an individual phenomenon but has become almost universal." (Report from Shanghai in the Hong Kong newspaper Sin Tao, September 2, 1950.)

Despite the very extensive purge campaign of 1950 in the party and the army throughout the country, and the noisy shouting of the local newspapers for "criticism and self-criticism,"* there was but

* We should point out the actual situation, according to official newspapers, with regard to the so-called criticism and self-criticism: (1) 68% of the criticisms and proposals published in the Honan newspaper from June to December 1949 were of no effect, and over 80% of the letters from readers which were sent on to the government or local party committees received no answer. On February 11, 1950, the Kiangsi paper published a letter from five readers exposing on five points the illegal conduct of Chu Kni, an official in the Linchuan district. Subsequently Chun wrote a threatening letter to the editor accusing him of being "the accomplice of secret agents." Unfortunately these were not the only instances of how the functionaries of the CP and the Peoples' Government rejected the criticisms in the newspapers (editorial in Peoples' Journal, April 23, 1950). (2) During the purge campaign in eastern China in 1950 some cadres not only did not accept self-criticism but even took revenge on those who made criticisms. Out of 328 articles critical of the party and the administration received by the newspaper of North Anhwei in the course of a year, less than 20% were accepted or received an answer (report from Shanghai in the Hong Kong paper Sin Tao). (3) In June 1951 the authorities announced that in the last year and a half the newspaper Nan Fang (a daily paper in the south) had received 36,632 letters, but that the functionaries were habitually hostile to criticisms coming from the people and even threatened or took revenge on them, put them in prison, had them beaten or hanged or separated them from their families. The authorities considered such conduct most serious. (Report from Canton in Sin Tao, June 18, 1951.)

little success in checking the corruption, extravagance and waste (which is but a variety of corruption) that on the contrary developed in two directions, deepening and broadening. Let us now look at the extent and the depth of this degeneration in various parts of the country, in the light of the data at our disposal.

From the report of Po I-Po, Finance Minister and director of the Central Economic Commission, we can draw the following picture of the organizations directly controlled at different levels by the Peking regime: "If all the money were recovered that has been wasted through corruption, there would be at least a billion dollars for the central administration alone. Up to January 29 there had already been discovered 160 important criminals guilty of corruption in various sections of the central administration. In addition, 202 are suspect on the basis of evidence, and a number of others besides, bringing the total to 450." Among these cases we may cite the following: Shi Kun San, associate director of the sales department of the Chinese Company, who wasted \$2,300,000,000; Soong Te Kwei, director of administration in the Ministry of Public Security, who wasted \$1,000,000,000; Lin Yu-tse, associate director, who was corrupted to the extent of \$140,000,000,000 (another report in the New China Press admitted that in the administrative departments and bureaus 80 percent of the functionaries were tainted with corruption); Mang Tao, associate head of the Bureau of Health of the central administration of railroads, who in association with others trafficked in opium and manufactured over 60 kilograms of morphine...

The examples of waste are even more numerous. During 1951 the section of supplies of the military committee and the railroads lost 5,000 tons of gasoline and in addition 2,000 tons deteriorated... When the delegation from the Central Peoples' Bank went to inspect constructions in Honan, the branch of the bank in Honan had spent 250 million dollars on entertainment expenses.

The cases of violation of financial discipline are also very serious. First of all, the phenomenon of the transforming of public property into private property is an altogether common occurrence. In the one central department of the fuel industry the losses mounted to 73 billions.

There are numerous cases of making up false accounts. Lu Ta, associate director of the department of steel in the Ministry of Heavy Industry, faked an expenditure of 50 billions. As with the special funds not used for their special purposes -- a pitfall in the top financial institutions -- the mixing of state and private expenditures is an everyday occurrence.

The editorial in the Peoples' Journal of January 29 concludes: "Whatever the organization -- whether of the party or the civil or military administration -- if it is in charge of large quantities of money or material it inevitably contains a large group of corrupt persons." Moreover, in a short period of time the authorities received 50,000 articles in criticism and denunciation of corruption. This would be sufficient to show how general and serious the degree of corruption is in Peking. According to a report in the newspaper New China of February 7, 160,000 articles of denunciation and accusation had already been received. Most of these dealt with the

bourgeoisie, but the bourgeoisie are closely tied up with the corruption of the cadres. Among all the cases of corruption in the Tientsin region the most striking and shameful was the following: the former secretary of the Tientsin regional committee, Liu Ku San, and the present secretary Chan Tse Suan, acted ignominiously in cutting the wages of the civil workers, stealing security funds, funds for river reparations and airfield constructions and security funds for the families of the cadres, swindling the banks for a sum mounting to 15 billions -- and thus sank into the mire of total degeneration. "Under their leadership the corruption of a few individuals became a collective corruption, their attempt to hide the corruption developed into a cooperative action to make up false accounts, and even when they were discovered they maintained an air of indifference... (The reason is that) we leaders are also affected by the rotten ideology of the bourgeoisie... Facts have shown that since the entry into the cities, the influence of the rotten ideology of the bourgeoisie has become very general, very rapid and very serious." (Article by Yang Siu Foong, president of the provincial government of Hopei.)

In east China, Shao Su Shi has pointed out that according to incomplete statistics the cases of corruption dealt with directly by the higher judicial authorities and by the control boards between January and November 1951, had already risen to 179 and the money involved to 288 billions. And according to the statistics of the committee of investigation of east China, for the period June to November 1950, the losses resulting from individual corruption amounted to about 124 billions. The most striking examples are these: The associate director of the planning section of the control bureau for textiles in east China, Chen Yen Chiu, was involved in a corrupt affair amounting to 3 billions; Wang Tsai Wen, of the department of industry of east China, 2 billions; Lee Yu Chao, joint-administrator of the Chekiang province branch of the Chinese Petroleum Company, one billion; the large sums received by Lu Sin Yuan of the Shanghai broadcasting station and by Fung Mun Tung, director of the municipal administration of Hangchow; the 85 functionaries in the office of tax collections in Changchow, who were bought out by 300 shopkeepers to escape taxes amounting to \$1,600,000,000...etc. Moreover, as regards waste the statistics for only four sections (including the industrial section) have shown a loss of \$224,500,000,000. The loss of stock in the warehouses is also serious. For example, in warehouse No. 1, taking into account only five of the main items, the loss has already passed 11 billions. "Although the great mass of soldiers are in need of medicines, the medicines and supplies stockpiled by the health department of the military region of east China -- valued at more than 10 billions -- have become worthless because of a long period of neglect; the Ministry of Culture bought some curious items for several billion "to put them in a museum for the amusement of a few." The ministry of munitions lost over 30 billion dollars as a result of swindling of materials and labor. All this constitutes only a part of the astronomic figures, and what hasn't been reckoned is incomparably greater.

In Shanghai, industrial and commercial center of the country, "according to investigations and statistics of the previous period, the cases of corruption in the municipal institutions and enterprises

have already reached the figure of 1,264, and the total in dollars is 2.3 billions. The figure for waste is even more shocking." "The deputy-mayor Pan Han Nien has frankly confessed his own bureaucratic conduct, his extravagance and waste...the leaders and responsible cadres of various sections of the Shanghai Municipal Council and various municipal bureaus have investigated and discussed these questions in party meetings and have liquidated the influence of the bourgeois ideology." That corruption has become a social custom may be illustrated by the fact that, among more than 40,000 officials and workers of the Shanghai railroads, in a short period of time over 14,000 voluntarily "admitted frankly" ("tam pai") their corrupt acts, and one does not know how many have not yet "tam pai-ed."

In the south-central region, one of the big "tigers" who was corrupted and was suppressing democracy, Yi Chi Kuan, deputy-mayor of Wuhan, general secretary and member of the provincial government, is now in prison. Another typical example is that of Chui Ming Ching, in the storage company of Wuhan, who involved more than 14 cadres along with him, their corruption reaching to over \$200,000,000 and causing a loss to the state of 1.7 billions. This case has a special importance for it happened immediately after two criminals of this company had been executed and after the misappropriation of public funds by the storage administration in Changsha.

In Kwangtung province the influence of the bourgeoisie (and also, to quite an extent, of the big landowners) is even more widely preserved than in other regions. The Economic and Finance Committee of south China has disclosed that from the time of the liberation to September 1950, the food supplies lost by the state exceeded 4,000 tons as a result of neglect, corruption and waste. In June 1951 the leaders of the party, the administration and the army in this province called a joint meeting at which the purge campaign was decided on: (1) To conclude from the reports coming from every side, the cadres at various levels in the provinces are seriously affected by habits of command and bureaucratism, particularly the work corps in the countryside who impose their authority by bureaucratic methods and alienate themselves from the masses. This behavior predominated in the first period of the liberation and had disappeared for a certain time as a result of severe criticisms, but it has now been born again and is growing. (2) Concerning corruption and the abuses of power; In its warning to the public it emphasized that the decision had been taken because of frequent disclosures that numerous responsible members of peasant committees and cadres of the militia had seized the fruits of the liquidation of the large landowners and autocrats. Numerous militia cadres reveled daily in sensual pleasures, wasting the public food, taking cattle from the peasants whenever they wanted to and paying only half price or even taking chickens and ducks without paying a cent."

Later on the Control Commission of the region announced that in the eight months since it had been established in January 1951, it had dealt with 33 cases of corruption, 38 cases of law violation and abuse of power; according to the reports of the special bureau, the cases of corruption rose to 230, neglect of duty to 40, abuse of power and violation of civil rights to 92, the cadres already convicted in the province to 364 and of these some cases of an extremely serious nature.*

*We do not know if these figures include the cases of collective corruption involving 69 percent of the employees in the postoffice department of Tai-san (including the director); 30 percent of the postoffice employees in the Sin Chang district, likewise under the lead of the director; the employees in the municipal office of food supplies and in the Municipal Peoples' Bank of Canton; and the 11 cadres in the Customs Bureau of Kung Pei...etc.

Up to now, in this region, "there have been very few instances of the seriously corrupt elements being thrown out. Unequal treatment in the purge is still a serious fact, chiefly because the leading cadres of a certain (?) organization...sit and do nothing." (New China, February 4)

The same report disclosed another fact: "The municipal section has spent over 10 billion for building offices. Because they were not sufficiently 'sumptuous' they were built, torn down and rebuilt (actually most of these houses were simply taken over). The old furnishings were discarded and over 3.5 billion was spent to get new furniture and absolutely useless stuff from Hong Kong." This was at the exact moment when they were denouncing pro-American sentiments!

In the more backward regions of the Southwest, the disclosures show similarly that "the phenomenon of corruption and waste in different parts of the military areas is most shocking." It has been revealed that up to January 10 the units directly connected with the military areas had wasted about 265 billions in two years, and the organizations directly connected with the political and military committee had wasted 2.8 billions. For example, the supply section of the army headquarters spent 50 billions on constructions most of which were useless." "While soldiers were still living in tents, the department of culture spent 5 billions for building a theatre, the supply section spent 2.6 billions for building bath-houses and 8.4 for a nursery. And of course these were only for a few privileged cadres. Moreover the sums prodigally spent by these cadres were similarly extravagant." (Peoples' Journal, January 6)

As for the Northwest, the most poverty-stricken region that for years had struggled against a climate of deserts and drought, Shee Chun Shuan, the vice-president, stated at a meeting of the cadres of this region: "Some people think that corruption in the Northwest is not serious. This is false. Actually, the situation in this part of the country is just as serious...There still exist many bureaucratic habits in the various levels of the leading posts of the party and the administrative organizations." He added: "In the city of Sian alone the swindles admitted to by the merchants and industrialists have already amounted to 5.4 billions, while the hidden losses are infinitely greater."

In the Northeast, that "exceptional" region which is in close touch with the Soviet Union and apparently least under bourgeois influence, the disclosures are unusually abundant. The president, Kao Kan, admitted in his report of August 31 of last year: "We also, it is true, have some (?) comrades, some old individual (?) cadres, who have developed a tendency to corruption and degeneration, which

is corroding the revolutionary ranks...This is a very grave matter... We have some organizations and comrades who are infected with deep-going habits of bureaucratism, who pay too much attention to appearances. For example, the number of American and British automobiles in the streets of Mukden has greatly increased...The instances of bureaucratism in the institutions are numberless." Among the numerous corrupt top functionaries who have already been expelled from the party, ousted from their posts or placed under investigation, we may note especially: the Minister of Labor, the director of the salt monopoly, the head of the bureau of foreign trade for the Northeast, the head of the municipal trade bureau of Port Arthur and Dairen, the head of the pharmaceutical department in the Ministry of Health, the administrator of the National Company of Medicines of the Northeast...etc. Had it not been for the notoriety of their acts and the seriousness of their cases, these old top-rank cadre would never have been subjected to such surgical operations.

What we have cited above represents only a part of the facts revealed by the party and the administrative and military organizations; the true situation must be incomparably more serious. Some people, however, attempt to hide the reality by saying that these are "phenomena" or "a tendency" of "a few" individuals or cadres. To do this is either to deliberately ignore the facts or to contradict oneself. (Even when 80 percent of the personnel in the administrative section of the Ministry of Public Security are corrupt, this is considered as only a small part of the entire personnel!) Others take refuge in explaining that only in the economic and financial sections are the responsible cadres susceptible to corruption. It is those engaged in trade union work who should be considered the most representative of the so-called "proletarian vanguard" group, who reflect the proletarian ideology, and are capable of stouter resistance to the corrosive influence of bourgeois ideology. But what do the facts show? Let us listen to the confessions of the National Trade Union Federation: according to the report in the Peking Journal, January 3 of this year, "vice-president Liu Ning-I asked us again to remember the seriousness of corruption, waste and bureaucratism in the trade union sector, particularly the corrosive influence of bourgeois ideology. This non-proletarian ideology is manifest everywhere. This is a particularly grave situation (!)... At the time of the entry into the cities, our National Trade Union Federation had no thought for getting the factories back in shape and restoring production rapidly -- to say nothing of the fact that there was no thought at all of working in the interests of the proletariat (!) -- but concentrated its attention on setting up huge offices, arguing over properties, autos, furniture, etc., fighting among each other for privileges and parties..." Chen Sao Min, president of the national committee of the textile union, emphasized in her self-criticism how she herself had represented the non-proletarian sentiment of some of the trade union cadres. She said: "Usually, when I listened to the complaints of some of the trade union cadres who called themselves 'fourth-degree cadres,' I did not correct them but instead agreed with them...as a reason for showing that our treatment is no better than that of others, that is to say, by comparison with others...by comparison with the life of the bourgeoisie." Is not this ideology, so clearly described here, the reflection of the objective reality?*

*On the subject of corruption and waste in the trade unions, the editorial in the Labor Journal had already stated at the beginning of last year: "Despite certain changes since the purging of the trade union cadres (for bureaucratic habits), the change has not been thoroughgoing. Particularly so with the collection of trade union funds, which is not conscientiously organized; certain unions take up collections but do not use them for the masses and give no accounting of the expenditures, and cases of serious corruption and waste have been revealed" (January 20, 1951). It was reported, according to the Peking Labor Journal that at a preliminary investigation of the accounts of the unions within the Tientsin Trade Union Local, the financial control commission discovered numerous instances of corruption and waste. There were 83 cases of corruption and misuse of funds; several unions did not even keep any regular accounts." (Peoples' Journal, August 14, 1950.) Soon after, the National Federation published a memorandum on "the provisional measures for control of trade union funds," which clearly reveals the gravity of the situation.

Even in the slightly superior and honest literary circles, this same destructive influence has infiltrated and been disclosed. An editorial in the Literary Review (Vol. 5, No. 6) admits openly: "We (literary workers) are likewise affected by deep habits of corruption, extravagance, waste and bureaucratism." And it cites numerous illustrations of this state of affairs.

All these facts prove that the practice of corruption and waste has penetrated into every pore of society.

The Essential Causes and the Significance of the Degeneration

How could the rotten ideology of the bourgeoisie so deeply invade the ranks of the CP and lead to such widespread and profound degeneration among old cadres with a record of ten to twenty years in the party and a long history of hard struggles -- the degeneration even of an entire local organization of the party? The fundamental reason is clearly that the new democratic policy of the CP has enabled the bourgeois influence to reestablish its positions, and has brought about the logical consequences of its development. After the Kuomintang regime was overthrown, not only did the CP, by its "common program" (with the other parties), give political and economic positions to the bourgeoisie, but also the result of the practical application of this policy was to promote the development of private industry and trade.* Moreover, the industry and trade of

*On this point Po I-Po has stated precisely: "In the course of the last three years the national bourgeoisie of China have made unprecedented profits by comparison with the more than 20 years of reactionary rule of the Kuomintang" (Peoples' Journal, February 2). The speech of Huag Chin, mayor of Tientsin, on January 16 to the industrial and trade circles was even more specific: "When you need money, we lend it to you; we supply you with raw materials when you need them; when there is no market for your goods, when they pile up, the government assumes your debt...the workers and the shopkeepers

have reduced (compulsorily) the payments due them...previously they had even cut their wages... Have you ever seen or heard of a government which would take such care of you?"

the originally non-bureaucratic capital sector have been revived and strengthened, and the development of the influence of the Chinese bourgeoisie has meanwhile manifested itself in the two following aspects:

A. As a result of the hybrid nature of the agrarian reform, a new capitalist element has grown up rapidly in those areas where the agrarian reform has been carried out. Usury flourishes, commercial speculation has grown, and the land is again being concentrated. The population of the countryside is once more being polarized; a new social layer, with the regional and district cadres of the CP as a base, is appearing. Regarding these developments Kao Kan furnished much new material to a gathering of the top cadres of the CP Bureau of the Northwest on January 10, 1952. He gave evidence that: (1) According to investigations in the region of Lungchiang and Sungchiang in the Northeast, the number of those already in debt is 60 to 70 percent of the entire population, and the borrowers constitute two-thirds of the families. Most of the borrowings are from usurers -- which shows that about half the population depends on loans from usurers to survive. Some farmers even sell their land and their horses in order to lend money to others (which shows the extremely high rate of interest on loans). (2) The "economically favored" party members and cadres not only engage in usury and commercial speculation, but also employ workers "at low wages and with very poor working conditions." According to investigations and exact statistics, day-laborers of this sort constitute 3.6 percent of the population of the six counties of Lunkiang province and 6.3 percent in the county of Chin Yien in the district of Caho Ha, Kirin. (3) In the semi-socialist cooperatives, the unequal allotment of work between man and horse has worked to the disadvantage of those without horses, and they are in a very unfavorable situation in the absence of any help from the leadership; moreover, "there appear in the cooperatives such forms of exploitation as wage-labor and usury. Some members don't want to participate in the cooperatives but prefer to work alone" -- a concrete illustration of the development of capitalist elements in the countryside. Faced with this development certain members "show their weakness and capitulate...and think there is no way of stopping the development." (Extracts from a speech by Kao Kan.) This ideology reflects the rapidity and power of the capitalist development.

B. The state economy and notably state trade is being gradually corroded and weakened by capitalist influence. The process of development in the last three years demonstrate that the state economy has not played a leading role in the market as a "conscious socialist economic factor," but on the contrary has increasingly revealed its capitulation to capitalist laws. The disclosures in the "San Fan" campaign (anti-corruption, anti-waste, anti-bureaucratism) are sufficient evidence of this. Almost none of the state economic organisms has escaped these influences of corruption and degeneration, and often their extent exceeds that in any other branch of an institution. The situation is equally serious in the mining

enterprises controlled by the state. Although all these organizations have been controlled by various leading cadres, they have become centers of speculation, for example the state company of pharmacy in the Northeast. The administrator Lo, who had the "honor" of over 20 years in the party but who could not resist the temptation of enormous profits, joined in with the corrupt practices of almost the entire responsible personnel above the rank of department heads, and made his company to nothing more than an organization controlling speculations. Kao Kan complains that in several places some members "do not make sufficient effort to strengthen and develop the enterprises of a socialist nature but on the contrary are constantly thinking of how to transform "public" into "private." Furthermore, there is an attitude of tolerance and even complicity toward the conduct of those bourgeoisie who compete with the state trade and are guilty of all kinds of schemings against the state, for example demanding extra work from the workers so that they can fill their orders, speculate and carry on illegal trade. In several places the state applies a policy of "commercial taxation lower than industrial taxation, taxation on the travelling merchant below that on the resident merchant, in order to aid and encourage the speculative activities of the capitalists." But the height of irony is when party members conspire with private merchants to dissolve the trade organizations run by the state. Two notorious examples of this are the cases of two regional party secretaries, in Tientsin, Liu and Chang. Moreover, the organizations of production which "had played a definite (?) role in the past" have now become one of the important areas of financial deterioration and corruption of the cadres" (Po I-Po).* How bitterly and cruelly this iron reality

*On April 20, 1950, the Central Finance and Economic Committee published its "directives to the official institutions and the army, strictly forbidding them from engaging in commercial operations," directives in which it is stated: "According to frequent reports from various places there are still some (?) organizations, troops and schools which engage in commercial operations, or directly appropriate large quantities of goods from the market, or devote themselves to speculation despite the governmental decrees. Such actions often produce price fluctuations and render more difficult the control of market prices by the state trade organizations." But despite this "strict prohibition," the phenomenon continues to exist today, in constantly changing forms.

conflicts with the "socialist" gospel of yesterday! (Indeed, in the above-mentioned report by Kao Kan it is openly admitted that CP members today do not dare even mention their propaganda of "from socialism to communism"!).

All of this is sufficient proof that, on the basis of a system of private capitalist property, it matters little that those who are responsible for the functioning of the new regime are old party members with dozens of years of struggle; their ideology is determined by the existence of the capitalist influence. Moreover, the opportunist idea of equal sharing between labor and capital, of equal regard for state and private property in the new democracy, has encouraged the bourgeois ideology.

Another not unimportant cause lies in the fact that to a large degree the regime of the party has been one of bureaucratic

centralism, and the regime established by it has from the outset been a bonapartist military dictatorship and not a dictatorship of the proletariat leading the poor peasants. As a result there is no genuine democracy, no genuine freedom in the party or the regime, no real criticism from the masses and no control by the base. The cadres and functionaries are not, in conformity with the ideas and norms conceived and set down by Marx, Engels and Lenin, freely elected by the people and recallable by them, but on the contrary owe their posts to the higher levels, far above the mass of workers and peasants, arbitrarily abusing their authority and thinking of themselves as the victorious leaders. They do not receive the same wages as an ordinary worker, according to Lenin's principle, but fix their own wages -- always higher and higher -- according to the official regulations; their wages are already several times higher than those of an ordinary worker; they enjoy other privileges in distribution and in amusements; the higher the rank the better the treatment. (The author has heard of and observed for a long time such differences of treatment, and the resentment and complaints of the lower ranks of the CP.) The working class, though crowned with the empty title of "leading class" or "master class," is actually still oppressed as before by the system of class exploitation; sometimes, in its struggle against the bourgeoisie to better its conditions, it meets with oppression from the newcomers (so-called "compulsory arbitration"). Occasionally the masses are given the weapon of "criticism and self-criticism," but actually they are powerless. (If this weapon has any practical meaning, it is simply the criticism of the subordinate by the boss, or the self-criticism of the lower ranks).*

*As has been shown in all the above examples. But we should point out that most of the letters of criticism and the proposals are written by party members and functionaries themselves (the masses in general not daring to express their resentment for fear of punishment). Despite the insistence of the party organs, most of the letters get no reply, and when they do, the replies are generally diplomatic. We can see from this how widespread and despotic this bureaucratism is.

Obviously it is inevitable that such bureaucrats, completely beyond the control of the working masses and peasants, surrounded by the interests of private capital, should tend toward corruption and degeneration in their ideology and daily life.

The Meaning of this Campaign

Taking advantage precisely of the reformist theories and practice of the CP, the Chinese bourgeoisie has carried on its activities in conformity with its own methods, and in all fields (especially the state economy) has competed for bases. The result is corrosion of the CP cadres and even the party organizations at various levels, which in turn alienates them from the masses and deprives them of popularity and support; corruption of the state apparatus; rendering it increasingly powerless and paralyzed; debasement of the state economy, leading to its enfeeblement and decomposition. Finally, and not least important, the bourgeoisie utilizes every kind of method (for example, tax-dodging, padding labor costs

in filling orders, cutting down on labor and materials in their contract jobs) to steal an always increasing part of the civil revenue and to sabotage the plans of the CP for national construction and war preparations. It is thus clear that the rightist opportunist policy of the CP for the last three years has borne bitter fruit.

In face of the evil spirits it has evoked, the CP has been forced to an empirical and instinctive understanding of the danger of its own corruption and degeneration, the complete bankruptcy of its New Democracy, the rapid decline and disappearance of its influence among the masses, and the future danger of being overthrown by the capitalist class. This threatening danger has compelled the CP to awake from its dreams of "fair profits for capital and labor, equal regard for state and private property," and to let forth a cry of alarm. It is a frantic offensive of the bourgeoisie against the "Peoples'" government, and "it is a serious class struggle." The CP has gone on to mobilize the masses in a limited fashion, from above to below, in order to eliminate the capitalist influence which is beginning to rear its head, and also to reestablish at one stroke its waning popularity with the masses. This is the fundamental reason for the mobilization of this campaign against corruption, waste and bureaucratism. We can therefore understand that the pressure compelling the CP to this action came principally from the right, from the capitalist influence -- rather than from the left, the base, as Comrade Kim maintains.

In the past, Marxists have consistently proved, by theory and by historical experience, that the peasantry by itself has no independent politics. It follows either the bourgeoisie or the proletariat. From this premise precisely there flows the conclusion that the present regime, which rests on the petty-bourgeoisie peasantry as its principal support, must either be replaced by a proletarian dictatorship or inevitably tend in the direction of corruption and degeneration and be eventually replaced by a restoration of the bourgeoisie. The present campaign has correctly justified this conclusion, that is, it has proved the tendency to degeneration. Yesterday the regime continued to rest on the bourgeoisie, repressing the reasonable demands and actions of the workers and peasants; whereas today it is turning toward the base, calling upon its help in resisting the pressure from the right; but the campaign has also proved the error of the statement in the "basis for discussion" that "the bourgeoisie could reestablish its rule in a peaceful manner."

Before the campaign was launched the large masses, and especially the working class, found themselves frustrated by the rightist policy of the CP, prisoners of the passivity, the impotence, the "ideological confusion and slackness of the organization." (The situation was pretty well described in an article "To correct the rightist tendency in the workers' movement within the private enterprises in Anton," which appeared in the Peoples' Journal February 7, 1952.) Despite their extreme discontent and great bitterness toward the CP's policy of compromise with the bourgeoisie, toward the innumerable acts of corruption and bureaucratism as well as the exploitation and oppression by the bourgeoisie, these sentiments had not found expression in action. Now, under pressure from the right, the CP is compelled to turn to the power of the masses in order to crush the influences which are menacing it! (for it is only the power of the

masses, and notably their sharp eyesight which can't be deceived, that made possible the documented denunciations of the criminal acts of the bourgeoisie and the bureaucrats). In the opinion of the masses this campaign has a progressive significance; consequently, under the impulsion of the CP leadership, many people, especially the shopkeepers, have gradually joined in on the indictments of the crimes of corruption of the bureaucrats, and have to a certain extent furnished a mass base to the struggle. But it must be pointed out, however, that the masses involved in the struggle act mainly within the framework established by the CP and, as in numerous past struggles, do not have the liberty to go beyond the CP leadership and carry the struggles to the end.

Perspectives of the Future

The present swing of the CP will not be a big one. Although it will certainly liquidate (in fact will be obliged to do so) a number of bureaucrats who are too unpopular and too flagrant, bureaucrats of lower and middle rank (the top leaders will not suffer from the purge, at least at present!); although it will strike at the too-greedy elements of the bourgeoisie and will check the growing influence of the bourgeoisie; nevertheless its traditional policy of New Democracy will not be fundamentally changed and its bonapartist military dictatorship which keeps it alienated from the masses will not be abolished. Actually, in order to appease the sentiments of the bourgeoisie, it continues to repeat that it is pursuing an unchanged policy.* As a result, the objective social origins for

*For example, the Tientsin Journal says in its editorial of January 15: "The orientation of the popular democratic united front has not been changed... If there is anything different today from three years ago, it is simply that we have now become aware of the corrosive role of the rotten bourgeois ideology, but we still hope that they will conscientiously accomplish their own reform in order to conduct themselves peacefully in the new democratic society."

the growth of corruption, of bureaucratism, etc., still remain, for no laws can go beyond the limits established by the existing economic structure. In the future, on this meager base, all the old tricks will be repeated. Of course, after increasing masses have participated actively in this campaign, there will quite possibly be a change in the relationship of class forces throughout the country, in favor of the masses and to the disadvantage of the bourgeoisie. But if anyone today nourishes the illusion that the present movement proves that China has begun to (or is tending to) march on the road of a Workers State, he is in error.

In this struggle against the bourgeoisie and the bureaucracy our militants of the Chinese section of the Fourth International are certainly not passive spectators but are at the head of the masses in order that they may conduct this struggle more resolutely and more inexorably to the very end.

In order to wipe out completely the influence of the bourgeoisie and the acts of corruption and bureaucratism, and, furthermore, to repress effectively every kind of resistance on the part of the

bourgeoisie, the following aims must be realized:

(1) The popular masses must enjoy complete democratic rights, and the system of military control and special police must be abolished.

(2) Complete break with the bourgeoisie and all ties to it; confiscation and nationalization of the large private enterprises; establishment, by general elections, of control committees in the factories in order to control production.

It is with these objectives in mind that the masses can be truly mobilized and the struggle carried through to total victory!

February 8, 1952.