

Betrayal of Proletarian Dictatorship Is Essential Element in the Book on "Self-Cultivation"

by the Editorial Departments of "Hongqi" and "Renmin Ribao"

All revolutionary struggles in the world are aimed at seizing political power and consolidating it. The desperate struggles waged by counter-revolutionaries against revolutionary forces are likewise solely for the sake of maintaining their political power.

— MAO TSE-TUNG

THE book on the "self-cultivation" of Communists is the representative work of the top Party person in authority taking the capitalist road. It is a big poisonous weed opposed to Marxism-Leninism, Mao Tse-tung's thought. Its poison has spread throughout China and the world. It must be thoroughly criticized and repudiated.

What is the essential element in this book?

It is betrayal of the Marxist-Leninist theory of the dictatorship of the proletariat. And this betrayal of the theory of the dictatorship of the proletariat means complete, out-and-out betrayal of Marxism-Leninism itself and of the revolutionary cause of the proletariat.

Marx pointed out over a hundred years ago:

"... And now as to myself, no credit is due to me for discovering the existence of classes in modern society, nor yet the struggle between them. Long before me bourgeois historians had described the historical development of this struggle of the classes and bourgeois economists the economic anatomy of the classes. What I did that was new was to prove: 1) that the existence of classes is only bound up with particular historical phases in the development of production; 2) that the class struggle necessarily leads to the dictatorship of the proletariat; 3) that this dictatorship itself only constitutes the transition to the abolition of all classes and to a classless society. . . ." ("Marx to J. Weydemeyer," March 5, 1852, Karl Marx and Frederick Engels *Selected Works* in two volumes, F.L.P.H., Moscow, 1951, Vol. II, p. 410.)

Lenin again emphatically pointed out fifty years ago:

"It is often said and written that the main point in Marx's teachings is the class struggle; but this is not true. And from this untruth very often springs the opportunist distortion of Marxism, its falsification in such a way as to make it acceptable to the bourgeoisie. For the doctrine of the class struggle was created not by Marx, but by the bourgeoisie before Marx, and generally speaking it is acceptable to the bourgeoisie. Those who recognize only the class struggle are not yet Marxists; they may be found to be still within the boundaries of bourgeois thinking and bourgeois politics. To confine Marxism to the doctrine of the class struggle means curtailing Marxism, distorting it, reducing it to something which is acceptable to the bourgeoisie. Only he is a Marxist who extends the recognition of the class struggle to the recognition of the dictatorship of the proletariat. This is what constitutes the most profound difference between the Marxist and the ordinary petty (as well as big) bourgeois. This is the touchstone on which the real understanding and recognition of Marxism is to be tested." ("The State and Revolution," V.I. Lenin *Selected Works* in two volumes, F.L.P.H., Moscow, 1951, Vol. II, Part 1, p. 233.)

Like all opportunists in the history of the international communist movement, the author of the book on "self-cultivation" curtails and distorts the fundamentals of Marxism. Though he lards this nearly 50,000-word book with certain abstract phrases on class struggle, he makes no mention whatsoever of the actual class struggle and the dictatorship of the proletariat. Without the dictatorship of the proletariat, his talk about class struggle is, naturally, just deceitful rubbish, and wholly acceptable to the bourgeoisie.

This book was first published in July 1939 and reprinted many times during the War of Resistance Against Japan and the War of Liberation. None of these editions made any mention at all of the anti-Japanese war or the class struggle during this period* nor did they mention the War of Liberation or the class struggle during that period, or the question of seizing political power. Such a book on "self-cultivation" could not do the least harm to Japanese imperialism, or U.S. imperialism and its lackey the Kuomintang of Chiang Kai-shek.

During the War of Resistance Against Japan, Chairman Mao pointed out: "The seizure of power by armed force, the settlement of the issue by war, is the central task and the highest form of revolution" (Mao Tse-tung: *Problems of War and Strategy*) and "the development, consolidation and bolshevization of our Party have proceeded in the midst of revolutionary wars; without armed struggle the Communist Party would assuredly not be what it is today" (Mao Tse-tung: *Introducing "The Communist"*). Obviously, the development, consolidation and building of the Party and the ideological remoulding of Party members cannot be discussed outside the context of the revolutionary wars and the seizure of power by armed force. Yet in the very years of war when the guns were roaring and when political power was being seized, the top Party person in authority taking the capitalist road wanted people to indulge in "self-cultivation" oblivious of the fundamental task of seizing political power by armed force. "Self-cultivation" of this kind can only "cultivate" philistines who will not take part in revolutionary war and do not want to seize political power! The philistine products of such "cultivation" are no Communists at all, but Social-Democrats of the Second International.

When a revised edition of the book on "self-cultivation" of Communists was printed in August 1949, and when it was re-published with many additions and deletions in August 1962, it dished up the same old stuff. Though revised and re-published on these dates, the book not only said nothing about the socialist revolution or the class struggle in socialist society, but remained completely silent about the dictatorship of the proletariat. The top Party person in authority taking the capitalist road was blatantly setting himself up in opposition to a whole series of great works by Chairman Mao, such as the "Report to the Second Plenary Session of the Seventh Central Committee of the Communist Party of China," "On the People's Democratic Dictatorship" and "On the Correct Handling of Contradictions Among the People." In flagrant opposition to Mao Tse-tung's thought, he wanted people to forget about

* None of the editions of the book on "self-cultivation" published before 1962 made mention of the War of Resistance Against Japan. In the revised 1962 edition, a passage concerning the policy on the anti-Japanese national united front was added as an illustration in the section "The Unity of Theoretical Study and Ideological Self-Cultivation."

the socialist revolution, the class struggle in socialist society and the dictatorship of the proletariat and engage in "self-cultivation." "Self-cultivation" of this kind can only "cultivate" a Bukharin type of person who goes in for capitalism instead of socialism or a Khrushchov type of person who rejects the dictatorship of the proletariat and works to restore capitalism!

Though reprinted and revised many times, the book on "self-cultivation" does not mention the seizure of power by armed force or the dictatorship of the proletariat. Is this an accidental oversight? By no means.

The book discusses the question of the state. A Marxist cannot possibly discuss this question without mentioning the class nature of the state and the dictatorship of the proletariat. Yet the book on "self-cultivation" precisely throws out the dictatorship of the proletariat and talks abstractly about the question of the state in the manner of scholars in the pay of the bourgeoisie.

The author of the book on "self-cultivation" says that the proletariat "can build up a party and state apparatus with strict organization and discipline for the purpose of carrying on an irreconcilable struggle against all forms of corruption, bureaucracy and degeneration and to ceaselessly purge the Party and the state apparatus of those elements who are corrupt, bureaucratic and degenerate in their work," so that "the purity of the Party and the state apparatus can be preserved." We may ask: How can the proletariat build up its own state apparatus? Is it possible without a revolution by violence? Is it possible without smashing the old state machine? The book has precisely discarded these fundamental principles of Marxism-Leninism. It would seem, according to the author, that so long as Communists apply themselves energetically to "self-cultivation," a "utopia" will descend from the skies. What he has been dreaming of is nothing but a bourgeois state.

In the 1962 edition of the book, the words "set up a centralized and at the same time democratic state apparatus" are added to the above-quoted passage. This deliberate addition indicates the way the author sees the nature of our state. However, neither here nor elsewhere in the book, does he make any mention at all of exercising dictatorship over the class enemy. **Chairman Mao says that our proletarian state exercises dictatorship over the class enemy and "what applies among the people is democratic centralism."** By simply describing our state as "centralized and at the same time democratic," with no dictatorship over the enemy, what is the author of the book on "self-cultivation" doing if not opposing the dictatorship of the proletariat, preaching the Khrushchov theory of "the state of the whole people" and advocating bourgeois dictatorship?

The book describes at length "the cause of communism" as "the greatest and most arduous undertaking in human history." A Marxist would find it imperative to mention here that communism cannot be realized

without going through the dictatorship of the proletariat. But the author does not say a word about the dictatorship of the proletariat.

"What is our communist cause about? How should Party members advance it?" The author replies: "In that world there will be no exploiters and oppressors, no landlords and capitalists, no imperialists and fascists. There will be no oppressed and exploited people, no darkness, ignorance and backwardness, and so on. In such a society all humanity will consist of unselfish, intelligent, highly cultured and skilled Communists, mutual assistance and affection will prevail among men and there will be no such irrationalities as mutual suspicion and deception, mutual injury, mutual slaughter and war. It will of course be the best, the most beautiful and the most advanced society in human history." The author adds: "We Communists should be men of the boldest vision and revolutionary determination. Every Party member should gladly and solemnly resolve to shoulder the task of realizing communism, a task greater and more arduous than any in human history." After these and similar priest-like invocations and blessings, the author draws the conclusion: "This is my understanding of the cause of communism." In the answer given by the author and elaborated in high-flown phraseology, the one thing he excludes is precisely the dictatorship of the proletariat. That is how he understands the communist cause, and that is what he advocates for achieving it!

This sort of description of communist society is nothing new but has existed from ancient times. In China, there are such descriptions in the passage about "great harmony" in the chapter entitled "Li Yun" in the *Book of Rites* [edited by Tai Sheng, a scholar of the Western Han Dynasty — 206 B.C.-24 A.D.], in *The Journey to the Land of Peach Blossoms* by Tao Chien [poet of the Eastern Tsin Dynasty — 317-420] and in the *Book of Great Harmony* by Kang Yu-wei [leader of the 1898 Reform Movement]. Abroad there are a great number of works by French and British utopian socialists, containing the same stuff.

In the opinion of the author, communist society is a bed of roses, without darkness or contradiction; all is well, without the existence of opposites. Society will thereby cease to develop. Not only will society never change qualitatively but it seems it will never change quantitatively either and social development will then come to an end, and society will for ever remain the same. Here the author discards a fundamental Marxist law—that the development of all things, all human society, is set in motion by the struggle of opposites, by contradiction. What the author is doing here is preaching metaphysics and discarding the great theory of dialectical materialism and historical materialism.

Marx said: "Between capitalist and communist society lies the period of the revolutionary transformation of the one into the other. There corresponds to this also a political transition period in which the state

can be nothing but the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat." ("Critique of the Gotha Program," Karl Marx and Frederick Engels *Selected Works* in two volumes, F.L.P.H., Moscow, 1951, Vol. I, p. 30.)

Lenin said: ". . . development towards communism, proceeds through the dictatorship of the proletariat, and cannot do otherwise, for the resistance of the capitalist exploiters cannot be broken by anyone else or in any other way." ("The State and Revolution," V.I. Lenin *Selected Works* in two volumes, F.L.P.H., Moscow, 1951, Vol. II, part 1, p. 291.)

In his book on "self-cultivation," the top Party person in authority taking the capitalist road emphatically points out that following the political victory of the proletariat, it is necessary to "undergo a prolonged period of socialist reconstruction" before a country "can finally pass, through gradual transition, into communist society." Anyone with a particle of Marxism would have inevitably mentioned the dictatorship of the proletariat at this point! But there is actually still not a word about it! Obviously, his "prolonged period of . . . reconstruction" is not a period of the dictatorship of the proletariat, and his road of "gradual transition, into communist society" is not the road of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

It is crystal clear that the author of this book has his own complete ideological system, which is to "advance the communist cause" without the dictatorship of the proletariat. This is out-and-out betrayal of scientific communism, of Marxism-Leninism, Mao Tse-tung's thought. It is revisionism, pure and simple.

Far from mentioning the dictatorship of the proletariat himself, the author has even deleted the term from two passages quoted from Lenin.

This is what Lenin wrote:

". . . the bourgeoisie, whose resistance is increased *tenfold* by their overthrow (even if only in a single country), and whose power lies, not only in the strength of international capital, the strength and durability of their international connections, but also in the *force of habit*, in the strength of *small-scale production*. Unfortunately, small-scale production is still widespread in the world, and small-scale production *engenders* capitalism and the bourgeoisie continuously, daily, hourly, spontaneously, and on a mass scale. All these reasons **make the dictatorship of the proletariat necessary**, and victory over the bourgeoisie is impossible without a long, stubborn and desperate life-and-death struggle which calls for tenacity, discipline, and a single and inflexible will."

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Thus the author flagrantly deletes the words "make the dictatorship of the proletariat necessary" from the middle of this passage. Is this an accidental oversight? Clearly, in the eyes of this top Party person in authority taking the capitalist road, the dictatorship of the proletariat is not necessary.

In the other passage, what Lenin wrote is this:

"The abolition of classes means, not merely ousting the landowners and the capitalists — that is something we accomplished with comparative ease; it also means abolishing the small commodity producers, and they cannot be ousted, or crushed; we must learn to live with them. They can (and must) be transformed and re-educated only by means of very prolonged, slow, and cautious organizational work. They surround the proletariat on every side with a petty bourgeois atmosphere, which permeates and corrupts the proletariat, and constantly causes among the proletariat relapses into petty-bourgeois spinelessness, disunity, individualism, and alternating moods of exaltation and dejection. The strictest centralization and discipline are required within the political party of the proletariat in order to counteract this, in order that the organizational role of the proletariat (and that is its principal role) may be exercised correctly, successfully and victoriously. The dictatorship of the proletariat means a persistent struggle — bloody and bloodless, violent and peaceful, military and economic, educational and administrative — against the forces and traditions of the old society. The force of habit in millions and tens of millions is a most formidable force. Without a party of iron that has been tempered in the struggle, a party enjoying the confidence of all honest people in the class in question, a party capable of watching and influencing the mood of the masses, such a struggle cannot be waged successfully. It is a thousand times easier to vanquish the centralized big bourgeoisie than to 'vanquish' the millions upon millions of petty proprietors; however, through their ordinary, everyday, imperceptible, elusive and demoralizing activities, they produce the very results which the bourgeoisie need and which tend to restore the bourgeoisie."

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Here the author flagrantly deletes "the dictatorship of the proletariat means a persistent struggle — bloody and bloodless, violent and peaceful, military and economic, educational and administrative — against the forces and traditions of the old society," and he even cuts out the statement about the leadership given by the Communist Party. Is this another accidental oversight?

Why are the lines on the dictatorship of the proletariat again left out in the revised 1962 edition of the book on "self-cultivation"? There can only be one explanation, namely, that the author opposes our state of the dictatorship of the proletariat, and wants to change the dictatorship of the proletariat into the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie.

This amply proves that this top Party person in authority taking the capitalist road is a sworn enemy of the dictatorship of the proletariat. The dictatorship of the proletariat is absolutely intolerable to him. Wherever he sees the term he strikes it out.

Thus, shamelessly, the top Party person in authority taking the capitalist road emasculates the very soul of Marxism-Leninism.

For this man, who has betrayed the dictatorship of the proletariat, to talk about "be the best pupils of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin" is really the greatest insult to Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin.

The revised 1962 edition of the book on "self-cultivation" changes "be the best pupils of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin" into "be worthy pupils of Marx and Lenin." It deletes all of the following three passages originally quoted from Chapter Four of the *History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolsheviks)* — *Short Course*:

"Men carry on a struggle against nature and utilize nature for the production of material values not in isolation from each other, not as separate individuals, but in common, in groups, in societies. Production, therefore, is at all times and under all conditions social pro-

duction. In the production of material values men enter into mutual relations of one kind or another within production, into relations of production of one kind or another."

"The first feature of production is that it never stays at one point for a long time and is always in a state of change and development, and that, furthermore, changes in the mode of production inevitably call forth changes in the whole social system, social ideas, political views and political institutions—they call forth a reconstruction of the whole social and political order."

"[The dialectical method considers] invincible only that which is arising and developing."

Obviously, in 1962 when he deleted Stalin's name and all the passages he originally quoted from Chapter Four of the *History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolsheviks) — Short Course*, the author of the book on "self-cultivation" had no other purpose in mind than to conform to the needs of the Soviet revisionist clique to oppose Stalin, that is, also to oppose Leninism.

And in order to delete the name of Stalin, he made Engels a co-victim and deleted Engels' name too.

In none of its many reprints and revised editions does the book anywhere call on people to be good pupils of Chairman Mao. Nowhere does it so much as mention Mao Tse-tung's thought. This is another illustration of the fact that the author is a bogus Marxist but a genuine revisionist, because in our times to depart from Mao Tse-tung's thought means to depart from the fundamentals of Marxism-Leninism, just as when Marxism developed to the stage of Leninism, to depart from

Leninism meant to depart from the fundamentals of Marxism.

Chairman Mao teaches us: "All revolutionary struggles in the world are aimed at seizing political power and consolidating it." (This Year's Election)

In opposition to this, the top Party person in authority taking the capitalist road does not want the proletariat and the Communists to seize power and consolidate it; he reduces everything in the world to "self-cultivation."

"Self-cultivation is everything, the ultimate aim is nothing" — this is the book's formula, a hundred per cent revisionist formula, similar to that of the old-time renegade Bernstein's: "The movement is everything, the ultimate aim is nothing."

Is it true that the ultimate aim is nothing? Of course not! Like that old-time renegade Bernstein, the top Party person in authority taking the capitalist road harbours sinister, ulterior aims. He seeks to demoralize the ranks of the proletariat by inducing people to become revisionist through "self-cultivation," because the more they engage in such "cultivation," the farther they will slide down the road of revisionism. Before nationwide victory was won, he opposed the proletarian seizure of political power; and since the winning of nationwide victory, he has been opposing the dictatorship of the proletariat in a vain attempt to practise and restore capitalism. This is the precise purpose of his reactionary formula: "Self-cultivation is everything, the ultimate aim is nothing."

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