

Red Sun Over the Miao Mountains

Our Staff Reporters

THE TRAIN sped through the Miaoling Mountains in the Kweichow highlands in southwest China. Four hours from the provincial capital of Kweiyang, we came in sight of a gleaming city nestling in the green Sword River valley—Tuyun, capital of the South Kweichow Puyi-Miao Autonomous Chou.* Once a remote and ramshackle little town, Tuyun, with its tall chimneys and buildings, its cranes, factories, power lines and highways, is today a brand-new city. Everywhere quotations from Chairman Mao in large red characters shone brightly in the sun. Revolutionary masses, carrying red flags, portraits of Chairman Mao, and signboards on which quotations were written, swung vigorously along the streets. Fully-loaded trucks roared past. Since the seizure of power by the proletarian revolutionaries, the whole place has been filled with revolutionary spirit.

Sufferings and Struggle

In Tuyun one finds a concentrated reflection of the tremendous change in the *chou* since the liberation and especially since the great proletarian cultural revolution. This mountain district covering 24,000 square kilometres is rich in natural resources but it was one of the poorest, most backward and isolated areas of old China. The million labouring people of Puyi, Miao and other minority nationalities living there constitute more than half the total population of the *chou*. Under the ruthless oppression and exploitation of the imperialists, Kuomintang reactionaries and the ruling classes of the Han and their own nationalities, the people were so poor that they had to do without salt, and quilts being unknown, depended on fires to keep themselves warm in winter.

* A *chou* is an administrative level below the province or autonomous region, taking in several counties and towns.

When the Red Army led by Chairman Mao passed through southern Kweichow at the end of 1934 during the Long March, the labouring people saw hope in the darkness. This hope remained with them. Wu Hua-wen, a former poor peasant of the Miao nationality of Paku commune, told us: "Ten years later, in the autumn of 1944, between 20,000 and 30,000 Miao working people rose in armed resistance against forced conscription by the Kuomintang. We sent two to three hundred people to try and make contact with the 'red soldiers' of Chairman Mao. But we could not find them. With broadswords, matchlock guns and homemade cannons we finally drove away the Kuomintang reactionary troops. Unfortunately we did not have the Party leadership then and our struggle did not keep to the correct direction. But we never lost our hope that one day the 'red soldiers' would come back."

After the Liberation

Finally in 1949 Chairman Mao's "red soldiers", the Chinese People's Liberation Army, did return. The labouring people of all the nationalities were liberated. Since then, under the shining banner of Chairman Mao's revolutionary line, they have tackled the tasks of socialist revolution and socialist construction with great energy.

When we visited the multinational Limu commune on the outskirts of Tuyun, Hsieh You-tsai, a 59-year-old Puyi and former poor peasant, glowed with enthusiasm as he showed us around. We saw highways, forests, pumping stations and irrigation channels on the mountains, the commune's farm machinery station, a food-processing factory and collective pig farms, the electric lights in the commune members' homes, the health clinic, the primary school and the newly-built Centre of Socialist Culture. Hsieh You-tsai said: "In the past I never even dreamed that our mountain village

could change into what it is today. If it had not been for the leadership of our great leader Chairman Mao, how could this be possible?"

But the south Kweichow lackeys of the top Party capitalist-roader, like crows attempting to blot out the sun with their wings, tried in every way possible to keep the people from studying and spreading Mao Tse-tung's thought. Under the pretext of "giving proper consideration to the special characteristics of the minority nationalities", they did many evil things. They protected the reactionary elements of the minority nationality ruling classes, and encouraged the retention of backward customs and habits and feudal and superstitious activities. They tried in every means to restore capitalism. Those who resisted their bourgeois reactionary line were attacked and persecuted.

A Great New Age

In the great proletarian cultural revolution personally initiated and led by Chairman Mao, the proletarian revolutionaries of south Kweichow, with the firm support of the Chinese People's Liberation Army, finally dragged out after a hard struggle the handful of Party capitalist-roaders. On March 8, 1967, under the leadership of the provincial revolutionary committee and the provincial military area, they carried out a successful seizure of power. Chang Tzu, chairman of the *chou* revolutionary committee and political commissar of the P.L.A. Tuyun military sub-area, said to us: "Fundamentally, the seizure of power by us proletarian revolutionaries is seizure of the power to establish the absolute authority of Mao Tse-tung's thought!"

Under the leadership of the *chou* revolutionary committee, there arose a new vigorous high tide in the mass movement for the study of Chairman Mao's works. Travelling through the *chou*, we

saw quotations from Chairman Mao written in red on the roadside, by the fields, on wooden boards, on mud walls, on stone slabs and carved on the sides of cliffs. Everywhere we saw people studying and heard people singing quotations, revolutionary songs and new folk-songs they themselves had composed. One goes like this:

*The sun rises and lights up
the mountains.*

*The golden flowers and silver
flowers I do not need,*

*I only love the boards with
quotations from Chairman
Mao!*

Regular study of Chairman Mao's writings has been established in all the army units, factories, government organizations and schools as well as in over 80 per cent of the production teams in the communes. The study is usually led by young people trained for the task. Ninety per cent of the adults take part. A new era in which workers, peasants and soldiers grasp Mao Tse-tung's thought has begun.

While we were in Tuyun, the *chou* held its first congress of proletarian revolutionary activists in the study of Chairman Mao's works. Among the nearly one thousand delegates were young workers, peasants and soldiers, former poor peasants including a blind man and others who were over sixty and unable to read or write. With great love for Chairman Mao and Mao Tse-tung's thought, they study hard and have brought about a deep change in their outlook. In each place we visited we were told stories of people who have overcome thoughts of self and have substituted public interest for self-interest.

After studying the "three good old articles" — *Serve the People*, *In Memory of Norman Bethune*, *The Foolish Old Man Who Removed the Mountains* — Pan Shih-hsueh, a Miao girl, built a mat shelter, made some desks and set up a part-time school for the 16-household mountain village where she lives. During work breaks and in the evenings, she helps the commune members study Chairman Mao's quotations. She takes the lead in

struggling against the capitalist-roaders, in carrying water to fight drought, and in scientific experiments to grow maize between rows of wheat. When a tile kiln was being built, she had to attend meetings each day away from the village. At night she joined in the construction work and did this for ten days in succession until the first batch of tiles was fired. "Why did you do this?" we asked. Her answer was: "Because I study Chairman Mao's works every day. All I think of now is to do wholeheartedly what Chairman Mao says, to do my best for the revolution."

Criticism and Repudiation of China's Khrushchov

In order to carry the proletarian cultural revolution through to the end, armed with Mao Tse-tung's thought, the labouring people of the various nationalities have launched a great campaign of revolutionary criticism and repudiation. We heard many penetrating speeches at the congress of activists in the study of Chairman Mao's works and at a *chou* congress of former poor and lower-middle peasants. Speakers declared that it was a slander for the capitalist-roaders to say that the minority nationalities are backward and "want to farm individually". The facts were that, during the three years of natural calamities from 1960 to 1962, the henchmen of China's Khrushchov in south Kweichow did their utmost to promote individual farming. In collusion with the handful of capitalist-roaders, the landlords, rich peasants, counter-revolutionaries, bad elements and Rightists seized for themselves good land and strong oxen. They cut down trees as they wished from collectively-owned forests, stole public funds, and engaged in speculation and usury. As one speaker said: "If it had not been for Chairman Mao's wise leadership, we former poor and lower-middle peasants would have been forced back to the old road and would have suffered a second time. China's Khrushchov, you big scoundrel! It is you counter-revolutionary revisionists who 'want to farm individually'

and take the capitalist road! We poor and lower-middle peasants of all nationalities will always listen to Chairman Mao's words and take the socialist road!"

Such meetings of criticism and repudiation — from big mass meetings to small group meetings — were being held throughout the *chou*. One evening we arrived at a production team of Paku commune to find such a meeting going on. Those who spoke included a grandmother over sixty and a woman with a sleeping baby on her lap. A young man said indignantly: "We are too young to have suffered in the old society, but we have certainly suffered from the practice of individual farming. We are too young to have suffered oppression by the reactionaries, but we did suffer oppression from the bourgeois reactionary line. This is the best class education for us! We pledge to defend Chairman Mao's revolutionary line with our very lives, to throw China's Khrushchov to the ground and put our feet on him so that he can never rise again!"

From Spiritual to Material Force

Mao Tse-tung's thought, once mastered by the masses, is transformed into a tremendous material force. Since the cultural revolution, production has increased rapidly. The value of the industrial output in the *chou* for the first six months of 1967 was 5.4 per cent above that for the same period in 1966. The summer grain harvest was the best ever, being 2.3 times greater than in 1966.

In the winter of 1966 the people in south Kweichow, in answer to Chairman Mao's great call for **preparedness against war, preparedness against natural calamities and everything for the people**, sowed an area of wheat twice as large as ever before. Last summer they had the big task of harvesting the wheat and sowing the rice crop within a short period of time. Lack of rain made the sowing particularly difficult.

In spite of this, the former poor and lower-middle peasants pledged: "This year the proletarian revolu-

tionaries have become masters. We must do our level best to win honour for Chairman Mao! We must give the capitalist-roaders in the Party and all other class enemies a hard slap on the face!" Before starting work they read Chairman Mao's quotation: "Be resolute, fear no sacrifice and surmount every difficulty to win victory." During the work breaks, they read: "Give full play to our style of fighting — courage in battle, no fear of sacrifice, no fear of fatigue, and continuous fighting." At the end of the day they read: "Even if we achieve gigantic successes in our work, there is no reason whatsoever to feel conceited and arrogant." Chairman Mao's words always arouse among them tremendous revolutionary enthusiasm. At the busiest times they continued during the night, the women getting the rice shoots out of the seeding beds, the old men looking after the irrigation ditches, the primary school pupils holding blazing torches on the high ground to light up the fields for the young people to work. Thus both the wheat-harvesting and rice-transplanting were finished in time.

When we were there, the plump ears of rice were already bending the stalks. Another good harvest was in prospect. The commune members were preparing for the autumn harvesting, ploughing and sowing. A new high tide of agricultural production was in sight.

Miao Village with the Spirit of Youth

South Kweichow is leaping ahead. We were keenly aware of its big forward strides even in the remotest places.

Our car climbed one mountain after another to arrive at the Paichin commune, some 120 kilometres from Tuyun. All the members of its Kaochai brigade belong to the Miao nationality. This brigade used to be a backward one. But ever since the socialist education movement in 1964 and especially since the proletarian cultural revolution, the sunshine of Mao Tse-tung's thought has poured into this little community and it has leaped ahead to become an advanced brigade.

We rounded the foot of a big hill to see beyond a brook two villages half hidden among the green trees. Leading to one was an arched entrance with "Always Loyal to Chairman Mao" written on it in huge red characters. Passing beneath it, we saw quotations written on every house. These were typical Miao two-story buildings with tiled roofs and wooden-board walls. Every commune member carried his *Quotations from Chairman Mao Tse-tung* in a little red bag hanging from the shoulder of his national costume. Not far from the basketball court, the commune members were levelling a new ground for sunning grain and building a granary. In our company was a P.L.A. comrade who guides militia work in the district. The commune members greeted him warmly as if he were a member of their own family. A youngster ran to a pomegranate tree and brought an armful of big red fruit for us to eat.

In the evening about a dozen commune members came to chat. "We feel ashamed to speak of it," said Yang Kuang-jung, head of the Red Guards' brigade, "but before 1964 we didn't even know which articles were Chairman Mao's 'three good old articles'. We had muddled thinking and had no daring. The capitalist-roaders did not want us to study. But after we studied Chairman Mao's works, we knew which way we should go. And when we have the 'three kinds of spirit' (the spirit of serving the people wholeheartedly, of utter devotion to others without any thought of self and of the Foolish Old Man who removed the mountains) we fear nothing. In the great cultural revolution we dragged out the capitalist roader in our brigade and struggled against him."

"We're not afraid of the capitalist-roaders nor of any difficulty," said Yang Kuang-chuan, secretary of the Communist Youth League branch. "We had talked for years of building a reinforced concrete aqueduct. This year we were determined to do it. A conservative-minded technician estimated that it would cost 7,000 yuan, take 1,500 workdays and that we commune members could not do it. Disbe-

lieving his words, we began to build it with the help of a few skilled workers. We spent only 850 yuan and required a mere 164 workdays. Without asking for one cent of state subsidy, we have now built the aqueduct. It is 16 metres long and irrigates 500 *mu* of land. With its help we got the rice transplanting finished on time despite the lack of rain."

"We're not afraid of the U.S. devils either," said Yang Tung-hsien, the militia leader, and he told us this story to show it. "It rained heavily the day after our brigade finished sowing rice this year. I called the militia members together and said, 'Now we have a fighting task—to support our Vietnamese brothers in beating the U.S. devils! Immediately, Yang Chao-fu stood up and with chest held high said, 'I'll go! I won't come back until U.S. imperialism is defeated!' Others followed suit, volunteering one after the other."

"Then I said to them, 'Wait a moment. We're not going to the front to fight, but staying in the rear to support our Vietnamese brothers by increasing production. We have finished transplanting rice, but the neighbouring brigade has not. It is raining now and we should go at once to help them.' I picked 38 men and women. Carrying boards with Chairman Mao's quotations, with our light ploughs on our shoulders and leading the oxen, we hurried off."

Our visit to south Kweichow moved us deeply. As we came away we several times recited these lines from one of Chairman Mao's immortal poems:

Bitter sacrifice strengthens bold resolve

Which dares to make sun and moon shine in new skies.

Happy, I see wave upon wave of paddy and corn,

And all around heroes home-bound in the evening mist.

These words seemed to provide the most generalized, penetrating and lively description of the South Kweichow Puyi-Miao Autonomous Chou illuminated by the sunshine of Mao Tse-tung's thought.



During a work break, members of the Yangchi production brigade, Paku commune, denounce the towering crimes of China's Khrushchov.



Pan Shih-hsueh (left) and another former poor peasant study together *Quotations from Chairman Mao Tse-tung*.



Members of the revolutionary committee of the autonomous chou and office workers regularly take part in productive labour. Third from left is committee chairman Chang Tzu.



These water pumps, made by the Tuyun General Machinery Plant which has grown out of the amalgamation of several handicraft workshops, are enthusiastically received by commune members.



Tuyun today.



Representatives from the nationalities who participated in the Poor and Lower-Middle Peasants' Congress of the South Kweichow Puyi and Miao Autonomous Chou assembled with their banners and slogans. The characters in the foreground read: "Wishing Chairman Mao a long life!"

Denouncing the towering crimes of China's Khrushchov: (Left) Young Red Guards of the Tuyun Nationalities Teachers' College write big-character posters and slogans. (Right) Militia members of the Yangchi production brigade hold a criticism and repudiation meeting in the fields.



SOUTH KWEICHOW MINORITY NATIONALITIES IN THE CULTURAL REVOLUTION

The Mao Tse-tung's thought propaganda team of the Chinese People's Liberation Army of the Tuyun military subdistrict performing for members of the Yangchang commune.



Miao members of the Kaochai brigade, Paichin commune, take their Quotations from Chairman Mao Tse-tung and boards on which quotations are written with them to work. They study in the fields during rest breaks.

