

SCOTT



6

CHINESE
LITERATURE

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Our great teacher Chairman Mao

Quotations From Chairman Mao Tsetung

Considering the revolutionary war as a whole, the operations of the people's guerrillas and those of the main forces of the Red Army complement each other like a man's right arm and left arm, and if we had only the main forces of the Red Army without the people's guerrillas, we would be like a warrior with only one arm. In concrete terms, and especially with regard to military operations, when we talk of the people in the base area as a factor, we mean that we have an armed people. That is the main reason why the enemy is afraid to approach our base area.

— *Problems of Strategy in China's
Revolutionary War*

Yu Tsung-hsin

Soldier Comes to Tien An Men

Mantled with wind and dust of the border area,
Bathing in Peking's morning sun;
With bold steps, singing a song,
A soldier comes to Tien An Men.

From the border area to Peking,
So close but yet so far beyond;
Beyond a thousand mountains
And ten thousand rivers far away,
Yet close, for Tien An Men
Is on my heart engraved.

How many a vigilant night,
Standing on sentry, guns in hand,

Yu Tsung-hsin is a member of the PLA.

Tapping wells of feeling we gazed toward
The red light in Chungnanhai,
In our hearts emerging then
The sun which never sets.

How many a morn fresh,
Early clouds red as fire,
Towards the sun rising bright
The East Is Red loudly we sang —
Our greetings to Chairman Mao.

When Chairman Mao's pages open up,
We ever feel as if we have come
To stand beside the red sun itself.
Whenever we heard the trumpet call
Of victory in the cultural revolution,
The rejoicing red waves of banners
Rippling before Tien An Men
Seemed to be before our eyes....

Come I to Tien An Men myself today,
Aglow with happiness and a fine pride;
Here I bring
Millions of red hearts of the border guards,
Here I bring
Many a paean to the red sun.

Coming to the very orbit of the red sun,
By Chairman Mao's side I sing aloud
Our songs of the one we cherish
And our songs of devotion to him.

From the border area to Peking I sing,
Louder and louder come a soldier's songs;
Thousand songs and ten thousand tunes
Into one voice mingle:
A long, long life to Chairman Mao!

Yang Shao-tung

Long, Long Life to Chairman Mao

High mountains of the Miao wind their way,
Range after range extend to Shaoshan.
Sun rises from Shaoshan, kindling up the sky,
Every mountain and stream mirror golden rays.

Cassia flower in bloom, fragrance far and wide,
Each fresh cluster turns to the sun;
We Miao people sing from our hearts:
Long, long life to Chairman Mao!

Yang Shao-tung is a Miao soldier of the PLA.

Wang Hsi-cheng

Chairman Mao Is the Golden Sun

Golden sunlight fills up the grassland,
Red flags dance in the sweeping east wind.
The pasture verdant, our cattle strong,
Snow-white yurts scattered a myriad *li* around.

Chairman Mao is the golden sun,
His kindness has no peer on earth;
Down and away with Liu Shao-chi —
Chieftain of overlords and herdowners.
The golden sun shines over the vast land.

Over the vast land shines the golden sun,
Closely we soldiers follow Chairman Mao;
On horseback, red flags lifting high,
No pests can withstand our charge.

Wang Hsi-cheng is a Mongolian five-good soldier of the PLA.

Golden sunlight fills up the grassland,
More beautiful the green meadow turns;
Playing a horse-headed fiddle, joyfully I sing:
A long, long life to Chairman Mao!

Chhamed Wadan

Emancipated Serfs Long for Chairman Mao

Rainbow clouds fly dancing,
Snow lotus in full bloom,
Over snowy mountains and grassland green,
Red banners flutter here and there.
We emancipated serfs day in, day out,
Long for our dear one Chairman Mao.
He is the golden sun brightening our land.

Vast as the grassland in the past,
No place for us serfs to put down a pot;

Chhamed Wadan is a Tibetan militia hero.

Though beneath the snowy mountains
Barley piled in a myriad mounds,
Never a bowlful for us serfs to eat.

Oh great leader Chairman Mao,
Out of the seas of woe you lifted us,
We serfs, to the warmth of the sun.
Arch-traitor Liu Shao-chi in base attempt
Again to plunge us into the bitter depths,
With venom reptilian was vicious as a wolf!

Oh Chairman Mao! Your grand thought
Guides all the peoples toward victory.
Millions of times we wish for you,
A long life and a long, long life!

Guerrillas of the Plain

Late autumn.

A long valley stretches from the mountains to the plain. On either side of a winding stream fields extend to the foothills, there rising gradually in terraces. The crops have already been harvested. In places, ungleaned grain lies scattered in the furrows. Red leaves on the trees, dislodged by the wind, drift to the ground, portents of a cold winter.

It is 1943. China's sacred war for national liberation against the Japanese invaders has entered its seventh year. In a desperate attempt to solve their supply problem, the enemy have pulled over forty thousand troops from various fronts and are concentrating them in a three-month "mop up" against the anti-Japanese democratic base in north China.

The "mop up" is at its height. In the mountains, Li Hsiang-yang, leader of a guerrilla contingent of the Eighth Route Army, in response to an order, is travelling at top speed to army headquarters of the sub-region.



A road in the valley. Mountains loom massively in the distance. Thick columns of rising smoke undulate. Along the road villagers, carrying children and supporting the elderly, travel towards the mountains to hide from the enemy.

Two riders gallop down the valley, growing larger as they approach.

The man on the roan is about thirty, of average height. His eyes, staunchly intelligent, gleam beneath heavy black brows. Dressed in ordinary peasant garb, he has two Mauser pistols, red tassels dangling from their butts, stuck in his belt. He is Li Hsiang-yang, leader of a guerrilla detachment and famed for his courage.

On the grey horse behind him is Kuo Hsiao-pei, messenger. Only seventeen, Kuo is still a bit childish. A clever lad, his eyes are lively and bright.

They turn their mounts off the road, cut across the fields, and ride swiftly up a winding mountain trail.

They approach a hamlet in the valley. It is in flames. A gang of Japanese bandits are wildly setting houses to the torch.

"Enemy ahead," Kuo says softly.

Li doesn't hesitate. "There's no other way to go. We'll ride through."

Two Japanese soldiers stare with astonishment at the riders racing towards them. Li is urging his horse forward.

He pulls out a pistol and fires twice. Both Japanese fall to the ground.

Li and Kuo tear through the hamlet, leap their animals over an earthen wall and gallop across a shallow stream. The horses' hoofs throw up a misty spray.

Recovering from the sudden attack, the Japanese fire madly at the riders. Li and Kuo turn in their saddles and shoot back, while continuing to speed ahead. They are soon lost in the depths of a ravine.

Sub-region headquarters of the Eighth Route Army. The soldiers are waiting for orders to march.

The commander, a huge man, is on the telephone as Li enters. Li salutes, out of breath. "Report."

The commander indicates that he should wait. "That's right," he says into the phone. "The enemy claim they'll wipe out our base in three months. Let them boast. All right. You can start immediately." He puts down the telephone and directs his messenger: "Dismantle the phone lines. Notify the troops to march at once." He walks over to Li and warmly pumps his hand. "You certainly got here fast, comrade."

Li smiles happily. "Give me my assignment, commander."

The commander grins. "You're always in such a hurry." He pulls Li over to a map hanging on the wall. With humorous seriousness he says: "A new job for an old fighter."

"Back to the plain?" Li asks.

"Yes." The commander points to a section of the plain on the map. "This is enemy-occupied territory. Your first task is to tie up the Japanese forces under Colonel Matsue and prevent them from reinforcing their troops in the mountain area. Drag them all around. This will relieve the enemy pressure on our mountain bases. Make them so dizzy their heads spin. Turn everything into a shambles,

pound them to jelly. Tie them up so they can't move a step. And if you get hold of Matsue —"

"Wipe him out." Li doesn't wait for the commander to finish.

"Right." The commander nods. "Your second task is to protect the thousands of *jin* of public grain concealed in Machuang Village north of the county town, and in Lichuang to its south. Our army needs that grain badly. At the appropriate time it will have to be moved to the mountains. Can you do it?" He looks at Li inquiringly.

Li smiles confidently.

Deep in thought, the commander paces the floor. He halts in front of Li. "It's no laughing matter. Matsue is a crafty dog and a notorious old China hand."

"I realize that, commander," Li replies gravely. "I've had dealings with him for over a year."

"Don't get careless, whatever you do," the commander warns, with concern.

"I won't," says Li.

The commander smiles. "You live in Lichuang, don't you? You'll be able to see your ma. Give her my regards."

Li smilingly nods.

II

Dusk. The sun is sinking behind the mountains. The clouds are a riot of colour.

Two hundred guerrillas remove their knapsacks and padded winter tunics and sit down to rest on a slope. Small white towels cover their heads, leather belts bind their waists. In their arms they cradle old Japanese rifles. Their average age is about twenty. They are a high spirited band.

Li stands on the summit. Beside him is his chief of staff, Chien Ta-yu, and leader of Third Company, Sun Chang-ching. Not far away are veteran scout Hou Ta-chang, young messenger Kuo Hsiao-pei, and two other scouts, Ta Cheng and Erh Huo.

Chien is an experienced, competent man of middle age, Sun an alert and lively young fellow. Hou is tall, slightly stooped, with big

eyes beneath thick brows. His cheeks are stubble-covered. A typical shepherd's sheepskin coat, with the fur on the inside, is draped over his shoulders. Kuo, though not tall, is very sturdy.

Before them stretches a vast plain of dull brown, a mournful sight. Dotted with dingy grey enemy gun towers, it is criss-crossed with a web of deep moats and automobile roads. Only thin smoke rising from cook stoves attests to the presence of villages hidden in groves of trees. The fields are soundless, lifeless. They look dismal and sad. Far off, the surrounding wall and a high pagoda of the county town are faintly visible.

From the summit, Li stares at the plain, thinking. He's seen it thousands of times. He knows every village, every road, every house, every peasant here. How many battles have been fought here, these last few years, how much blood has been shed. Now, they must come to grips with the enemy again, an enemy engaged in a "mop up" crueller than ever before.

The task is therefore more arduous than ever before. They have to defeat Matsue, protect the grain, ease the pressure on our people and armed forces in the mountains, and boost everyone's morale. Treacherous, crafty Matsue is ensconced in the county town. He won't be easy to handle...

Li hears the boom of cannon in the mountains, he sees the dreary scene on the plain. "We must beat Matsue, come what may," he says to himself, "and we will!" His heart seems to burst into flame.

"Set out, chief of staff," he says to Chien. "Keep in contact with us when you get to Machuang."

Chien nods. He leads his men off down a narrow trail to the left.

Li watches till they are far away. Then he turns to Sun and Hou and the others and waves his hand. Seven of them altogether, they follow a trail to the right which leads to the plain.

The plain is enveloped in darkness. A bright moon rides in the sky.

Li and his scouts softly advance. They stay off the roads, travelling winding paths through the fields. Withered crops and weeds stand darkly in the silvery moonlight. It is very quiet. Gusts of

cold wind carry the barking of dogs in a distant hamlet. Far off, black mountains form a backdrop to the villages, large and small, which dot the plain.

Hou and Kuo, cocked pistols in hand, scout alertly about two hundred metres ahead of the party.

They reach a large moat. It runs for dozens of *li*. On the opposite side, campfires burn at intervals, marching into the darkness in a long twisting belt of fire. Beyond, enemy gun towers can be seen. Roaming watchmen beat bamboo segments from time to time, the sound approaching and fading away. These are old peasants who have been pressed into service by the Japanese to patrol the moat. The bamboo tattoo indicates that all is well.

Sun starts across the moat with the men in the darkness between two campfires. They lower a thick rope into the moat, which is nearly thirty feet deep, and climb down, one by one, with practised skill.

Li and Kuo are already over. An old watchman approaches and shakes Li by the hand.

"So you're back. We've been longing to see you fellows again."

Li smiles. "How are you, Uncle Chang?"

The old man straightens himself militantly as if suddenly strengthened by the appearance of the guerrillas. He raps the bamboo smartly three times. "All's well!"

The thunder of a locomotive draws near. A Japanese patrol engine rolls up along the rails. At Li's command, the guerrillas throw themselves flat. A powerful searchlight beam sweeps the edge of the moat just beyond them.

"Never mind," the old man says calmly. "Nothing will happen. They do this all the time." Again he raps the bamboo sharply and sings out: "All's well."

A Japanese pokes his head out of the locomotive, looks around, then draws back inside. The train moves on. The guerrillas get up. Li walks over to the watchman.

"After we leave, send someone to one of the gun towers to say that the Eighth Route Army has come down from the hills."

The old man nods. "I'd do that without your telling me."

By this time, Sun and the others have all crossed over. They move deeper into the fields. Li shakes hands with the old man. With Kuo, he hurries to catch up with the party.

Li is leading his scouts. Kuo dashes back from his position as advance guard. Behind him, Hou is striding calmly. Li waves his hand for the group to halt.

"Enemy ahead," Kuo reports tensely.

"Don't get excited," Li says coolly. "What's it all about?"

"Only a few security guards on patrol. They can't bite," Hou says comically, in his unhurried voice.

A dozen or so figures appear on the horizon, playing flashlights in every direction. It is an enemy patrol.

"We won't wait for them to find us." Li says to Hou. "We'll make the first move and give them a little surprise."

"I get you," Hou replies. "Now watch this and learn, young brother," he tells Kuo.

The flashlights are quite near now. Li, Hou and Kuo walk boldly towards the enemy.

Halting, the puppet soldiers cast their beams uncertainly on the three guerrillas.

Li continues to advance. He fires once with his pistol, knocking the flashlight out of the hand of the enemy soldier in the lead. The light is extinguished, as the man exclaims in alarm.

"What unit?" Li shouts.

The lieutenant commanding the security platoon calls back: "A patrol from town. What outfit are you?" The enemy soldiers raise their weapons.

Li laughs. "Oh, a patrol from town. I thought you were Eighth Routers." He keeps walking forward.

Relieved, the puppet soldiers lower their arms and walk towards him.

Li moves with lightning speed. Suddenly producing his gun, he snaps: "Up with your hands." His voice rings sharp and crisp.

Hou bounds forward and also covers the foe. "Get 'em up," he cries.



Frightened silly, the puppets hastily comply.

"You're making a mistake," cries the enemy lieutenant. "We're a security patrol."

"There's no mistake," Li assures him. "We're the Eighth Route Army."

The startled puppet soldiers realize they've been fooled. With a glance, the lieutenant indicates to them to open fire. Two of the foe suddenly fall back and aim their guns at Li.

He fires rapidly, twice, at close range. The guns in the puppets' hands fall to the ground.

"Don't stir! The next one to move is a dead man!"

The lieutenant's ardour is cooled. Timidly, he asks: "Are you Li Hsiang-yang's guerrillas?"

"You've guessed it," quips Hou. "Take a good look."

"Then are you the mighty Li Hsiang-yang?" the lieutenant asks Li stammeringly.

"We're the advance guard," Li replies.

"Commander Li is following with the main force," Hou adds. "They'll be here soon."

The frightened puppets lay down their arms. "Li Hsiang-yang?" they exclaim. "We surrender, we surrender..."

Ta Cheng removes the cartridges from the enemy weapons and puts them in his pocket.

To the puppet lieutenant, Li says: "Take a message to Colonel Matsue. Tell him that Li Hsiang-yang's guerrillas have come down from the mountains. Say we're sorry we can't call to pay our respects; we'll do that another day. Now beat it, all of you."

The lieutenant nods and bows repeatedly. "Yes sir, yes sir."

Li waves to Sun and the others behind him. Then he and his guerrillas silently vanish into the darkness.

III

Night. Matsue's headquarters. A telegram lies on his desk. Matsue is disconsolately strumming a mandolin. Ho Fei, a Chinese traitor who serves as his interpreter, stands beside him.

"Our granary is nearly empty," says the traitor. "What are we going to do?"

Matsue puts down his mandolin. "Are we positive the Eighth Route Army's grain is hidden in Liuchia Village?"

"It's hard to say."

"Without grain, we can't reinforce our troops in the mountains."

"True."

Matsue gives orders to a Japanese captain: "Assemble your men and go to Liuchia immediately and find that grain."

"*Hai*."

Another Japanese enters and reports: "Li Hsiang-yang and his guerrillas are north of the town."

Matsue walks over and examines a map on the wall. "Li has some purpose, showing up so suddenly," he muses. "We'll do it this way—we'll go forth in two columns and bag the whole lot before they have time to get set. Do I make myself clear? Snap into it."

"*Hai*," exclaims the Japanese.

"*Hai*," echoes Ho Fei.

Matsue is about to leave when Yang Shou-yeh and the puppet lieutenant run in.

"Excellency, excellency," Yang cries.

"What are you babbling about?" Matsue snaps.

"Li Hsiang-yang was seen on this side of the moat, excellency."

"What?" Matsue is astonished.

"We ran into him west of the town," the puppet lieutenant affirms.

"West of the town?" Again Matsue is surprised.

"Yes sir."

Matsue hurries over to the map and peers at it for some time. "How many men has he?"

"His main force has come down from the mountains," the lieutenant says in a trembling voice. "There are hundreds of them. They're all over the place. He says ... he says ..."

"Out with it," Matsue demands.

Reluctantly, the lieutenant blurts: "He says he'll come and pay his respects to you another day."

Matsue paces the floor in a rage.

Yang says in an undertone to Ho Fei, the interpreter: "Something big must be stirring if Li has come down."

"That's puffing him up and belittling us," replies Ho Fei. "There's nothing wonderful about Li."

Matsue strides over to them. "His coming must be connected with the grain. . . . That Li yells towards the east and attacks towards the west. He's making a feint to delude me. He's not north of the town, he's west of it, in Liuchia Village."

"A brilliant deduction, excellency," Ho Fei says fawningly.

"Assemble your troops and go west to Liuchia," orders Matsue.

"*Hai*," exclaims the Japanese.

Ho Fei hastily hands Matsue his field glasses as they prepare to leave.

Lichuang, an ordinary village on the plain. South of the county town, it consists of four or five hundred families. With the exception of one tall tile-roofed building surrounded by a wall in the centre of the village, all the homes are simple cottages. Our forces have a substantial basis among the people here.

Li Hsiang-yang's home. Three rooms in a row. At the western end is a shed for animals. Inside this, towards the back of the house is a narrow dark corridor, not visible from outside.

The door of the cottage opens into a large room. Aunt Li, Li Hsiang-yang's mother, is seated on the *kang*, in the inner room, spinning beside a feeble oil lamp.

In the village, a dog begins to bark.

Aunt Li stops spinning and listens. The dog continues to bark. She quickly pushes aside the spinning wheel, jumps down from the *kang* and blows out the lamp.

Someone taps lightly, three times, against the window.

Happily, Aunt Li whispers: "One of ours." She re-lights the lamp and opens the door. There stand Hou, Kuo, Ta Cheng and Eth Huo.

Hou grins. "Aunt Li," he hails her loudly.

"*Aiya*, it's you," she cries, with pleasure.

Hou snaps to attention and salutes. "Right. Special Scout Hou reporting for duty."

"You really gave me a fright," she says, as she leads them inside.

Hou scoffs: "You don't think the Japanese would come out this time of night? They're scared stiff. You sure move fast, aunt. You blew that lamp out in a jiffy."

"That's something I learned from you boys," Aunt Li laughs. "Have our forces come?" she asks.

Hou nods. "Enough to give old Matsue a good bellyful."

Kuo approaches her. "Our detachment leader is here too, aunt."

"Is he still so busy?" she asks in concern.

"Ha," Kuo exclaims mischievously, "the busier he is, the higher his spirits."

The village administration office. A small oil lamp is burning on a table. Li and Sun are discussing moving the grain with Meng Kao, district Communist Party secretary, and Old Hai, head of the village.

"It seems to me we should temporarily stop the work of improving the entrances to the tunnels," Li is saying, "and begin moving the grain immediately. What do you think, Meng?"

Seated cross-legged on the *kang*, Meng is the picture of a simple, honest old peasant. He considers for a moment. "Our forces are operating north of the town. Won't Matsue go there first?"

Li smiles. "Not necessarily. We came swaggering through openly because we wanted to let him know we are here. Our aim is to lead him a merry chase so that he won't be able to re-inforce the enemy troops in the mountains." Li pauses. "Why did we divide our detachment into two groups? Because we have to shift the grain from two villages, and also to confuse the enemy. Matsue will probably come out of the town and attack. If he strike north, we'll shift the grain here in Lichuang. If he strikes here, we'll move the grain that's in Machuang in the north."

Meng nods in agreement, then asks: "What if he rushes us?"

"The way I figure it, unless there's some special reason, he won't get here till dawn the day after tomorrow, at the earliest. That devil doesn't make a move unless he's sure. Do you think we can have all the grain shifted by then?"

Meng glances at Hai. "It would be a pretty tight squeeze. How about this — we'll call a meeting of Communists first. If we all put our heads together, we'll be able to do the job. Come on, Hai, we've got to get moving."

The compound with the surrounding wall.

A sixty-year-old man stands on the steps of the main building of the inner courtyard. He is the big landlord of the village, a lean-looking hound, and the person in charge of Kuomintang affairs in the district. His name is Yang Lao-tsung.

He listens intently to sounds on the street, then signals to a man squatting on the roof and goes into the brightly lit house. Its windows are covered by black curtains.

The man on the roof has a small head. He observes the smoke rising from the chimneys of Aunt Li and her neighbour Tsui Ping, a girl who is a member of the village Women's National Salvation Association. Small Head stealthily comes down a ladder from the tile roof and hurries into the house.

"There's no mistake," he says to Yang fearfully. "The guerrillas have come."

"Pull yourself together. Is Li with them?"

"I couldn't see."

"Useless clod. I'm just waiting to take his life."

"He's here. He must be here."

Startled and actually afraid, in spite of his bluster, Yang asks: "Has he really come again? How can you be sure?"

"Smoke is rising from his mother's chimney and Tsui Ping's. They must be cooking for Li and his guerrillas."

Yang audibly grinds his teeth. "I'll get my revenge against him or I'm no real man," he grates, to give himself courage. "I'm going into town to report. You fellows stay here and start taking steps. You hear me?"

"Yes sir, we will."

They go into the rear courtyard. Small Head places a ladder against the wall. Yang climbs up, looks cautiously over the top. The fields beyond are silent. He hastily clammers over the wall and disappears into the night.

IV

Aunt Li's home. The lamp is burning brightly.

Kuo feeds the fire while she cooks. Hou and the other scouts are sleeping in the next room. Aunt Li asks Kuo about what's going on in the mountains and whether the guerrilla detachment intends to fight.

Li, Meng and Hai enter.

A jolly fellow, Hai, hearing Aunt Li's question, asserts: "The neighbours all say wherever Li goes, there's sure to be a battle." Hai roars with laughter.

Li smiles. "Ma, our detachment always puts you to a lot of trouble when we come here."

She walks over to her son, grasps the edges of his open tunic. With deep feeling, she looks him over. Is he thinner? How is his colour? Are his clothes warm enough?

Li laughs fondly. "Ma," he says in a soft voice.
The others exchange warm smiles at this re-union.

Aunt Li awakens Hou and the scouts and serves the food.

Tsui Ping, a lively, capable girl of twenty-two, and Chin, a man of seventy with a long white beard, enter followed by Tsui Ping's eleven-year-old little brother, Pao. Chin leans on a stick.

Everyone greets them.

Li leads the old man to a seat on the *kang*. "It's so late, grandpa. You shouldn't have got up."

Chin laughs. "How can I sleep when our forces come, young fellow? I want you to give those Japanese sons-of-bitches a good drubbing. Let them know we Chinese can't be pushed around. I remember back in 1900 when eight foreign armies ganged up and invaded us —"

"Not now, grandpa," Tsui Ping interrupts. "Brother Li and the others haven't eaten all day."

"Ah, of course, of course. Some other time. All right, Tsui Ping, bring them out."

The girl, her hands behind her back, winks at the old man. Looking at the table, she says: "What's the matter with you, Aunt Li? Here your son comes home and you don't give him a bit of good white flour."

Aunt Li smiles. "Saucy wench. If I had any wouldn't I make something tasty for the comrades to eat?"

Tsui Ping produces a cloth-wrapped packet and opens it. Inside are more than a dozen wheat cakes.

"Never mind, aunt," says the girl. "We've brought something. They're made of Grandpa Chin's flour."

The old man smilingly strokes his white beard. "Go on boys, eat."

"You neighbours are having a hard time," Li protests. "We've come to protect your grain, not to eat your white flour."

Chin's face darkens. "You don't have to give me any political lessons. Your detachment was set up under my eyes. I've kept this white flour for you specially. So don't talk, eat."



Li tries to refuse. Tsui Ping pushes the wheat cakes in front of the guerrillas.

"They're only a small token of how we feel about our forces, Brother Li. Eat them, go on."

Helplessly, Li takes one. Tsui Ping hands them around to the others.

Li gives some to Pao and rubs his head. "How fast you're growing."

"The kid pesters me all day long," says Tsui Ping. "He wants to join our Eighth Route Army." To the little boy she says: "Brother Li is here now. You can ask him directly."

Li says: "So you want to become an Eighth Router. That's the spirit. But an Eighth Router must be determined and brave. Are you?"

"Yes," the boy replies loudly. "When I see those Japanese devils I'm not a bit scared. I'm going to be an Eighth Router when I grow up. I'm going to join our guerrillas and fight in the mountains."

"Good," Li smiles. "I'm sure you'll be better than me."

Everyone laughs.

"Give me a cartridge, will you, Brother Li?" Pao asks gravely.

Li is puzzled. "What do you want a cartridge for?"

"To fight the Japanese," the boy says proudly.

Li laughs. "How can you do that? You haven't any gun."

Pao grins. "But I can." He takes a nail out of his pocket and gestures as he explains. "I just hit the back of the cartridge with this, and the bullet flies out."

Li hugs the boy to his chest. "Clever little devil. You deserve a cartridge for that." He ejects one from his gun and holds it up before Pao.

Everyone watches, smiling.

Pao scans the faces around him, then stares at the cartridge. Suddenly, he grabs it.

Late night. The main street in the town.

Japanese troops march through the deathly silence. Matsue, in full battle array, sits his horse. Ho Fei follows behind on a bicycle.

The Japanese unit leaves the town.

Lichuang. A road at the entrance to the village. Kuo relieves Ta Cheng and Erh Huo, who are on guard, and tells them to go back and eat.

They are vigilantly watching the surrounding fields.

Still later. Two Japanese columns are slowly proceeding through the fields. Matsue, on horseback, from time to time glances up at the sky, or looks at his watch.

Yang Shou-yeh is leading the way with his gang of special agents. At a fork in the path he sees a dark figure approaching.

"Who's there?" he challenges.

"Don't shoot. It's me . . . it's me," Landlord Yang replies in a panic.

"Pa, you?" the younger man exclaims, surprised. "What's wrong?"

"Li Hsiang-yang is in our village," says the landlord. He goes over to Matsue and reports: "Li is in Lichuang."

Matsue calls a halt.

"He's just come," adds the landlord.

"You're sure?"

"I saw him with my own eyes."

"How many men has he?"

"A lot."

Matsue ponders a moment. "To Lichuang," he orders.

V

Li's house. Ta Cheng and Erh Huo are eating. The other guerrillas have finished. Aunt Li is washing the bowls and chopsticks.

Kuo enters. "Something's up," he says to Li.

The men are instantly alert. Sun pulls out his pistol.

"This time the Japanese didn't come through the villages or follow the main road. They've stolen up quietly. One column cut around east of Tachang, another west of Hsiaohsi."

"I've never thought Matsue would get here so fast," says Li. "There must be spies in this village, Meng. Someone has tipped Matsue off."

"Tell everyone to hide in the tunnels, quick," Aunt Li urges.

"You get the people into the tunnels, Hai," Li orders. "Wu Yukuei, when the enemy come, you stall them. Meng, Sun, let's go and talk this over."

Aunt Li removes the big cauldron fitted over the stove. "Go through here into the secret room for your talk."

Meng pulls Li by the hand into the tunnel entrance beneath the stove. Sun and Hou follow.

When they reach the narrow room, Meng sighs. "We won't be able to shift that grain."

"Not for the time being," Li says thoughtfully.

Sun is impatient for battle. "When the enemy get here, how are we going to fight them?"

Li glances at him, but does not reply. He is pondering. Meng and the others wait for his decision. The atmosphere is tense, oppressive. Finally, Li looks up, his eyes burning.

"We'll do it this way —"

"Tell us," Sun eagerly interrupts.

"My guess is that Matsue will use the same tactics as before — a double encirclement." He sketches on the table with his finger. "There are a lot of them and only a few of us. We'll go out here . . . hit them, then come back to this place. . . ."

Sun, Hou and Meng, crowded round the table, listen intently.

Outside the village. Matsue is commanding his Japanese troops.

One column is encircling Lichuang and closing in, the other remains on the outer perimeter. Matsue intends by this method to prevent Li Hsiang-yang and the guerrillas from escaping.

In the tunnel. Leading Sun and the others, Li is crawling rapidly forward through the narrow passage.

VI

The entrance to the village, shortly before dawn. All is wrapped in a pervading white mist. Li and his guerrillas emerge from a dry well beside an earthen wall and from a hollow tree. They crouch by the base of the wall, gazing towards the road.

Soon Japanese troops march into the village. Dozens of Japanese and puppet soldiers, with fixed bayonets, file past the guerrillas down the street. Sun starts to move. Li stops him with a restraining grasp. When the enemy has gone about two hundred metres, Li levels his pistol. A sharp crack breaks the silence, and a Japanese soldier falls. The enemy immediately turn and fire in Li's direction. Sun throws a hand-grenade. It explodes in a burst of fire. Two more soldiers drop to the ground.

From outside the village, another group of Japanese dash into the fray. Li is firing with both pistols. The scouts fling hand-grenades at the Japanese troops entering the village.

Yang is commanding his special agents. "We're surrounded by Li's guerrillas," he yells. "Break out!" He and his gang run from the village in the direction of the earthen wall, followed by Japanese and puppet soldiers.

Ho Fei and a group of Japanese hurry towards the village. A Japanese lieutenant shouts: "Li and his guerrillas are trying to get away. Fire!"

Japanese and puppet troops outside the village all charge towards the wall.

Both bands of Japanese and puppet troops fire in the direction of the wall as they slowly press forward. . . . Li and the guerrillas slip back into the dry well and hollow tree.

The two enemy units commence shooting hotly at each other.

A group of puppets press towards the wall, under the command of special agent Yang.

Outside the village, Matsue, on horseback with waving sabre, is urging on his Japanese troops.

Gradually the sky lightens, the mist dispels.

Special agent Yang, rushing forward, sees a mounted figure. Startled, he recognizes Matsue. Yang suddenly realizes they've been duped.

Waving his hand, he shouts: "Excellency, excellency, we've made a mistake."

Matsue, recognizing Yang, at first doesn't understand.

Ho Fei also comes running up, bawling at the top of his lungs: "We're fighting with each other, colonel. Please order a cease fire, at once."

At last, Matsue comprehends. He sees two groups of Japanese and puppet troops busily exchanging shots. Angry and dejected, he waves his sabre and gallops between the contending sides, yelling in Chinese, then in Japanese: "Stop, stop!"

The soldiers hold their fire and gaze at Matsue in stupefaction. "Idiots," he shouts. "Who told you to shoot at one another?"

Recovering from their battle frenzy, the puppets and Japanese take a good look at their opponents. They finally realize what has happened.

Matsue dismounts. Arms akimbo, he furiously paces back and forth.

"Li has fooled us," says Ho Fei morosely.

The subject is too painful for Matsue. "Nonsense," he yells, glaring. He strides a few steps, then turns and orders decisively: "Into the village."

In the secret room of the Li family.

Li is listening at the window. It is camouflaged from the outside with tall weeds through which pale light filters. Scattered shots can be heard.

Meng, Sun, Hai, Hou and Aunt Li are sitting around the table. Li says to them: "The enemy is making a search."

Sun cannot restrain his impatience. "Let me go out and scout around," he pleads. "I hate being penned up in this dark room."

Li smiles. "Keep your shirt on. The village is full of enemy soldiers. If you go out now, you'll only expose yourself. Wait till Wu comes back and reports."

VII

Broad daylight. The village administration office.

Matsue is pacing the floor, looking confused. Is Li still in the village? Are there Eighth Route Army men in Lichuang? If so, how many? How can they have vanished so completely?

Special agent Yang enters with Wu. He shoves him in front of Matsue. "This is the village information man, colonel."

Wu chuckles. "My name is Wu Yu-kuei."

"Where is Li?" Matsue asks, in Japanese. "How many Eighth Routers came here last night?"

Ho Fei translates into Chinese.

"Now, that I know," Wu says with feigned directness. "Last night, they came through here. They drank dozens of buckets of water, though how many I can't say exactly."

"Stop blathering." Yang is a mean bully, quick with his mouth and quick with his fists. "Li was just here."

"That may be," Wu says with a forced laugh. "I don't know."

Yang slaps his face. "Quit pretending."

"Don't hit me. They've got legs, haven't they?" Wu controls his anger.

"I'm asking you. Where has Li gone?"

"Do you think he'd tell me? My guess is he left long ago. He's not anywhere near here."

Yang fumes helplessly. "We know. He's probably in this village," he yells.

"I'm sure you know better than me about that."

Yang glares and steps towards Wu menacingly. Matsue stops him and asks: "Are the Eighth Routers in the tunnels?"

Wu shakes his head. "I don't know."

"Isn't it true that Li didn't leave until our Imperial Army neared the village?" the Japanese colonel persists.

"I really can't say."

"If you tell us where Li is, I'll give you a big reward."

Wu chuckles. "I'd like to have the money, but I'm just not lucky, I guess. I don't know where he's gone."

"Don't waste your time on him, excellency," says Yang. "He's probably in league with them." He turns a threatening gaze on Wu. "If I ask you where the villagers are, where the tunnels are, where the cadres are, where the grain is hidden, I suppose you'll say you don't know that either. Right?"

"Right." Wu forces a smile. "I don't."

Yang is hopping mad. He gnashes his teeth. "Say you don't know once more and I'll kill you." He pulls his pistol out of its holster.

Wu has long experience in coping with the enemy. He knows this is a moment for coolness.

"It's easy enough to shoot me," he says quickly. "You just move your trigger finger and I'm wiped out, once and for all. But what I know, I know, and what I don't know, I don't."

"Well, then," Matsue hastily interposes, in Chinese, "what do you know?"

"I know how to look after you. I'm only joking, of course, but if you kill me, you won't even have anyone to pour you a cup of tea." Wu chuckles.

Matsue laughs. He pats Wu on the shoulder and says in Chinese: "You're a smooth talker. All right, assemble the villagers." He gives Ho Fei a meaningful glance.

"You heard him," says the interpreter. "The Imperial Army hasn't come for your grain. They've all they need in the town. You can relax. Don't listen to rumours. We've come only to talk about the 'Imperial Prosperity Programme' and the 'Bigger East Asian New Order.' Go out and beat your gong. Call the peasants together for an open-air meeting."

Wu picks up a gong from the table. "See what I mean? If you killed me, who'd beat the gong to summon the people?" Chuckling, he leaves the office.

"He's a local Eighth Router," Matsue mutters. "All the peasants are local Eighth Routers...."

VIII

Beating his gong, Wu halts in front of Li's door and deliberately shouts in the direction of the hidden room: "Neighbours, the Imperial Army is calling a meeting. They want everyone to come out. Go to the big east threshing ground. They're going to explain the 'Imperial Prosperity Programme.' They say they're not after our grain." For emphasis, he repeats: "Go to the east threshing ground. They say they're not after our grain. Come out, neighbours, hurry." Wu strolls on, beating his gong.

In the secret room.

Li and the others hear Wu's shouts fading away.

Meng is worried. "It looks like Matsue is going to stay in the village and search for the grain."

"Of course," says Li. "That's what he came for."

"We've got to think of some way to lure him out of here," says Hai.

"Yes," Li agrees thoughtfully. "Lure him out of the village. That's the idea."

"Let me go to Machuang and tell our forces to attack the town," Sun pleads. "He won't be able to stay here if that happens."

Li looks at Sun, considering. "Our people are moving grain out of Machuang right now. We'll have to solve this ourselves."

Everyone racks his brains. What is the best way to get Matsue out of here?

Li walks over to Hai. "Didn't you say the gun tower at Hsiaohsi wants a cook?"

Hai is mystified. Why is Li bringing that up all of a sudden? But he replies: "Yes. They sent someone over only yesterday to remind us."

Li paces a few steps. "That gun tower is one of the enemy's most important fortifications. You Hou, and you Hai, really ought to do something about it."

Observing Li's expression, Hou guesses what is on his mind. He comes closer. "Put it out of action! And I know just how to do it."

They listen to Hou's plan. Everyone smiles.

IX

The village administration office. Wu, gong in hand, is standing before Matsue.

"Where have all the villagers gone?" Ho Fei demands angrily.

"Very strange," says Wu. "I called and called."

Special agent Yang charges up to him. "Crap! They're all in the tunnels. I lived here. You think I don't know?"

Wu glances at him. "I'm sure you know much more about these things than I do, Master Yang," he murmurs significantly.

Yang swells with fury. Matsue pounds the table and yells: "Come on. We'll search every house. We must find them."

Wu tosses his gong on the table. "Good. I'll go with you."

Pushing Wu before them, Matsue, Ho Fei and Yang leave the office.

Dusk. A dull grey sky. A gusty wind whips up the dust on the road.

The outskirts of the village of Hsiaohsi. A round, three-storied gun tower stands alone in the hills.

Hai and Hou cross a drawbridge. Hou is dressed like a townsman, in new padded trousers and a new padded gown. A puppet security guard leads them to the entrance. A sentry searches them, then lets them go in. On the ground floor, puppet security guards are gambling, idly singing, playing noisy drinking games. They glance at the arrivals, and go on with what they are doing.

A tall security guard on the far side of the room nods at them. He and Hai exchange a significant look.

The guerrillas mount the stairs to the second floor, quarters of the lieutenant commanding the tower. A door on props serves as a bed, over which hangs a mosquito net. A pistol is on a peg on the wall.

The lieutenant is gambling with three soldiers. Cigarettes, drinks and food are also on the table, and they partake of these as they play. The room is thick with smoke.

Hai walks over and smiles obligingly. "You asked me to find a cook, lieutenant. Well, I've got one."

"Oh." The lieutenant gives him a sideways glance. "Where is he?"

Hai pulls Hou forward. "His cooking is famous in the town of Chinghsien. He's come home with his earnings to get married. At first he didn't want to come here, but I said to him: 'The lieutenant of the security guards is looking for a good cook. You'll eat well, and have plenty to drink.' So he finally agreed."

Gathering his dominoes, a cigarette dangling from his lips, the lieutenant looks Hou over. With an obsequious smile, Hou bows low.

"I only just got home, and he insisted on dragging me over here."

Hou's quick eye observes that the lieutenant's cigarette is nearly smoked down to the end. This is the chance he's been waiting for. He whips out a pack of cigarettes, causing a roll of money to drop from his pocket at the same time, as if by accident. He snatches up the money, after making sure the lieutenant has seen it, and offers him a cigarette.

At the sight of money the lieutenant is all smiles. "Why not sit in on the game for a while?" He accepts the cigarette and courteously indicates for Hou to be seated.

Hou pretends to be embarrassed. "I really can't..."

The lieutenant forces him down on a chair. "The rule of this gun tower is eat, drink and be merry. Here, you're one of us." To two of the soldiers, he says: "Scram. You paupers can screw off."

They get up and go down the stairs.

Hou still feigns reluctance. "This is my marriage money, lieutenant. If I lose it..."

"Oh, come on." Hai joins in the act. "Be a sport. Maybe you'll win. Then you can have an even fancier wedding."

"That's right," says the lieutenant. "We play for cash here."

Hou seems reconciled to take the plunge. He and Hai sit in on the game. Hou is dealer. He shuffles the dominoes and starts to deal.

Early evening. Japanese soldiers carrying torches and flashlights come to Li's house to search, led by Matsue, Ho Fei and Yang. The special agent snoop around, trying to find anything that looks suspicious.

In the secret room next door, a small lamp is burning. Li watches the searchers through a crack in the wall which is concealed by a tattered New Year's picture.

Sun, Meng, Ta Cheng, Erh Huo and Kuo, pistols cocked, tensely keep their eyes on Li.

In the house.

Smiling, Matsue walks over and pats Wu on the shoulder. In Japanese, he asks: "Is there a tunnel entrance in this place?"

Ho Fei translates: "His excellency wants to know whether there's a tunnel entrance here."

"No, no," Wu retorts quickly. "If they had one, it wouldn't be in their house. That's obvious, isn't it?"

"There must be an entrance here, excellency," Yang cries impatiently. "Let's search."



Matsue nods. He sits down beside a table. Yang and Ho Fei tap and poke around with sticks. Wu pretends to help.

Yang approaches the stove.

In the secret room.

Li signals with his hand to Meng and the others. They level their pistols at the secret room's tunnel entrance.

In the house.

Yang reaches out to feel the stove. Wu cleverly knocks down an earthen jug hanging on the wall. It hits the floor with a crash. Terrified, Matsue, Ho Fei and Yang throw themselves prone. When he sees that it was only a jug, Matsue snarls at his underlings: "What are you so panicky about? Li has got you jumping out of your skins."

"Why bother with this place, excellency?" Wu takes advantage of their confusion to say. "There's no tunnel entrance here."

Matsue is fed up. "Send men around the village and start them digging. We must find those tunnels." He strides out.

Ho Fei and Yang exchange looks, then hastily follow, pushing Wu before them.

In the secret room.

The guerrillas breathe a sigh of relief and lower their guns. They talk the situation over.

Meng says: "The enemy is going to dig around. We must protect our people in the tunnels."

"Of course," says Li. "Sun and a couple of scouts will go with you. Block any place the enemy open up. The main thing is to persuade everyone to stick it out and keep calm."

"Right," says Meng. "That's what we'll do."

Li says a few words to Sun, then again addresses Meng. "I'll stay here and watch what's happening above ground. Keep in touch with me."

Meng nods. He goes down into the tunnel, followed by Sun, Ta Cheng and Erh Huo.

X

After midnight.

The gambling is still going on in the gun tower at Hsiaohsi. A lamp with a glass chimney burns on the table. Hou shuffles the dominoes. Hai pours the lieutenant another drink. The puppet gulps it down and drunkenly counts his pile of winnings.

Looking at the dominoes he has drawn, he chortles: "Another pair of eights. Marvellous. Let's see your hands."

Hou lays down his dominoes. He pats the lieutenant on the shoulder. "You're pretty lucky with eights today."

Laughing, the puppet stuffs the money into his pocket. "That's enough. I quit. You can all scam."

"You've won, lieutenant," says Hai, moving closer. "That calls for another drink."

The puppet takes up the wine jug and guzzles, then topples over on his bed.

Hou swiftly removes the pistol from the wall and cocks it. He whispers to Hai: "Tie him up."

Hai, producing a rope, does so. The puppet opens his mouth to cry out, Hou points the muzzle of his gun at his temple. "Not a sound," he orders.

He pulls cotton from the quilt and rams it into the lieutenant's mouth. The puppet struggles weakly.

"What's going on down there?" the lookout calls from the top of the tower.

"The lieutenant's had too much to drink," Hai replies quickly.

By now, Hou has mounted to the roof. He sees the guard lighting a cigarette.

"Save the match," says Hou. He advances, smiling, with a cigarette of his own. The guard gives him a light and turns away. One swift blow fells him unconscious to the ground. Hou relieves him of the hand-grenade hanging on his belt, picks up his rifle, and returns to the second floor.

"Hold on to this," he says, giving the rifle to Hai, "and keep an eye on things here. I'm going downstairs."

"Be careful."

Hou removes the cover of the grenade, hooks his finger through the ring of the firing string and starts down to the ground floor.

Puppet soldiers are still gambling. Some are sprawled sleeping on their pallets. Near the bottom of the stairs, Hou raises the grenade over his head.

"Don't make any false moves. Surrender your arms and live."

The enemy security guards stare at him in confusion and alarm. A sergeant grabs for his gun. The tall soldier, who had exchanged silent greetings with Hai when the guerrillas arrived at the tower, already has him covered.

"Freeze," he snaps. "Drop that gun."

The puppets are petrified with fear.

"We're the Eighth Route Army," Hou shouts. "Those who don't want to be slaves of foreign invaders raise your hands."

One after another, the soldiers raise their hands.

Japanese troops and Chinese special agents are digging and looking for tunnel entrances on the street and in the courtyard of every home. All over the village, lanterns and torches gleam.

Yang, chief of the special agents, brings his landlord father to Matsue. Wu quietly follows.

"We're not getting much co-operation from you Kuomintang people," Ho Fei says to the old scoundrel. And he whispers: "His excellency wants to find the grain and leave quickly. Better do something to get back in his favour."

The old man bows repeatedly to the Japanese colonel. "I can't be too open about this, excellency," he whines.

Matsue glares at him with such venom that he falls back a few paces. "Don't be angry, excellency," he begs. "I can show you where the tunnels are. A few days ago I dug a shelter in my courtyard, to hide from the Eighth Routers. By luck, I cut into the main tunnel. I was afraid they'd find out, so I blocked that part of the wall up again."

Wu is shocked. He moves back a few steps. He must get away to the tunnels and report.

"Your shelter connects with the main tunnel?" Matsue asks the landlord delightedly.

"Fine. If there's a tunnel, there must be people," says Ho Fei. "When we get hold of them, we'll be able to find the grain. Come on. To Yang's place."

XI

It is growing light in the east.

Li is pacing inside the secret room. From time to time he peers through the camouflaged window. Suddenly, he gives a joyous shout.

"Kuo, come here, quick. The Hsiaohsi tower is burning. Our Hou is really all right!"

Kuo rushes to the window. With pleased satisfaction they gaze at the fiery glow in the distance.

Li grasps Kuo's arm. "We're going to the outskirts of the village. Let's see what Matsue does now."

They go into the tunnel.

Matsue, Ho Fei and their men are entering the landlord's gate. A special agent runs up, panting. Yang, his chief, grabs him.

"What's up?" he asks tensely.

"Li's guerrillas have set the Hsiaohsi tower on fire."

Matsue is staggered. Yang leads him and the others rapidly to a battlement on the landlord's compound wall. They all stare in the direction of the tower.

Flames are clearly visible on the horizon five or six *li* away.

The Japanese colonel is speechless.

"Excellency," Yang stammers, "what are we going to do?"

With an effort, Matsue takes a grip on himself. He thinks a moment.

"Don't worry. This is another one of Li's tricks. He's trying to 'lure the tiger down from the hills.' We won't pay any attention. What can he do about it?"

"How shrewd you are, colonel," Ho Fei flatters him. "Now let's find that tunnel."

They return to the landlord's courtyard.

Wu slips out of the gate and hurries into a lane.

A grove of cedars near a stream outside the village. Amid the trees, neglected graves and broken tombstones are nearly buried in a profusion of weeds. This is the secret meeting place of the village cadres.

A tombstone rises up and Li and Kuo emerge from a concealed tunnel entrance. They stand on one of the grave mounds and gaze towards Lichuang. Shouts can be heard, but two or three Japanese and puppet soldiers are still patrolling at the village entrance. The enemy show no sign of leaving.

Kuo spots two figures approaching from the direction of Hsiaohsi. "They're back," he shouts exultantly.

Li hurries forward and shakes Hou and Hai by the hand. "A beautiful job."

"Is Matsue pulling out?" asks Hai.

Kuo sighs. "He's not even stirring. I'm afraid he...."

Hou looks at Li. "Burning the tower didn't do much good," he growls, annoyed.

Meng and Sun arrive. Li doesn't say a word. What should their next move be? Li paces thoughtfully in the grove.

Along a path not far from the cedar grove the old watchman who patrols the moat approaches. He peers vigilantly in the direction of Lichuang and notices the men in the grove. He hesitates until he recognizes Li, then hurries towards them.

"I've a message for you from the mountains."

Li and Meng, side by side, read the letter:

Comrade Li Hsiang-yang:

Our counter "mop up" in the mountains is at its height. The enemy are frenziedly making sudden concerted attacks. But the united action of our army and people foil them everywhere. Our intelligence reports reveal that the enemy are trying desperately to move up grain and re-inforcements from the plain. Besides pinning down Matsue and his men, your detachment must also speedily demolish their attempts to ship grain to the mountains.

Our forces here are in urgent need of grain. You must move the Lichuang grain to the Luochuang sector in the foothills at once....

Li hands the letter to Hou. "Let everybody read it."

"What does the leadership say?" the old watchman asks.

Li does not reply because he suddenly thinks of something. He pulls Meng aside.

Wu pops up in the mouth of the tunnel. They all stare at him in surprise.

While he is still climbing out, Wu exclaims uneasily: "Li, Meng, bad news." Panting, he rises to his feet. "Landlord Yang has taken Matsue into his courtyard. He's got a shelter there that connects with our tunnels."

The guerrillas are shocked. Li retains his calm with an effort. Sun rushes over to him and cries impatiently: "They'll find out where the grain is hidden. Let's attack."

Ta Cheng, Erh Huo and the others softly talk over this proposal.

Li understands how they feel, but he knows that they are gripped by a dangerous mood.

"Attack. Is that all you understand?" he snaps. "That's just what Matsue is hoping we'll do. But what about our main task?"

Sun's face reddens. He lowers his head and does not reply. Kuo grimaces at Hou. The atmosphere in the grove is tense. No one speaks.

"Our task is to drag the enemy around after us," Li finally says. "Every minute we do that brings our forces a minute closer to victory."

Meng ambles over and looks at Li with a funny grin.

"Matsue has pulled all his troops out of the county town to search for grain. He seems pretty determined." Meng gives an exaggerated sigh. He puts a cigarette in his mouth and strikes a match. But instead of lighting up, he stares intently at the flame.

Li's eyes follow Meng's. The flame seems to grow into a big fire. The two men exchange a smile. Meng cries out as the match burns his fingers. They both laugh.

"We'll go into the town," Li says merrily, "right into Matsue's lair, and turn it topsy-turvy. We'll smash it up so, he won't be able to remain in Lichuang."

Meng nods. "Good. Leave the village to me. I promise the enemy won't dig into our tunnels. After Matsue leaves, we'll deliver the grain to the mountains."

He and Li shake hands, as a pledge that they'll accomplish their respective tasks.

At parting, Li says to Meng: "Some of our tunnels aren't suitable yet for fighting. You'd better get them into proper shape quickly." He calls over Hou and Kuo.

Hou comically bats his eyes. "Are we going into town?"

"You've guessed it," Meng grins.

"All right, let's go," says Li.

XII

Noon. The rather narrow main street of the enemy-occupied county town. It is very dreary. Some of the shops are closed. Business is scarce for those still open. People stick close to the sides as they walk to avoid the rude roving gangs of puppet troops and special agents. Japanese soldiers, carrying rifles, patrol the streets.

Li, Hou, Kuo, Ta Cheng and Erh Huo, in disguise, mingle with the pedestrians. Ta Cheng totes a load of cabbages, Erh Huo is a pedlar with a basket of sunflower seeds and peanuts.

At the door of a grog shop Li rubs his ear. This is a signal for the two scouts to wait for them elsewhere. They go off. Li, Hou and Kuo enter. Chen Feng-ming, the waiter, comes forward to greet them.

"This way, please, gentlemen." Chen leads them to a table and brings a pot of spirits. "What's the job?" he asks softly.

"Put a little pepper on their tail, first," says Li. "Spread the news that I'm in town."

"Right." Chen's face is expressionless. As he walks away from the table he says loudly: "Yes sir. Eight ounces of white spirits, a dish of salted peanuts, four ounces of potted beef, with a little pepper on the side."

The three guerrillas drink and eat.

Four special agents barge in through the door.

"Any of these around?" An agent indicates with his fingers the number "eight."

Chen smiles. "If any Eighth Routers came to town, they wouldn't come to a place like this, right in the middle of everything."

"They wouldn't dare," the agent agrees. He glances over at the guerrillas. "Who are those three?"

"Just some local peasants," Chen says quickly.

A fat agent walks over and grabs Kuo by the arm. "Where are you from?"

"Liuchia Village, west of here."

"What are you doing in town?"

Before he can continue, Li and Hou walk up to the agents and produce pistols.

"Don't move," Li commands softly.

Chen goes to the door to keep watch.

"Who are you?" snarls one of the agents. He starts to draw.

"Put your hand down," snaps Li. "I'm Li Hsiang-yang, leader of the guerrillas."

The eyes of the special agents go wide with fright.

"Surrender your arms and we'll let you live," says Li. "That's an old rule of ours."

One by one the agents place their guns on the table. Kuo collects them.

"Educate these fellows," Li says to Hou. He sits down and lets Hou take over.

"Stand up straight," Hou orders the agents. "I'm going to give you a lesson in political affairs. The international situation is this: Hitler has been given a good beating. The German fascists are on the verge of collapse. In China, our Eighth Route Army is getting ready to launch a big counter-offensive. Time, for the Japanese invaders, is like a rabbit's tail — very, very short. Why are you still making a big noise? Stop all this dirty business and get back on the right path."

"Yes sir, yes sir," the agents chorus hastily.

Hou glances at Li.

"Go back and tell your commanding officer," says Li, "that Li Hsiang-yang is in town."

"Yes sir."

After the agents depart, Li looks through the window. A military truck laden with ammunition rolls by.

"The munition is from a train that came in from Paoting last night," Chen tells him. "They're taking it into the mountains tomorrow. If we can blow up the train, that'll bring Matsue back to town all right."

"Where is the train now?" Li asks.

"Near the storage shed in the station."

Matsue, in the landlord's house, listens in astonishment to a voice coming over the telephone.

"What's that?" he cries. "Speak clearly. What? What? Li is in town? What? He's been seen?" Furious, he falls back on a chair. The voice on the phone crackles: "Please return to town at once, colonel." Matsue slams down the receiver.

Rising to his feet, he paces the floor rapidly, unable to make up his mind.

Night. Japanese sentries patrol the railway station. A locomotive pulls in and stops. Li stands in the door of the cab, dressed like a railway worker.

"Blow out plenty of steam," he tells the driver.

"Right."

The locomotive emits a great cloud of steam which spreads like a fog. Under cover of this, Li and several others run to the side of the munitions train. A Japanese sentry approaches. At Li's signal, they all slip beneath the train. The sentry, seeing nothing to arouse his suspicion, turns and walks away. Li signals to his men beneath the train, "Hurry, hurry!"

Crouching low, Hou and Kuo light a fuse. Then they scramble out and run back through the cloud of steam to the locomotive. With the guerrillas on board, it rolls swiftly away from the station.

The munitions train blows up in a tremendous explosion.

After the locomotive has gone some distance it halts and Li and his men get off. They confer on a slope not far from the line.

"I'm leaving town to lay an ambush for Matsue with our detachment," Li tells Hou. "We'll take some of the starch out of him. You stay here and scout out the situation on the enemy's granary."

"Right," says Hou.

"Let's go," Li says to Kuo.

Lichuang. Matsue stands on landlord Yang's roof peering angrily at the county town, over which a reddish light glows in the sky.

In the house, Ho Fei is speaking urgently into the phone. "What? Li has blown up the munitions train?" He flings down the receiver and rushes into the yard. "Excellency, a calamity," he shouts to Matsue on the roof. "Things are very tense in town. Li has blown up the munitions train."

"Assemble the troops," bellows Matsue. "We're going back at once."

Late at night. Matsue rides on horseback at the head of his marching Japanese and puppet soldiers. They have left Lichuang and are hastening towards the town.

After midnight. A gorge through which the road runs, a dozen or so *li* from town. Pine groves on either side. Li and part of his contingent are hiding there in ambush. A few sentries posted along the road watch in the direction of Lichuang.

Beside a grave amid the pines, a scout is reporting to Li.

"Matsue and his men are at Tachang Village. That's only eight *li* from here."

To the commander of Second Company Li says: "Prepare for battle." He turns to the scout. "Continue scouting."

XIII

On the road.

Matsue rides, frowning. Something occurs to him, and a savage grin flits across his face. He reins in his mount.

"Detachment halt!" he yells.

The marching men halt. Matsue rolls out of his saddle. Yang the special agent chief, Ho Fei the interpreter, and two Japanese lieutenants run up and stand awaiting the colonel's orders.

Matsue pays no attention to them. He paces the road, smoking furiously. Ho Fei and the others can't imagine what's up. They watch him tensely.

Suddenly, Matsue halts before Ho Fei. "What do you think?" he demands. "Has Li gone into town?"

Ho Fei can only mumble.

Matsue glares at him and strides over to Yang. Pointing his finger at the special agent, he asks: "Or is Li still in Lichuang?"

"That fellow flits in and out like a ghost," Yang stammers. "Who knows where he is?"

The Japanese colonel snorts and resume his rapid pacing. A moment later, he takes a deep drag on his cigarette, then flings it, half consumed, to the ground.

"We're going back," he says decisively.

Ho Fei blinks. "Going back where?" he asks, stammering.

"To Lichuang." Matsue is inflexible.

"We're not going to the county town?" Yang asks with trembling timidity.

Matsue is exultant that even his intimates can't fathom this move. He laughs uproariously.

"I'll show that Li a thing or two. He thinks I'm going to the town. Well, I'll just swing back and catch him flat-footed. Let's see how he likes that."

This seems a very dangerous procedure to Ho Fei, but before he can say anything, the colonel is again in the saddle. Matsue waves to his Japanese troops and takes the lead in hurrying towards Lichuang.

Li and his men lie waiting in ambush on both sides of the gorge through which the road passes. Li gazes impatiently in the direction of Lichuang. From time to time he looks at his watch.

A scout is running towards them. Li goes forward to meet him. Panting, the scout reports.

"Bad news. Matsue and some of his Japanese got as far as Tachang, then turned around and returned to Lichuang."

"Blast!" The cry escapes Li's lips. "Lichuang is going to be hurt. . . . Rush to Machuang and tell Comrade Chien Ta-yu to attack the town at once. I'll give you a letter."

Li tears a page from a small notebook and writes a few lines in the beam of a flashlight held by the commander of Second Company.

"Assemble the men," Li directs the commander. "We're returning to Lichuang, on the double."

XIV

Before dawn. A threshing ground in Lichuang Village. Bonfires burn on all sides. Japanese and puppet soldiers hold torches and flashlights to light up the threshing ground.

Every four or five paces on the edge of the arena stands a guard facing outwards. Another similar ring of guards face inwards. All with fixed bayonets. In the centre is a group of peasants who have been seized. Two machine-guns menace them.

Silently, the peasants watch Matsue, pacing to and fro. Several women conceal Meng and Hai from view with their bodies.

Ho Fei approaches Matsue and whispers: "Yang the landlord says that old man with the white beard knows where the grain is hidden, excellency."

Matsue looks at Grandpa Chin and nods.

He walks over to the captives, followed by Ho Fei and Yang.

With hypocritical benignity, he says in Japanese: "Don't be afraid, good people. The Imperial Army loves the peasants. Whoever tells where the grain is will be released immediately, what's more, he'll be rewarded. But if you don't speak, the Imperial Army won't forgive you."

Ho Fei translates: "His excellency says you are all good people. The Imperial Army will protect you. Whoever tells where the grain is hidden will be released immediately and given a reward. If you don't talk, you'll be shot. So speak up, fast."

The peasants eye the enemy coldly. Not even a child cries or utters a word. The atmosphere is tense and still. The only sound is the crunch of Matsue's pacing boots.

Obviously none of the peasants will speak. Ho Fei pulls Grandpa Chin out.

With a chill smile, he says: "Don't think we haven't heard that you know where the grain is."

Grandpa Chin remains mute.

"Why don't you say something?" Ho Fei asks sarcastically. "Are you deaf, or dumb?"

The old man stares at him with icy fury. "I'm just a peasant. I don't know how to talk."

"Are you a human being, or just a stupid animal?"

"Who knows? At least I'm not someone who's forgotten his ancestors," Grandpa Chin retorts mockingly.

"You mean me, eh?" Ho Fei rages. "I'll kill you, you old bastard." He raises his gun.

Old Chin spits in his face. "Call yourself a Chinese, you dirty son-of-a-bitch. All day long helping the Japanese murder the Chinese people. Heaven must have been blind to give you a human skin."

Ho Fei's eyes are popping out of his head. "I'll kill you," he screams.

Old Chin thumps his chest. "Here's the place, little rat. Aim straight. Kill a seventy-year-old man. That'll show how brave you are. When I fall into the hands of you devils I don't expect to live."

Ho Fei points his gun. Matsue intervenes.

He walks over to Grandpa Chin and pats him on the shoulder, then sticks up his thumb and says admiringly: "Among the Chinese, you are this! Let me ask you, old man, which is better, the Imperial Army or the Eighth Route Army?"

To everyone's surprise, Grandpa Chin replies: "The Imperial Army."

Matsue is very pleased. He thinks he's getting somewhere. "Ah," he says, "and tell me, in what way is the Imperial Army better?"

"The Imperial Army doesn't murder, or set fires, or rob us of grain. Really admirable," the old man says derisively.

Matsue glowers. "And what's so good about the Eighth Route Army?"

Grandpa Chin is silent.

"Well, why don't you speak?" Ho Fei presses him. "Don't you dare? Are your bones weak?"

Again the old man's anger bursts forth. He shakes his finger at Matsue and Ho Fei. "You're just a pack of filthy beasts. Where do you get the nerve to ask me that? How can a pile of dog turds like you be compared with our Eighth Route Army?"

Matsue can no longer mask his savagery. He whips out his sabre. "You're an old Eighth Router. Speak. Where is the grain?"

"I don't know. I don't know. A hundred times — I don't know."

Matsue slashes wildly with his blade. The old man stands motionless.

The peasants cry out and lower their heads. They shut their eyes tight.

Grandpa Chin falls in a pool of blood.

The peasants weep.

Matsue strides over to them and hauls out eleven-year-old Pao. "You," he barks, "speak."

Pao sinks his teeth into the Japanese' hand. Viciously, Matsue shoots him dead.

A shocked exclamation bursts from the peasants. Tsui Ping rushes forward and throws herself on the child's body. Her hands immediately become reddened with his blood. He has stopped breathing. Tsui Ping wails, heartbroken.

The darkness before the dawn.

Guerrillas under Chien and Sun have already taken the southern approaches to the county town. The men have mounted roofs and are exchanging fire with the puppet troops in the battlements above the gate of the town wall. Several guerrillas are tying ladders together to make them long enough to reach the wall's fifty foot top.

Sun is on the roof of a shop. Beside him, two machine-guns and three mortars are pounding a withering barrage into the puppets. Guerrillas on the various rooftops shout as they fire: "Hit them hard. Into the town. Up the wall."

The guerrillas tying the ladders rustle them to make a loud noise, shouting at the same time.

The road to Lichuang.

Li and his men are marching rapidly.

Gradually, the sky lightens in the east. Over Lichuang, not far ahead, the glow of flames can be seen.

Li swings his pistol. He and his guerrillas break into a run.

The threshing ground. It is already daylight.

Matsue pulls the weeping Tsui Ping from the body of her little brother. "Who is a Communist cadre here?" he harshly demands.

Tsui Ping wipes away her tears and looks at him with hatred. "I am," she says coldly. "I am a Communist cadre."

Again Matsue insanely brandishes his sabre. He is about to bring it down when Meng leaps out of the crowd.

"Stop," shouts Meng. "She's not a cadre. I am."

Tsui Ping throws herself in front of Meng to shield him. "He's not a cadre, he's my uncle." She turns to Meng and weeps loudly: "Uncle, you shouldn't..."

Yang springs forward and thrusts the girl aside. "Are you really a Communist cadre?" He demands of Meng.

Hai steps out. "He's not. But I am."

Another young man strides from the crowd. "I'm a cadre."

Still another man advances, shouting: "I'm a cadre."

Then another and another, until there are well over a dozen men and women, all maintaining: "I'm a cadre."

Matsue, Ho Fei and Yang are flabbergasted.

A tense silence hangs over the threshing ground.

Two minutes pass. Matsue suddenly laughs hugely. "So you're all cadres? Fine, fine." He signals to the soldiers at the machine-guns. "Ready..."

The gunners move the ammunition belts into position.

Just then a Japanese messenger on horseback comes galloping from the other end of the village. He jumps from his mount before Matsue and hands him a dispatch. The Japanese colonel reads it.

"What," he cries involuntarily. "Li and his guerrillas are attacking the town?"

At the same moment, shooting is heard at the edge of the village. Japanese and puppet guards retreat.

"What are Eighth Routers doing outside the village?" Matsue yells.

"It's Li Hsiang-yang's guerrillas," shouts a puppet. "Li Hsiang-yang."

In consternation, Matsue orders Ho Fei: "Withdraw immediately. Back to town, back to town."

The enemy, departing in confusion, have no time for the captured peasants.

Li and his men charge on to the threshing ground. Meng and Hai run forward to greet them. Other guerrillas pursue the fleeing foe. Constant firing can be heard.

The rescued peasants crowd around Li, shaking his hand, grasping his arms. No one can speak. Tsui Ping rises from the body of little Pao.

"Commander Li," she exclaims, weeping, "Brother Li, avenge us."

Aunt Li hurries over and supports the girl.

Only then are the people able to cry. They weep and sob.

Li stands in silence with lowered head before the bodies of Grandpa Chin and little Pao. He notices a cartridge that has fallen from the child's hand. It is the one Li gave him. He picks it up and gazes at it with tears in his eyes.

In a terrible anger Li raises his pistol and fires three shots into the air. Then he slips Pao's cartridge into the gun's chamber.

A militiaman dashes up from outside the village and gives Li a letter.

He hastily reads it, hands it to Meng, and says to his men: "Comrades, the leadership has ordered us to destroy Matsue. I swear that we'll wipe him out—here in Lichuang."

To the peasants Meng says: "Neighbours, let's shift the grain and improve the tunnels immediately."

"Right," everyone shouts in voices of steel.

Li goes over to Meng. "I've got to go into town again. I've had no news of Hou and the others all this time. Something may go wrong."

Meng nods in agreement. "We'll get a portion of the grain to the mountains tomorrow. You go back to town and deal with Matsue."

XV

Matsue returns to the town. He asks some puppet officers about the guerrilla attack.

"They fought a while, then left," says a puppet lieutenant.

"Excellency," says Yang the special agent, "we've just had a report of suspicious activity in the neighbourhood of the granary."

"Is Li still here, then?"

"Hard to say."

Ho Fei has a proposal. "Why not search the whole town?"

"Hm. . . ." says Matsue. "Put plenty of men in every lane. Do it secretly and keep calm."

"Yes sir," says Yang.

A busy street.

Yang patrols, looking all around. His agents are checking people on the street.

He stops and searches a peasant selling firewood. Li and Hou are standing in front of a vendor's stall. They turn and walk away, unnoticed.

The heavily guarded entrance to an old temple. This is where the Japanese army has stored its grain. Li and Hou peer over a gap in the back wall, carefully noting the temple's layout. Then they go to a busy street where vendors are hawking their wares. They follow two Japanese soldiers.

Yang and his agents are still checking pedestrians. Yang suddenly sees Li before him. "Li Hsiang-yang," he shouts urgently.

"Grab him," yell the agents.

Yang pulls out a gun and chases after Li.

Li fires twice. The crowd mills in wild confusion.

Waving his pistol and yelling, Yang can't push through the crowd. "Grab him," he howls. "Grab him. He's Li Hsiang-yang. Grab him."

People are running in all directions. Li and Hou dash into a quiet entranceway, where Kuo and Ta Cheng are waiting for them with

changes of clothing. Hou puts on the uniform of a puppet soldier and goes out.

He runs after two Japanese soldiers, shouting: "Excellencies, excellencies."

"What is it?" demand the soldiers.

"There are Eighth Routers over there. This way."

"Aha."

Hou leads them into a lane. "This way."

Li and the other guerrillas hiding there knock the Japanese to the ground.

Late at night. It is snowing heavily and the wind is blowing hard.

Wearing Japanese uniforms, Li, Kuo and the scouts ride up in a big cart to the temple where the grain is stored. Many Japanese and puppet soldiers are tensely patrolling outside.

Two Japanese guards stand at the entrance. When they see Li dressed in the uniform of a Japanese lieutenant they hastily salute. Li returns the salute and strides inside, as if very angry, pistol in hand. The disguised guerrillas are met by several special agents as they enter the inner compound. One of the agents opens his mouth to question them. Kuo shouts, in an imitation of a Japanese speaking Chinese: "Get out, get out. Many Eighth Routers everywhere here. Big search."

The special agents hastily make themselves scarce.

Li goes to the door of the main temple building. A Japanese soldier is standing guard. Silently, Li stalks up to him and shoots him dead.

Li waves his hand. "Work fast."

Kuo and the scouts quickly untie the gasoline-filled pig bladders attached to their belts. They saturate the door and windows of the building, as well as the sacks of grain inside, with the volatile liquid, and set fire to them. Instantly, the grain and the building are ablaze.

Outside, there are hoarse shouts. "The granary is burning. How did it happen?"

Li fires three shots into the air.

At this signal, the scouts fire into the blazing building, at the same time yelling: "There are Eighth Routers in there. Shoot, shoot."

Japanese and puppet soldiers run into the compound. They too empty their guns into the burning temple, assuming that Eighth Routers are inside setting fires.

The wind whips the flames higher.

Shooting into the building, Li and his men gradually withdraw. The Japanese and puppets, also shooting, move as close to the blaze as they dare.

The guerrillas come out of the temple grounds.

"Let's go," says Li. "Leave them here fighting the Eighth Route Army."

The guerrillas stride through the snowstorm into the darkness. Some distance away, they see flames from the temple shooting into the sky, and hear a babel of yells and shots. They burst out laughing.

In the temple, the flames gradually subside. The grain has been reduced to ashes.

Matsue stares with eyes that are glazed. Frustrated, angry, he mutters: "That Li is a fox, a demon."

Ho Fei and Yang, standing to one side, try to make themselves small.

A Japanese lieutenant approaches with two Japanese soldiers under guard. They were the sentries at the temple entrance.

Matsue pounces on them in a fury. He slaps and punches them mercilessly.

Trembling, they plead: "We didn't recognize Li Hsiang-yang. Forgive us, forgive us."

"Shut your mouths," Matsue roars. He pulls out a pistol and shoots.

The soldiers drop dead.

Other Japanese, Ho Fei and Yang stare, frightened, at the maddened colonel.

Gun in hand, he strides up to Ho Fei and Yang. "Put the whole town under martial law. Capture Li Hsiang-yang. Get him, you hear?" He waves his pistol under their noses.

The two hastily fall back. "Yes sir. Yes sir."

XVI

The next day at dusk. The town home of special agent Yang. Li and Hou, still dressed in Japanese uniforms, pound on the door and shout a few words in Japanese.

Landlord Yang, father of the special agent, opens the door and sees what he believes to be Japanese officers. "Please come in, excellencies, please come in," he cries.

Before the landlord has a chance to recognize him, Li shoots him dead.

Yang the agent, hearing the shot, comes running in, very flurried. "Who fired that gun? Father!"

Li pokes his gun in the traitor's back. "Don't move. Up with your hands."

Yang looks over his shoulder. "Aiya! It's you."

Hou, in front of Yang, relieves him of his pistol.

"Spare me, Commander Li," the agent begs. "I'll let you out of the town."

"You'll let me?"

"No, no. I mean you can go whenever you like. Here's a pass to get you through the gate."

Li takes it. "Come on. Come with me."

"Where to?"

"Out of the town."

"Out of the town?" Yang stammers. "Will you let me go when we get there?"

"This is no time for bargaining. Start moving, fast."

Hou pushes Yang outside. Li takes a letter from his pocket, goes back into the house and places it on the body of the landlord. The envelope is addressed:

"To Colonel Matsue, with compliments."

That night. Matsue takes the letter, which Ho Fei hands him, and opens it. The characters are neatly written with a brush pen. It reads:

Colonel Matsue:

To keep the promise I made when I came down from the mountains, I have called specially to pay my respects. These last few days in town, with the kind assistance of your underlings, we have completed our mission. This letter is to express our thanks. Forgive me for not taking leave of you in person. We shall see you again outside the town.

May you meet the same fate.

Li Hsiang-yang

Furious, Matsue laughs like a madman. He is about to question Ho Fei when a Japanese soldier comes in with a telegram. Matsue grabs it and reads:

"Troops in mountains in urgent need of grain. Deliver town stores immediately to Wangchiachen sector and come immediately with re-inforcements..."

With trembling hands, Matsue turns to Ho Fei. "We march at once. Back to Lichuang."

XVII

The sun is in the west. Japanese and puppet troops, plus special agents, are savagely searching the village of Lichuang.

A gang of Japanese walk towards the door of a house. Two sharp reports ring out. Two of the Japanese fall. No one knows where the shots came from. The rest of the enemy hastily take shelter against the wall of the dwelling. Guerrillas fire through holes in the wall. More of the enemy collapse.

Ho Fei and a gang of agents enter the home of Aunt Li.

The rooms are bare of furniture, the *kang* and the stove have been dismantled. A big trough for horses has been built in their stead. At the foot of one of the walls is a hole.

Standing in the doorway, Ho Fei orders: "Go down there and look."

A sudden bullet hits one of the agents. The others are dumbfounded.

"Where did that shot come from?" demands Ho Fei.

Hai and a village militiaman, inside the horse trough, remove two loose bricks and fire together. Two more agents fall.

The remainder let out a yell and stampede through the door.

Agents crowd around a tunnel entrance in the floor of a home.

One of them jumps in. There is a splash, as deep dark water closes over his head.

"It's a trap," shout the others. They turn and run.

Japanese soldiers file into the breach in the tunnel in landlord Yang's courtyard.

Ta Cheng and Erh Huo wait with bayonets in a recess at a turn in the tunnel. The moment a Japanese rounds the bend, Ta Cheng runs him through.

In Yang's parlour, lamps have been lit.

Matsue is raging. "Spread poison gas," he howls pounding the table. "Burn the village to cinders."

Japanese lieutenants trot out to execute his order.

Ho Fei waits till Matsue has calmed down a bit, then approaches him fearfully.

"Our superiors have sent telegram after telegram, colonel, urging us to reinforce our troops in the mountains. I don't think we'll find anything here."

Matsue nods. "When we've burned down Lichuang we'll march at once."

He walks over to the window.

Japanese soldiers are setting buildings on fire.

One of them goes to get kindling from a pile behind a house. As he picks up a stick, the pile explodes, slamming him to the ground.

"Booby traps, booby traps," yells another, running down the road.

Boom! Boom! Boom! As if in response to his cry, landmines blow up in various parts of the village.

XVIII

Midnight. For the moment the village is still.

The fires have nearly burned themselves out. Thick smoke rises everywhere.

Hai and militiamen are in a tunnel, delivering hand-grenades. Guerrillas are polishing their weapons.

"Hurry up with that cleaning," says Ta Cheng. "It's quiet now, but we'll be having it out with them very soon."

Aunt Li and Tsui Ping bring baskets of sweet potatoes, which they distribute to the guerrillas.

In courtyards all over the village Japanese and puppet troops assemble and form ranks. They are preparing to leave Lichuang.

A contingent of guerrillas, under Chien Ta-yu, climb out of a tunnel entrance in one of the houses. They take positions in the rooms.

Rifle and cannon fire, inside the village and out, sound off at the same time. From all sides, the guerrillas suddenly begin blasting the enemy.

Chien and his men open up on the Japanese assembled in the courtyard.

The foe scatter, shooting back in confusion.

Japanese and puppet soldiers pour out into the streets. From the rooftops, guerrillas commanded by Sun spray them with bullets.

Enemy troops in the courtyards continue to resist.

A group of puppets run towards one of the village entrances, hoping to get away.

The concerted fire of several machine-guns drives them back.

Another puppet unit tries to break out at a different point. Machine-gun bullets from outside the village cause them to hastily retreat.

Guerrillas dash into a courtyard and cover a gang of puppets with their guns. "Surrender your arms and live," they shout.

The puppets raise their rifles over their heads with both hands and surrender.

Other guerrillas charge into a house. The puppets there are already holding up their weapons, waiting to be taken prisoner.

Matsue, waving his sabre, is wildly shouting orders from Yang's parlour to Japanese soldiers outside, personally commanding their battle.

Guerrillas and Japanese are fighting hand to hand in the landlord's second compound. The guerrillas shout fiercely as they match bayonets with the foe.

One after another, the enemy falls under the powerful onslaught of the bayonets of Kuo and Erh Huo.

In the parlour, Matsue is reading a telegram. It says: "Reinforce Chikou sector immediately. Utmost speed essential. Do not delay...."

Ho Fei, standing beside him, says, trembling: "We can't get out of here. There isn't time. The best thing to do, it seems to me, is...."

"You want to surrender?" Matsue yells savagely. He shoots Ho Fei dead.

Li and several guerrillas come to landlord Yang's front courtyard.

Kuo runs up and reports: "The Japanese have withdrawn into the wings of the main building. They're going to fight it out."

"If they won't surrender, destroy them," Li says crisply.

Japanese in the east and west wings and guerrillas on the roofs are exchanging fire.

Kuo and his men dig holes in the roofs and drop in hand-grenades.

The bursting grenades bloodily shatter the foe. Bodies lie all over the floor.

On the roof Li shouts: "Capture Matsue alive." He fires three shots into the air.



At his signal, the guerrillas charge, shouting: "Capture Matsue alive."

Matsue, hiding in the parlour, locks the door, his eyes glaring wildly. He groans in despair.

Kuo and guerrillas smash open the door. Li, Sun and Chien rush in.

The terrified Matsue falls back a few paces.

"Drop your weapon," Li says contemptuously. "The Chinese people do not permit you and your kind to rampage around on their land."

In a last desperate attempt, Matsue lunges at Li with his sabre. Li coolly shoots dead this enemy who refuses to lay down his arms.

The people of Lichuang cheer the victory of the guerrillas.

"The enemy have withdrawn from the mountains and our main force has surrounded them east of the river," Li announces. "We guerrillas have to go immediately and cut off their retreat. Meng, you and the villagers get that grain to the mountains right away."

“Good,” the peasants shout. “The day we’ve been waiting for has come at last.”

Light spreads in the east.

In the foothills, a whole row of enemy gun towers are burning briskly.

A convoy of large carts laden with grain rolls swiftly towards the mountains, under Meng’s command.

Li waves his pistol and leads the guerrillas forward at top speed across the plain.

EDITORS’ NOTE: Our great leader Chairman Mao recently issued an extremely important directive: “It is necessary for educated young people to go to the countryside to be re-educated by the poor and lower-middle peasants. Cadres and other people in the cities should be persuaded to send their sons and daughters who have finished junior or senior middle school, college or university to the countryside. Let us mobilize. Comrades throughout the countryside should welcome them.” The broad masses of educated youth in all parts of the country warmly responded to this great call. Carrying with them Chairman Mao’s peerless writings and stirred with high aims and lofty aspirations, they have gone one after another to settle down in the countryside, in hilly regions and border areas where they will learn from the former poor and lower-middle peasants and take the broad highway leading to the revolutionization of their thinking.

We print here three of the many poems that have been written with this as the theme.

Chi Nien-tung

Song of New Horizons

Chairman Mao badge shimmering in gold on the chest,
Four bright-red volumes held high in hand,
Striding towards the sun-lit Tien An Men Square,
Standing before the likeness of our great leader —
That kind and imposing face — now a vow we make.

Oh, let's start right from here
To take wing across the wide sky,
Lunging at clouds like virile falcons;
Following your pointing hand,
We face new battles and trials.

We are the children of the working people,
We are the youth of Chairman Mao's era.
The splendour of his thought lights up our red hearts,
His teachings we'll bear for ever in mind.

Through purifying fires of the cultural revolution,
Storms, thunder and lightning of class struggle,
Our hearts become more loyal, eyes more vigilant,
Will still firmer, mettle ever higher.

Chairman Mao has made clear the revolutionary road,
The "three good olds"* triumphantly light us on.
With Bethune's** scalpel the cancer of "self" we'll incise,
With Chang Szu-teh's*** carrying pole revolutionary loads we
will lift.

*Referring to Chairman Mao's three important writings: *Serve the People*, *In Memory of Norman Bethune* and *The Foolish Old Man Who Removed the Mountains* — sometimes also referred to as the Three Constantly Read Articles.

**Norman Bethune, a member of the Canadian Communist Party and a distinguished surgeon came to China's Liberated Areas in 1938 at the head of a medical team of Canadians and Americans to help the Chinese people in their War of Resistance Against Japan. His spirit of sacrifice, enthusiasm for work and sense of responsibility were exemplary. He contracted blood poisoning while operating on a wounded soldier and died in Tanghsien, Hopei, on November 12, 1939.

***Chang Szu-teh was a communist fighter to whom Chairman Mao paid high tribute in his brilliant work *Serve the People*.

To the countryside — what's to fear, come difficulty, come hazard!
To the frontier — what to dread, let rage the ice-cold wind and snow!
Always from worker, peasant and soldier to learn anew
And dedicate our youth to Chairman Mao's revolutionary line.

Together with the workers we'll create wonders,
With the liberated peasants the Gobi we'll transform,
We'll stand by the PLA at the frontiers,
From our diligent hands will rise a new world.

Han Ching-ting

My First Lesson

Entering the hamlet poor and lower-middle peasants I greet,
A youth from school, I wish to report my arrival
To be one of you in the commune here in the countryside.

Thanks for offering me water, but not now,
Nor shall I lay my knapsack by, no, not until,
Uncle, I've seen all round the dale.

"Leap Forward" Bridge arches over the River of Happiness under
the hill,
Oh, weren't the Red Guards in those early days
Sharpening the spears there by the riverside?

Narrow paths yesterday, today wide highways wind,
Remember how the Red Army laid mines everywhere here
And there the enemy fell — what feats of valour!

Revolutionary forefathers' sweat and blood
One by one young rice plants did nurse;
Now the red sun shining over the great earth,
People's thinking changes with the new mountain face.

As an educated youth I come to the vast countryside,
Revolutionary traditions I'll always keep in mind
And bear the heaviest burdens on my back
To fit myself to wear our heroes' shoes.

Every utterance, the bead of a tear,
Every word, a drop of blood,
I'll never forget the lesson
Uncle Chang gives on class struggle.

"... The menace of the year-end reckoning drew nigh,
Landlord's flunkies arrived with cruel shouts,
Demanding impossible dues, the vicious landlord
Flogged my father and his hip did smash....

"... Heavy snow weighed down our thatched hut,
My family sought shelter in a broken-down temple,
In tears we struggled on, eating weeds and husks.

"Renegade Liu Shao-chi, he it was
Who wanted capitalism back again,
That's reviving the exploiting classes
To let us taste those sufferings again — no, never!"

Growing up under the red banner,
From birth nourished by sweet honey,

How can I comprehend the working people's suffering
In the bitter sea of agony?

The poor peasants' lesson strikes home sharply,
My heart rises in waves, higher and higher,
Oh, such a lesson on class struggle—
In what drowsy classroom could it be learnt!

Every young heart must carve in his memory
The teachings of our great supreme commander:
**"It is necessary to ... be re-educated
By the poor and lower-middle peasants."**

Hsiung Tao-heng

A Letter to Mama

By the Heilung River, under the Lesser Khingan Mountains,
Like a scroll the wind unfurls our scarlet banner;
As the wild goose flies up the blue sky,
Our fighters' songs soar to the bright clouds.
Tomorrow our red detachment of women
Pack up and go to cut wood in the forest.
Before our departure,
I must write a reply to my mother.
Heart throbbing with exhilaration,
So many words jostle for expression:
Shall I tell how the political instructor and myself
Together creatively study and apply Chairman Mao's works,
Fight self, repudiate revisionism and decide to strike root here?
Shall I tell how we launched mass revolutionary repudiation,

Hsiung Tao-heng is a fighter in an army production and construction corps.

Brandishing iron fists on the bourgeois headquarters of Liu Shao-chi?
Shall I tell her how Grandad Han and I became "a red pair,"
Deepening my feelings for the poor and lower-middle peasants?
Shall I tell her how Aunt Chu recounted old bitterness,
And with her we think of today's sweet life,
So that for ever we will imprint in our hearts,
Hatred for the old society?

Dearest mama,
Six months ago,
Revolutionary determination in my breast,
The four treasured volumes in my hand,
Along the road where intellectuals must become one
With the workers, the peasants and the soldiers,
I came to settle down here close by the frontiers.
Serve the People is our first lesson on joining up,
The spirit of Chang Szu-teh makes its mark on our minds.
Our commander explained the Eighth Route tradition,
And in my hand he placed a hoe.
Where the summer weeding has begun,
There I went with my big hoe,
Trickles of sweat dripping, dripping.
"Come on, Hsueh-meï, get on with it!"
"Oh dear, I've dropped so far behind."
My face burning like fire,
Hands tightly gripping the handle,
I hoed and hoed with desperation.
"Plop!"
A young plant dropped beneath my hoe.
Ashamed and very much annoyed, I asked,
"Am I really useless with a hoe?"

Grandad Han came quietly to my side,
"Don't get flustered, girl,
You'll learn in time, in time.
Let's talk awhile as we work together."

"I want to tell how when I was seven,
Unable to pay his load of usurious debt,
My father was killed by the landlord's deadly club.
I was dragged away in payment for the debt,
Slaved for the landlord and sweated blood.
Enduring bitterness for which I find no words,
I struggled in a sea of misery,
My stomach never full, my body ever cold,
The landlord's whip bit like poison fangs.
Lacerating flesh, drawing blood,
My tattered shirt all crimson dyed...
It is Chairman Mao who led in making revolution,
Saving us poor urchins from the pit of misery.
Born in the new society, Hsueh-meï, you grew up
Under the red flag, knowing nothing
Of the bitterness of old.
Chairman Mao makes the call:
'Educated young people — go to the countryside'
So that they can revolutionize their thinking.
But that renegade, traitor and scab Liu Shao-chi
Would have us dragged along the capitalist road.
Child,
You must always follow Chairman Mao's teachings!"
What Grandad Han said kindled
Hot hatred of oppression in my breast.

The fervent hopes of this poor peasant,
I must take for my own and always share.
From this moment Grandad Han I made my teacher,
And determined now to strike root in the countryside.

My dearest mama,
I am no longer a spoiled child, as when at school
I'd scan myself before the mirror to flick off
The least bit of dust on my clothes.
Now I spread the manure with my hands,
And thick calluses have grown on my palms.
My revolutionary purpose comes clearer to me.

The latest instructions of Chairman Mao light
A beacon for intellectuals to rebuild themselves.
I will embrace the re-education given me
By the workers, peasants and soldiers,
Strike root and blossom in the countryside.
Dearest mama,
Just you wait for news of my endless victories!

*Chairman Mao Leads the Workers' and Peasants' Red
Army to the Chingkang Mountains (oil painting) ►*



Special Express

Early in the morning of January 21, 1969, Number 362, an ordinary passenger train from Wuyiling, pulled into the Tangwangho station in northeast China. A badly injured PLA soldier was carried on board. His pupils were enlarged, his breathing was laboured and rapid. He was in a critical state.

The soldier's name was Hsu Chen-hsing, and he was stationed at a post near the border. The previous afternoon, he and a few comrades were coming back from a ride on some new horses they were breaking in. Hsu's mount took fright and suddenly bolted. As it galloped round a turn in the road, it overtook three young Red Guards, walking shoulder to shoulder. The road was narrow and there were houses on either side. Hsu couldn't swerve past the boys. There wasn't even time to shout for them to get out of the way. Placing the people's interests above his own life, Hsu pulled with all his strength and reined the animal sharply to the right.

The three Red Guards were saved, but five-good soldier Hsu was knocked from his horse by a projection of the building. His head

struck the ground heavily. He struggled to his feet, saw that the three Red Guards were all right, then collapsed, unconscious.

“First of all—the public good, most important of all—the people, biggest of all—the revolution, highest of all—Chairman Mao,” Hsu liked to say. “Everything I do shall be in the interests of the people. I’ll wage revolution, following Chairman Mao, all my life.” Hsu had matched his deeds to his words. He had fulfilled his vow.

Hsu’s story was broadcast over the train’s loudspeaker system. His heroic deed stirred the hundreds of passengers. They worried about his wound.

Ma Hsueh-hai, a newly appointed train leader, who had matured in the great proletarian cultural revolution, was completely loyal to our great leader Chairman Mao. To the members of the train crew, he said: “The life of our PLA comrade is our life. We must fight to gain every second.”

He sent a telegram to the Harbin Railway Bureau reading: “In keeping with Chairman Mao’s great directive **‘Support the army and cherish the people,’** the entire complement of train 362 shall do their utmost to save the frontier soldier who was injured for the people’s sake. We shall get him to Harbin ahead of time.”

Ma organized his crew for battle, dividing them into a rescue, a blood transfusion and a propaganda team. The great Mao Tsetung Thought welded the crew into a unified command and unified action collective, and brought into full play the leading role of the working class.

Every member of the train crew, whether on duty or off, plunged into the fight. Headed by the train leader, the rescue team stood by Hsu’s side. “Great leader Chairman Mao, we are infinitely loyal to you. We shall save this PLA comrade even if we have to cross a mountain of knives and go through a sea of flames to do it,” they vowed.

Hsu’s head wound was severe. He was in a deep coma. The compartment became an emergency room, as the medical personnel worked rapidly to sustain his life.



Members of the rescue team helped to prepare the patient for the coming operation. Kneeling on the floor, for two hours they gently supported his head while it was being slowly and carefully shaved.

Yang Chun-lin, chef in the dining car, heard that Hsu’s temperature and blood pressure were both dangerously high. They had to be brought down immediately. Yang took ice out of the refrigerator and washed it clean, while the chill bit into his bones, and delivered it quickly to the medics.

All the passengers were very concerned about the patient’s condition. When a request for blood donations was broadcast over the loudspeaker system, workers, poor and lower-middle peasants, PLA commanders and soldiers, and young Red Guards thronged to Hsu’s car. A peasant woman who has reached the half-century mark pleaded that her blood be accepted. The doctors had a hard time convincing her that hers wasn’t the right type. When she finally left, it was with tears in her eyes.

Everyone wanted to see the border guard who, in order to avoid hurting the people, had been injured himself. But there were too

many of them. It just couldn't be done. At last, each car selected its own representatives, and these went to visit the patient. A little girl of five unpinned her best-loved Chairman Mao badge from her chest and handed it to one of the representatives. "Give this to the PLA uncle," she said.

Imbued with the deepest feeling between the army and the people, the train flew on.

On receiving the train leader's telegram, the Harbin Railway dispatcher's office promptly reported to the Railway Bureau's revolutionary committee. "**Our duty is to hold ourselves responsible to the people.**" The responsible comrade of the revolutionary committee seemed to hear these words of Chairman Mao in his ears. Chairman Mao's teaching is a command. It must be carried out! To the comrades in the dispatcher's office he said: "We are the people's railway workers, we must run people's trains. We are determined to save the injured PLA comrade with the utmost speed." They converted train 362 into a special express.

The decision was relayed through the sub-bureaus to every station along the line, and to 362 itself. The train was thrown into an uproar. "Long live Chairman Mao! A long, long life to Chairman Mao!" "Dear as are father and mother, Chairman Mao is dearer, deep as the rivers and oceans are, proletarian love is deeper." Cheers and songs rang in the surrounding snowy forests.

On raced the "special express." It was the first time a special express had sped along this remote mountain line. Li Hung-tsai, the engineer, and his two assistants were very stirred when they were told that to save the frontier guard, they were to speed up the train. Gazing at a picture of Chairman Mao in the driver's cab, Li said: "You can rely on us, Chairman Mao. Guided by your glorious thought, we promise to do a good job of driving. We'll get our frontier guard quickly and safely to Harbin."

January in the northeast is the coldest time of the year. The temperature drops to thirty below, Centigrade. Icy wind swirled into the driver's cab as the train thundered along. But Li was undeterred. He kept leaning far out of the window into the bone-chilling

gale and peering ahead, so as to ensure the speed and safety of the run. The dining car sent him food, but he wouldn't touch a mouthful. He had only one thought — push the train along at high speed without any accidents and save the life of the injured PLA comrade.

Every member of the train crew and every passenger was aware of how precious time was. Each time they stopped at station, Ma the train leader dashed into the dispatcher's office and made arrangements about stopping and taking on water at the next station. Crew members got ready ahead of time passengers who were leaving the train, so that they could get off and others get on quickly. The baggage men prepared in advance parcels and mail for rapid unloading. In the stations, maintenance workers checked the train swiftly to ensure prompt departure. For the sake of the injured PLA comrade, they grasped every second. Though the time was limited, they did limitless work. Though the time was limited, they demonstrated their limitless loyalty to our great leader Chairman Mao, their limitless love for a soldier of the PLA.

Many passengers had to get off at stations before or after their destination because the train had become an express. But they all said: "The main thing is to save our PLA fighter. We'd gladly go a thousand *li* out of our way rather than delay the train one second."

Ordinarily water for the dining car and the tea boilers was taken on at Nancha. Now, this was omitted, to gain time. Although the passengers had nothing to eat or drink all day, they said: "We're determined to act in accordance with Chairman Mao's call to '**Support the army and cherish the people.**' Saving the PLA comrade must come first. A day without food and water is nothing. If it would save him, we'd do without them for three."

Songs in praise of our great leader Chairman Mao rang out especially loud on train 362 today, for everyone was especially stirred and the fight to save a dear one was especially tense. The train was indeed a special express on which Mao Tsetung Thought was in command.

From Wuyiling to Harbin is over a thousand *li*. All along the line everyone took Chairman Mao's directive "**Support the army**

and cherish the people" as their highest battle order. The great Mao Tsetung Thought linked every station into a single entity fighting to save the life of a hero. Responsible members of the revolutionary committee of the Harbin Railway Bureau time and again went to the dispatcher's office to inquire anxiously about train 362. Revolutionary committee comrades of the Chiamuszu Railway Bureau personally commanded its movements. Every section along the line kept in the closest contact to ensure that 362 could advance swiftly without impediment.

At Yichun and Nancha, units which heard the news immediately sent medicines and medical personnel, who boarded the train to help. As 362 was charging past Tungchin, the train's chief dispatcher, grasping the handrail of an open door, leaned out and flung a message wrapped round a stone to the man on duty at the station. It read: "Notify Suihua at once to prepare forceps, retractors, trepanning drill, oxygen, breathing tube, anaesthetic and other operating equipment and medicines."

Suihua was only one station away from Tungchin. The train would be there in fifteen minutes. And what a precious fifteen minutes they were! The man immediately got on the phone to the Suihua station, which in turn notified the Railway Hospital.

All of the hospital's medical personnel were quickly mobilized for battle. Together they recited the quotation from Chairman Mao **"Without a people's army the people have nothing,"** then set about their work. In a very few minutes all the operating equipment and medicines were ready. They rushed these down to the railway station. Some comrades who were not well ignored their own pains. **"Be resolute, fear no sacrifice and surmount every difficulty to win victory,"** they exclaimed as they ran for the station. They reached it before the train did. When it rolled to a halt they delivered all the requested items. One of their doctors went aboard to join the rescue team.

The train flew on. They were nearing Harbin. Responsible comrades in the Harbin Railway Bureau and medical personnel from an army hospital were waiting impatiently at the station.

At five-ten in the afternoon, the "special express" arrived at Harbin, three hours and forty minutes ahead of time. Comrade Hsu was quickly placed in a waiting ambulance.

Emergency treatment at the hospital soon had this frontier guard who had been injured while preserving the people from harm out of danger.

As the good news was transmitted from one railway station to the next, railway workers, revolutionary cadres, and revolutionary passengers waiting for trains, shouted: "Long live Chairman Mao! A long, long life to Chairman Mao!" All along the line, songs in praise of our great leader reverberated through our vast north.

A Night in the Snowstorm

It was night, a night of wind and snow. The tiny canteen was unusually busy.

Suddenly the door was flung open. In burst a young man with perspiration pouring off his forehead and gasping for breath.

"Where is the driver?"

"I am the man you want." Li Teh-fu the driver immediately stepped forward and quietly asked, "Anything I can do for you?"

"A Liberation Armyman's hurt his eye. He is one who has come here to support agriculture. He was helping an old woman — a poor peasant chopping firewood. A stick bounced up and hit him. Would you mind making a special trip to take that comrade to the county hospital?"

Comrade Li Teh-fu belongs to the Peking Motor Transport Service. That day, eager to get ahead of the snowfall, he had started from Fengning and traversed seven mountain ridges, carrying in his lorry and

Cheng Hai-fa is a worker-correspondent.

trailer a full load of eight tons of firewood. He had just arrived here at Liuli Temple. During the whole day he had not touched a drop of water nor a morsel of food. Now it was already dark, snow was falling heavily and the road would be too slippery for journeying onward. He had ordered his meal and planned to put up at Liuli Temple for the night. He intended to start early the next morning, and after crossing two more big mountains he would reach Peking with his load.

The young man's request set him musing: "Ordinarily, even in the daytime it requires extra care to drive a lorry over the heights. I have no experience of driving a lorry with a trailer behind on the steep winding roads in the mountains, especially in the dark. Besides, the ground is covered with deep snow, the roads must be slippery — and those gullies are very deep! If by accident . . ." Before the idea took shape, the image of Comrade Norman Bethune bright with the spirit of "**utter devotion to others and without any thought of self**" flashed before his eyes. A flush of warm determination surged within him. What of wind and snow, what of dark night, high mountains and slippery roads, they were all nothing to him. "To help save the eye of our dear comrade, I can overcome any difficulty," he said to himself. He pushed aside the steaming-hot food which had only just been put in front of him, and said to the young man crisply, "Let's start at once." And out he strode.

At this moment the injured Liberation Armyman arrived from the village, a host of poor and lower-middle peasants round him. His eye had really been badly hurt, blood was still oozing through the gauze dressing.

The night was pitch-black. The feather-like snowflakes swirled still more thickly. Li Teh-fu's heavily laden lorry, now an "ambulance," was heading along the rough, winding mountain road.

Soon the vehicle was climbing the lofty mountain. The road was narrow, steep, with one curve following the other. Even in the daytime this presents lots of difficulties for the drivers, not to speak of a black night in a snowstorm. Half-way up, the wind-current through the valley set up a flurry of snowflakes. Dancing before

Li's eyes, they blocked his view. Unable to see the way ahead, further driving seemed impossible.

Keep on going? The road was hidden from him. Turn back? No, never! The eye of the soldier for whom he was so concerned, was still bleeding. There must be no delay. Li Teh-fu was torn with anxiety. At this moment he looked up at Chairman Mao's portrait hanging in his cabin. Our great leader's teaching to **"support the army and cherish the people"** seemed to ring in his ears. Then he heard the armyman beside him reciting in a low voice Chairman Mao's illustrious Three Constantly Read Articles. He must be in great pain, for though smiling cheerfully, beads of sweat rolled down his cheeks. Clutching the steering wheel with both hands, Li Teh-fu stared straight ahead and said resolutely to himself: "To help save my kinsman's eye, if it meant pulling a tooth from a tiger's mouth, I would not flinch. No matter how dangerous the mountain roads, I'll ride them out." He asked the peasant who had come along to look after the soldier, to get off and lead the way while he slowly drove on. It was in this manner that the "ambulance" managed to climb up the mountain.

However, when the car started to descend, with the snow-clad ground already frozen, the brakes failed to hold it on the mountain road. And the trailer bumped into the lorry, making it still harder to control. This created a new difficulty for the driver.

Nevertheless by displaying the fearless spirit of the working class of daring to think and to act Li Teh-fu managed to hit upon an idea. Calmly he tried out the handbrake, applying it only two-thirds instead of to the full to minimize the skidding. In this way and with the careful manipulation of the accelerator, he succeeded in overcoming the difficulty. The problem of skidding during a down-slope drive on icy roads was successfully dealt with in this way.

After passing over two big mountains and running over nearly fifty *li* of winding roads, they reached the county hospital without any accident.

Immediately Li Teh-fu helped the patient to the operating room.

"Comrade, is the Liberation Armyman any relation of yours?" asked the doctor, seeing his air of concern for the soldier.

"He is my class brother, a soldier who belongs to us workers," Li answered in a tone firm and proud.

It was not until he found that his army comrade's eye was out of danger that Li Teh-fu left the hospital and happily threw himself into a fresh day's work — to him always a new expedition. By then it had stopped snowing and the sun was rising from the eastern horizon.

Charcoal to Cherish the People

Early one morning, the Fourth Company turned out its first kiln of charcoal. The six fighters on the job had never burned charcoal before. What was more the cold was severe and conditions were bad. However, taking Chang Szu-teh as their model, they overcame one difficulty after another by relying on the invincible Mao Tse-tung Thought and finally succeeded. Holding up pitch-black pieces of charcoal in their hands, they were full of joy.

A north wind was roaring and heavy snow was falling. This reminded Hsiao Ho of his comrades who had gone out on a mission. "Squad leader," he said anxiously, "it's getting so cold we must send the charcoal to the comrades at once. They need it urgently."

Squad Leader Chiu was worrying too at this moment. He was thinking not only of the comrades in the company but also of the people in the Ching kang Mountains, for he always bore in mind Chairman Mao's teaching: **"Wherever our comrades go, they must build good relations with the masses, be concerned for them and help them overcome their difficulties."** "If we are feeling cold now," he

told his comrades, "the masses in the Ching kang Mountains must feel the cold too. The more difficult conditions are the more reason for us to think of the masses first and help them overcome difficulties. My opinion is that we must send this charcoal to the people in the Ching kang Mountains."

The squad leader's proposal won warm applause. Everybody thought that they should deliver the charcoal to the masses as soon as possible. But to whom should they send it first? "To the revolutionary committees first," Hsiao Ho suggested. "The revolutionary committees are following closely Chairman Mao's great strategic plan, wielding political power for the proletariat and leading the people in grasping revolution and promoting production. They have great achievements to their credit in their work. We should send the charcoal to them. That will express our never-ending concern and firm support for the revolutionary committees. It will also show our determination to defend them in all eventualities."

"Let's send some of our charcoal to the old folk in the Homes for the Aged," Hsiao Chiang countered. "The revolutionaries there, though old, have red hearts and persevere in their study of Chairman Mao's works in spite of the cold. When they get the charcoal they will study harder and follow Chairman Mao to carry the revolution through to the end."

"Send some of the charcoal to the poor and lower-middle peasants too," another soldier suggested.

Scarcely was the lively discussion finished when the deputy company commander arrived up the mountain with several soldiers, baskets on their shoulder-poles. "Deputy company commander," the squad leader reported, "we had a discussion just now and decided we would deliver the charcoal to the masses in the Ching kang Mountains." The deputy company commander smiled and said: "We have both hit upon the same idea!"

In fact, when the soldiers at the foot of the mountain had heard that the charcoal would be ready today, they had also had a discussion and unanimously reached a decision that the first kiln of charcoal should be sent to the people in the Ching kang Mountains. "It doesn't matter if we suffer a bit of cold," they remarked. "We mustn't let the people

suffer from cold.” The Party branch committee accepted this opinion and sent the deputy company commander here to take the charcoal to the people.

So the comrades of the Fourth Company named their first kiln “Charcoal to Cherish the People.” Under the command of the deputy company commander, the soldiers delivered the charcoal. Beating gongs and drums, they held high red flags and sent the charcoal to the revolutionary committees, the Homes for the Aged and the people’s communes, while singing along their way the quotation from Chairman Mao: **“If the army and the people are united as one, who in the world can match them?”**

When the revolutionary masses received the charcoal they were much moved and said: “The PLA comrades really give timely help.” With great emotion they cried again and again: “Long live Chairman Mao! A long, long life to him!”

Cabbage to Support the Army

Not long ago several People’s Liberation Army fighters came to Island A on a mission. They were billeted with the fisherfolk and Grandma Shih’s house was again full of them.

Each day Grandma Shih never failed to look at the portrait of Chairman Mao which the coastal guards had brought her as a gift. And what seemed to be ringing in her ears all the time was Chairman Mao’s significant teaching: **“Without a people’s army the people have nothing.”** This truth had been borne out by the actualities of the sorrowful and miserable life she had gone through in the old society. Her husband had worked like a slave on the seas for a despot in the fishing trade for decades, and yet he could not escape being swallowed up by the sea. Not only unmoved by the tragedy, the heartless despot went further by taking back the fishing boat he had rented to her dead husband. At the end of her tether, Grandma Shih had to go begging with her children. It was not until the PLA, which owed its existence to Chairman Mao, came to the island that

This article was written by a reporter of the Hsinhua News Agency.

she was delivered from her sea of bitterness and began to lead the happy life that she knows today. Now that these dear Liberation Armymen had come to stay at her home, what could she do to express the depth of her feelings for the people's own soldiers?

She thought and thought, then got an idea. She called her granddaughter Little Red to her side and said that she was going to grow some white cabbage for the soldiers. The girl jumped at the idea and said that she would get some seedlings from their relatives on a neighbouring island. No sooner said than done, Little Red was off in a flash. Taking up a hoe, Grandma Shih went straight up the hills. She walked from one place to another until finally she stopped at a hollow — a suitable spot she thought — and began tilling. As the earth was hard, for the island was rather rugged with rocks scattered about, digging was strenuous. However, stroke after stroke the hoe fell upon the ground. When she got tired she stopped to draw strength by reciting a passage from *The Foolish Old Man Who Removed the Mountains* and then went on. After two days' laborious work, two vegetable plots were prepared.

Now that the plots were ready and Little Red had secured some cabbage sprouts, planting was immediately started. To water the plants, grandmother and granddaughter went over the entire island to look for a spring. They discovered one, a very tiny one under the foot of a hill. From then on to do the watering every day they got up very early or worked on the plots till darkness set in. Ladle after ladle they filled their bucket with the water from the spring, and again ladle by ladle they dipped it on the plots. A week passed, the vegetable beds were green all over.

Once at midnight came the sudden onslaught of a gale, followed by torrents of rain. Roused from sleep, Grandma Shih immediately woke up her granddaughter. Braving the storm, they hurried to the vegetable plots. When they got there they found the plants knocked down by the wind and lying in all directions. One by one they stood them upright and banked them up with earth. In order to protect the plants against wind, they built an embankment with stones.



When it was nearly time for cutting the cabbage, Grandma Shih and Little Red tended the plots all day long, more meticulously than before to ensure that the cabbages grew well and sturdy. One morning when they had just gone off to the plots, the Liberation Armymen left the island on a new mission. By the time they heard the news it was already noon. They were very upset and did all they could to find out their whereabouts. At last they were told that the soldiers had been transferred to the nearby Island B. Immediately grandmother and granddaughter gathered in the cabbage crop, loaded it on a boat and headed towards Island B.

When the commander and fighters saw that the boat was manned by Grandma Shih and Little Red they gave them a warm welcome on the pier. Learning that the pair had made the trip specially to bring the vegetables the soldiers were greatly moved.

“Grandma Shih, what you are bringing us is not ordinary white cabbage but ‘red-heart cabbage’! It comes from the island people’s warm affection for their own soldiers,” the armymen remarked.

“This is just to show the feelings of us former poor fisherfolk for our people’s soldiers. I’m sure when you eat this cabbage we have grown for you, you will grow stronger and better defend Chairman Mao and the iron-strong socialist state power!”

Instantly soldiers on the pier burst out cheering. With great emotion they said, “When we have behind us revolutionary masses like you, holding high Chairman Mao’s great banner of **‘support the army and cherish the people,’** there is no match for us in the world.”

A Soldier and an Old Woman

On a speeding passenger train an old poor peasant woman suddenly fainted. All the passengers in the compartment were concerned and gathered around to attend to her. Among them was a PLA fighter named Tu Kuei-fa. He got some hot water for her to drink and then went to look for a doctor.

A doctor was quickly found and after emergency treatment the old woman regained consciousness. But soon she began to vomit. She was so ill that she could not walk a step. What was worse, the conductor said that she was supposed to get off at the next station. What was to be done? Young Tu wondered. At this moment, Chairman Mao’s teaching rang in his ears: **“These battalions of ours are wholly dedicated to the liberation of the people and work entirely in the people’s interests.”** He thought: “Whether or not we serve the poor and lower-middle peasants shows our attitude towards the masses, our attitude towards Chairman Mao’s revolutionary line. It is my duty to help the old woman, for this is what serving the people means. Thinking this, Tu, without the slightest



hesitation put the patient on his back and got off the train with her. Although this was not his destination he decided he must take her to a local hospital.

The hospital was several miles from the station. When they got there Young Tu was covered with sweat. He did not stop to take breath nor even have a mouthful of water, but immediately set about registering the sick woman. He did not relax until the old woman had had her examination and had been put in the ward.

When Young Tu found that the old woman had not brought enough money with her, he gave her all he had, fifteen yuan, before he left and repeatedly insisted to the comrades in the hospital that they must take good care of her. The old woman was greatly moved. With hot tears in her eyes she asked the soldier to give her his name, but Tu smiled and said nothing. Instead he presented her with a shining, gold badge of Chairman Mao.

A Red Station for Soldiers

Near the guard-house on the border at a South Sea frontier there lives a poor peasant woman in her fifties by the name of Wu Hung-hao. With utmost concern for the Liberation Army men, she treats them as her kith and kin. She has turned her house into their study room, lounge, mess room and what not — a home for soldiers passing by when they come on or go off duty. She has indeed composed a real-life song of **“support the army and cherish the people”** with her practical deeds which express her care for the soldiers. No wonder the frontier guards she has looked after never fail to praise her as a “revolutionary mother” and to call her home a “red station for soldiers.”

One night after ten, all of a sudden a big storm lashed the place with wind and rain. The weather was very cold. The villagers were all asleep. Three PLA fighters came out of the storm to Aunt Wu's house. When she saw them soaked to the skin and shivering with cold she was greatly concerned. At once she got busy, boiling water and cooking food for them and dried their tunics over the fire.

Late at night, after the soldiers had dozed off she pulled her own quilt, a new one, over them. Afraid that they would still not be warm enough, she added a cotton-padded coat. Only then did she relax and go to bed.

On another occasion a new recruit left for the sentry-house to keep watch after having had his supper at Aunt Wu's. It suddenly came upon her that as it was then high tide, a section of the way along the sea shores would be inundated, the soldier would have to turn back and make a detour and besides as it was already dark, she was afraid this would make him late for duty. "There is a short cut through the woods close to the mountain. It's a path directly leading to the sentry-house," she decided to tell the coast guard. So without delay she ran after the soldier and volunteered to act as his guide. Together they by-passed the sea shores, went through the woods and arrived at the sentry-house in time.

On still another occasion, she discovered that one of the fighters ate only one bowl of rice and called it a meal. When she asked the reason she found out that he was not feeling well. Then she gave him all the care and concern that she would have as if he had been her own boy. So that he might get well as quickly as possible she went to great pains to look for herbs in the woods and brew them for the soldier to take as medicine. Before long the young man regained his health...

Why is Aunt Wu so solicitous for the Liberation Armymen? The answer will be found in the fact that she had gone through severe sufferings and hardships in the past. Before liberation she had been tortured by the old society in all sorts of ways. The Kuomintang reactionaries had stolen away the lives of both her parents, three of her younger brothers and sisters and one child of her own. It was Chairman Mao who had led the Liberation Armymen to deliver her from the pit of agony and later help save her daughter — now her only one — from the jaws of death when the child was seriously ill. Recalling the past and thinking of the present, how can Aunt Wu fail to thank her great benefactor Chairman Mao and the PLA men who are close to her heart? This is what she thinks: The Liberation Army is the army sent by Chairman Mao, the soldiers are the people's

own good fighters; to cherish them is to be loyal to Chairman Mao. The soldiers never flinch in the face of adversity, the people's interests are their interests. They are safeguarding our red political power day and night. This is exactly what we poor and lower-middle peasants should do — to look upon the Liberation Armymen as our nearest and dearest.

Therefore, whenever a Liberation Armyman comes to her door, she always welcomes him in with great warmth, preparing meals and supplying boiled water for him as if he were her own kinsman. Since the mass movement for the creative study and application of the writings of Chairman Mao started, Aunt Wu has been very active in studying his works. She constantly examines her own thinking and actions with his teachings as a mirror and so to spur herself to make further progress. "Liberation Armymen are dear to us poor and lower-middle peasants," she said. "It is only right for me to do something for them."

As time goes on and the Liberation Armymen passing by Aunt Wu's house grow in number it is natural that they should look upon it as their own "red station."

Mao Tsetung Thought For Ever Sheds Its Radiance

On July 17, 1964 and again on June 16, 1967, our great leader Chairman Mao attended performances of *Taking the Bandits' Stronghold*. This showed his great concern and support for the revolution in Peking opera and was also the greatest inspiration and education to us.

Our great leader Chairman Mao with penetration recently pointed out, **“Historical experience merits attention. A line or a viewpoint must be explained constantly and repeatedly. It won't do to explain them only to a few people; they must be made known to the broad revolutionary masses.”**

Since the founding of the People's Republic of China, the struggle between two lines on the literary and art front has been exceptionally acute. It is an important part of the struggle waged by the proletariat against a restoration of the bourgeoisie. Chairman Mao has consistently given his attention to the struggle between the two lines

This article was written by the workers' and PLA men's Mao Tsetung Thought Propaganda Team at the Shanghai Peking Opera Theatre and the theatre's writing group for *Taking the Bandits' Stronghold*.



Yang Tzu-jung, leader of a PLA scout platoon, goes deep into the bandits' lair and boldly wages a battle of wits against the enemy

on the literary and art front, linking struggles on the cultural and ideological front with those on the political and economic front and pointing out the revolutionary orientation for us. Chairman Mao's **Two Instructions Concerning Literature and Art** and the *Summary of the Forum on the Work in Literature and Art in the Armed Forces with Which Comrade Lin Piao Entrusted Comrade Chiang Ching*, have drawn scientific conclusions from the struggle between the two classes, the two roads and the two lines in the sphere of literature and art since the founding of our People's Republic. These are beacons guiding us in triumphing over the ideology of the bourgeoisie and other exploiting classes, in developing socialist literature and art, in consolidating the proletarian dictatorship and in smashing attempts at a capitalist restoration. These are programmatic documents of the great proletarian cultural revolution.

In his instruction dated December 12, 1963, Chairman Mao pointed out sharply, **"Problems abound in all forms of art such as the drama, ballads, music, the fine arts, the dance, the cinema, poetry and literature and the people involved are numerous; in many departments very little has been achieved so far in socialist transformation. The 'dead' still dominate in many departments. What has been achieved in the cinema, new poetry, folk songs, the fine arts and the novel should not be underestimated, but there, too, there are quite a few problems. As for such departments as the drama the problems are even more serious."**

In the department of drama where the "dead" still dominate and the problems are even more serious, the Peking opera stage was an outpost in the struggle between the two lines. To seize this outpost, a world-shaking revolution in literature and art began in answer to the call of the great leader Chairman Mao under the personal leadership of Comrade Chiang Ching. It was an important component part of the struggle between the two lines within our Party. Like the other model theatrical works, the revolutionary modern Peking opera *Taking the Bandits' Stronghold* is a rich fruit of Chairman Mao's revolutionary line which triumphed over Liu Shao-chi's counter-revolutionary revisionist line. Guided by Chairman Mao's recent instruction, **"His-**

torical experience merits attention,” we conscientiously reviewed the sharp struggle between the two lines which had developed round the opera *Taking the Bandits' Stronghold*. We came to see more clearly that the big renegade, traitor, and scab Liu Shao-chi is the arch-criminal who opposed the exercising of proletarian dictatorship over the bourgeoisie in the realm of culture and art and so we came to understand more fully the incomparable brilliance and correctness of Chairman Mao's thesis: **“The current great proletarian cultural revolution is absolutely necessary and most timely for consolidating the dictatorship of the proletariat, preventing capitalist restoration and building socialism.”**

The struggle that ensued over the opera *Taking the Bandits' Stronghold* is primarily a question of politics and political line. The struggle between the two lines over questions of literature and art is but a reflection of the struggle between the two political lines.

Taking the Bandits' Stronghold presents a profile of the great people's War of Liberation and tells how a PLA detachment pursued a gang of bandits on the northeastern battlefield in 1946.

Two diametrically opposed military lines then existed on this battlefield. One was the revolutionary line of Chairman Mao implemented by Comrade Lin Piao which was to boldly mobilize the masses, **“Build stable base areas in the northeast,” “leave the high road alone and seize the land on both sides,”** and **“using the villages in order to surround the cities and then taking the cities.”** Another was the counter-revolutionary line of Liu Shao-chi, vigorously pushed by Peng Chen, his agent in the northeast, which advocated adventurism, putschism and a rightist tendency which was “left” in appearance only. Under the pretext of “protecting” the cities, they fitted in with the U.S.-Chiang plot for false negotiations and genuine attacks and attempted to disintegrate and wipe out the revolutionary forces and present the northeast to the U.S.-Chiang reactionaries. Guided by Chairman Mao's revolutionary line, Comrade Lin Piao, who never failed to follow closely Mao Tsetung Thought, thoroughly smashed the capitulationist line of Liu Shao-chi, Peng Chen and their ilk which was “left” in appearance and rightist

in substance, and personally commanded this battle which liberated the whole of the northeast, scoring a brilliant victory. After that the People's Liberation Army fought its way south, heading straight for the seat of the Chiang Kai-shek hierarchy, and laid the foundation for the liberation of the whole of China.

In the creation of the opera, Comrade Chiang Ching again and again had us study Chairman Mao's writing *Build Stable Base Areas in the Northeast* and explained in detail the history of the struggle between the two lines on the northeastern battlefield. She pointed out clearly the necessity of clarifying the political background and underlining the collusion of Chiang Kai-shek with U.S. imperialism in plotting false negotiations while waging real attacks. The Eagle must be depicted as a political gangster in league with the U.S.-Chiang reactionaries, and the urgent desire of the broad masses for liberation from his cruel oppression must be brought out. Only in this way would it be possible to fully express the great strategic significance of this struggle and bring out sharply Chairman Mao's great thought on people's war. Only in this way would it be possible to sing to the full of the invincible might of Chairman Mao's military line.

Precisely because this opera trenchantly reflects the struggle between the two political lines, it was violently attacked at the Festival of Peking Operas on Contemporary Themes held in 1964. Lackeys of the bourgeois headquarters, carrying out the schemes of their master, openly organized an attack on *Taking the Bandits' Stronghold*. They wanted to change the revolutionary theme of the opera, to go after “out-of-the-ordinary episodes,” and “scenes of adventure” to the extent of making Yang Tzu-jung end up so helpless that he has to pull out his hand-grenade and blow himself up with the bandits. This was their attempt to reverse the verdict on their capitulationist line which was “left” in appearance and rightist in substance.

Comrade Chiang Ching smashed their treachery in time. She organized everyone participating in the Peking opera festival in a big debate and resolutely countered the frenzied attacks of the class enemies. In a way this struggle round *Taking the Bandits' Stronghold* was in fact a continuation of the struggle on the northeastern bat-

tlefront in 1946, an important battle in the offensive launched by the proletarian headquarters against the bourgeois headquarters.

Whether the stage is to be occupied by proletarian heroic images or by bourgeois representatives is the main form of expression of the struggle to seize power between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie in the realm of literature and art. It is a reflection on the theatrical stage of the struggle for power in the realm of politics. The core of Comrade Chiang Ching's guiding principles for the revolution in Peking opera is the creation of proletarian revolutionary heroes armed with Mao Tsetung Thought. This is also the crux of the struggle between the two lines on the literary and art front.

In the creation of *Taking the Bandits' Stronghold*, Comrade Chiang Ching kept a firm grip on the central link, the sculpturing of revolutionary heroes, for it is mainly through revolutionary heroic characters that Chairman Mao's revolutionary line and his great thought are crystallized on the stage. She poured out her warmest feelings in the course of depicting proletarian heroes such as Yang Tzu-jung and Shao Chien-po. She pointed out that Yang Tzu-jung should be a hero radiating Mao Tsetung Thought who is a real proletarian hero in the eyes of the audience but also a "good fellow" with appeal in the eyes of the bandits. When Comrade Chiang Ching put forward this comprehensive yet concrete proposal for the correct presentation of the opera, she asked us to make use of all the effective artistic means at our command, to use the most beautiful verse, the finest tunes, the brightest colours and the most effective production to bring out the revolutionary scope of the character of Yang Tzu-jung and present the giant stature of today's proletarian hero.

But Liu Shao-chi and his lackeys racked their brains to oppose Comrade Chiang Ching's directive and did their utmost to prevent proletarian heroes from taking the literary and art stage. They did this, on the one hand, by stealthily emphasizing the negative characters in an attempt to make them outshine the positive character and so to maintain their reactionary dominance of the stage. They not only concocted a large batch of negative characters whom they described with great relish, but put in a few special scenes to highlight

them. They tried by hook or by crook to let Eagle dominate the stage and denigrated the hero Yang Tzu-jung by making him stand to one side and appear a pitiable minion who fawns on the bandit chief. On the other hand they sabotaged the presentation of proletarian heroic images by attempting to distort their character, making them out to be bourgeois representatives who are heroes in name only. For instance, using the so-called "truthful writing" advocated by the black line in literature and art as a theoretical basis, they proposed that Yang Tzu-jung should be someone coarse, hooliganish and more bandit-like than the bandits. They even wanted him to sing trashy tunes, act like a rogue and speak gangster language all the time so that, divorced from the masses, this hero would become a brash individualist whose being reeked of gangsterism, was adventurist in his behaviour and talked exactly like a bandit. This would have been a great distortion and slander of the proletarian heroic image.

In her speech *On the Revolution in Peking Opera* Comrade Chiang Ching exposed the enemy's plots trenchantly. She pointed out that, "You must consider which side you stand on. Should you stand on the side of the positive characters or on the side of the negative characters?" "We should place the emphasis on creating artistic images of advanced revolutionaries so as to educate and inspire the people and lead them forward." Comrade Chiang Ching kept a firm grasp on this key point, the creation of proletarian heroic images and waged tit-for-tat struggles against the class enemy. She resolutely cut out scenes of certain negative characters and gave her whole attention to the creation of proletarian heroes armed with Mao Tsetung Thought, like Yang Tzu-jung and Shao Chien-po. She did not neglect even the smallest detail, placing the emphasis on the revolutionary heroes at all times so as to enable them to triumph over the reactionary arrogance of the character, Eagle. For instance, originally, in the sixth scene, "The Bandits' Lair," Eagle was placed in a seat dominating the middle of the stage and various traditional artistic expressions of Peking opera were used to convey the gloom and solemnity of the bandits' hall, thus highlighting their reactionary arrogance. Now the Eagle is placed standing to one side of the stage, leaving the centre to Yang Tzu-jung who leads him round by the nose. Much attention

was given also to underlining the hero's high ideological level as he combats the enemy. Because Comrade Chiang Ching held high the great red banner of Mao Tsetung Thought and resolutely defended the proletarian revolutionary line, it was possible to show, under her warm care and detailed guidance, Yang Tzu-jung's eminent ideal "to smash the chains of a thousand years," his great aspiration to "open a freshet of endless happiness for the people," his bravery in daring to go through "bushes of knives and a forest of swords" and, the fact that his wisdom and strength emanated from the red sun in his heart — the invincible Mao Tsetung Thought. It was through such detailed arrangements that a noble, powerful image of the proletarian revolutionary appeared, standing erect on the socialist stage, radiating the brilliance of Mao Tsetung Thought. Thus it can be seen that the question whether Yang Tzu-jung or the Eagle dominates the stage is not a detail in art but involves the question of whether proletarian or bourgeois dictatorship is to be exercised on the stage.

The birth and growth of *Taking the Bandits' Stronghold* were accompanied by fierce struggles between the two lines. In the spring of 1965 Comrade Chiang Ching came to Shanghai and personally led the work of revising and improving *Taking the Bandits' Stronghold*. She encouraged us to develop revolutionary stubbornness and to try always to perfect our skill so as to turn this opera into a revolutionary model work. Only by creating models which are outstanding both politically and artistically, models which establish the new style of socialism and the distinctive qualities of the proletariat, can the proletariat firmly occupy their own positions. Only then is it possible to break the reactionaries' big stick.

The struggle between the two lines in the revolution in Peking opera never ceased. When the forces of reaction realized that their days of peril were at hand, they became desperate and took action, making all-out attacks. The agents of Liu Shao-chi in Shanghai and the handful of capitalist roaders and reactionary art "authorities" of our theatre waved their tattered banner of "keeping the characteristics of Peking opera" in an attempt to obstruct the wheels of progress of the revolution in Peking opera. Comrade Chiang Ching repeatedly empha-

sized the necessity of creating musical images of the heroic figures which would express their revolutionary determination and noble spirit with whole sets of arias which are at once militant, majestic and endowed with the spirit of the times. But the enemy wanted Yang Tzu-jung to study the character of Yang Szu-lang, a renegade in the opera *Szu-lang Visits His Mother* or Huang Tien-pa, a lackey of the feudal ruling class in another opera. This was their attempt to "remould" our hero.

They worked directly counter to Comrade Chiang Ching's directives and engaged in sabotage. For instance, they changed the music of a passage expressing the hero's determined attachment to the Party, "A Communist must at all times follow the Party's call" into moody and oppressive tunes which did great harm to the heroic image. They actually attempted to invoke the so-called "laws of drama" to oppose the revolution in Peking opera so that they could retain their hold on this position and keep it for feudal, bourgeois and revisionist literature and art. However, Comrade Chiang Ching, never relaxing her grasp on the red banner of Mao Tsetung Thought, fought against the evil tempest they whipped up with the courage and spirit of a proletarian revolutionary and with never-shaken militancy and will. She led us to triumph over the repeated attacks of the class enemy and swept aside all obstacles to win victories in the struggles waged over *Taking the Bandits' Stronghold*. Together, we succeeded in setting up an exemplary model for proletarian revolutionary literature and art. This model opera further showed its resilient vitality throughout the trials of the proletarian cultural revolution. This is a great victory of Chairman Mao's revolutionary line in literature and art, a rich blossom of the great proletarian cultural revolution.

Full-Length Documentary Exposing Soviet Revisionists' Anti-China Provocations Shown Throughout China

A full-length documentary *Anti-China Atrocities of the New Tsars*, which exposes the provocations carried out by the Soviet revisionist renegade clique against China on the Wusuli and Heilung Rivers, was shown in Peking and other parts of the country beginning April 19.

The film, produced by the Central Newsreel and Documentary Film Studio, exposes with irrefutable facts the ferocious features of the Soviet revisionist renegade clique which, taking over the mantle of tsarist Russian imperialism, has been pushing a social-imperialist policy of aggression. It fully reflects the iron will of the Chinese armymen and civilians, who are armed with Mao Tsetung Thought and have been tempered in the great proletarian cultural revolution, to defend the sacred territory of their motherland at all costs.

The film tells the audience that the Wusuli River and the Heilung River in northeast China were China's inland rivers up to 1860. By the unequal "Sino-Russian Treaty of Aigun" and the unequal "Sino-Russian Treaty of Peking," tsarist Russian imperialism annexed by force more than one million square kilometres of Chinese territory north of the Heilung River and east of the Wusuli River. Thus the Wusuli and Heilung Rivers became boundary rivers between China and the Soviet Union.

This expanse of land annexed by tsarist Russia is five times the size of Byelorussia or ten times the size of China's Kiangsu Province.

The film records the righteous statements by Marx, Engels and Lenin denouncing the crime of aggression against China committed by tsarist Russia. It records the proletarian policy announced by the Soviet Government under Lenin's leadership on September 27, 1920: "All the treaties concluded by the previous Russian government with China are null and void, and it renounces all the seized Chinese territory and all Russian concessions in China and returns to China gratis and for ever everything the tsarist government and the Russian bourgeoisie seized rapaciously from her."

The film reminds the audience of the fact that although there have been boundary questions between the People's Republic of China and the Soviet Union left over by history, nothing undesirable happened along the boundary when the Soviet Union was still a socialist state. The Chinese and the Soviet peoples have forged a profound revolutionary friendship between them in the course of long revolutionary struggles. The film presents a moving scene reflecting the friendly relations between the people of the two countries on the Wusuli and Heilung Rivers.

The Chinese Government consistently holds that boundary questions between China and the Soviet Union left over by history should be settled through negotiations and that pending a settlement, the *status quo* of the boundary should be maintained. However, the Soviet revisionist renegade clique single-handedly sabotaged the Sino-Soviet negotiations on boundary question held in 1964 and has constantly undermined the *status quo* of the Sino-Soviet boundary and created border incidents. This renegade clique has usurped the leadership of the Party and state of the Soviet Union, brought about an all-round restoration of capitalism at home and carried out frantic anti-China activities in collusion with the U.S. The film shows a map handed to the Chinese side by the Soviet revisionists during the Sino-Soviet negotiations on boundary question in 1964. On this map, the Soviet revisionist renegade clique tampered with the boundary line at will and marked as its territory more than six hundred of the over seven hundred islands in the Wusuli and Heilung Rivers

on the Chinese side of the central lines of the main channels of the two rivers. All this exposes to the hilt the ambition of the Soviet revisionist renegade clique to seize still more land from China.

With a multitude of on-the-spot shots the film truthfully records the frenzied criminal anti-China activities conducted by the Soviet revisionists on the Wusuli and Heilung Rivers. The Soviet revisionists send gunboats to stir up trouble in the Wusuli River. They ram at Chinese fishing boats, seize Chinese fishermen's nets, splash the Chinese fishermen with high-pressure hoses and even kidnap Chinese fishermen. The Soviet revisionists send fully-armed troops to occupy the Chinese territory Heihsiatzu Island by force and repeatedly intrude into the Chinese territory Wupalao Island, Chilichin Island and other islands, interfering with and undermining the productive work of these Chinese inhabitants in the border area. They even push some of them into the Heilung River and send armoured vehicles to kill unarmed Chinese fishermen by running over or ramming at them. All this indicates that the Soviet revisionist social-imperialists, like the U.S. imperialists, are a group of out-and-out fascist pirates.

The film shows how the Chinese fishermen armed with Mao Tse-tung Thought and tempered in the great proletarian cultural revolution wage a heroic struggle against the Soviet revisionist intruders who carry out provocations. This testifies to the heroism of the fishermen who dare to **"vanquish all enemies and never to yield."**

The film gives a view of Chenpao Island of our great socialist motherland. The island has always been Chinese territory. Chinese fishermen have worked on the island for generations and Chinese frontier guards have always been patrolling the island. During the ice-bound seasons in the two years and more between January 23, 1967 and March 2, 1969, the Soviet revisionist frontier troops intruded into China's Chenpao Island area on 16 occasions. And the film records the crimes of Soviet revisionism in carrying out armed intrusions into the Chenpao Island area on eight occasions in January and February of 1969.

In order to extricate itself from its internal and external difficulties, the Soviet revisionist renegade clique directed Soviet frontier troops

to flagrantly intrude into the Chenpao Island area on March 2, 1969 and launch a sudden attack on Chinese frontier guards on patrol duty, thus creating an extremely grave incident of bloodshed. The film makes a record of this towering crime.

When they had reached the end of their forbearance, the Chinese frontier guards were compelled to fight back in self-defence. They gave the intruders, who carried out provocations, the punishment they deserved, and victoriously safeguarded the sacred territory of our great socialist motherland. The Chinese Government lodged the strongest protest with the Soviet Government against this extremely grave armed provocation on the border carried out by Soviet revisionism. The film vividly records the scenes showing hundreds of millions of armymen and civilians in China, who have bitter hatred for the enemy, holding demonstrations and rallies on an unprecedented scale to condemn the Soviet revisionists for their crimes of aggression. The Chinese people serve this stern warning to the Soviet revisionist renegade clique: China's sacred territory brooks no violation. Armed with Mao Tse-tung Thought and tempered in the great proletarian cultural revolution, the 700 million Chinese people are invincible. Should you dare to continue your attacks, you will be smashed to smithereens. Whoever comes will not go back alive.

Tibetan Edition of "Chairman Mao's Poems" Available in Lhasa

On March 16, the Tibetan edition of *Chairman Mao's Poems* with a parallel text of Han, the main Chinese language, was made widely available for the first time in Lhasa. Local revolutionary people of the Tibetan nationality warmly hailed this as a momentous event in the political life of the million emancipated peasants in Tibet.

On that day when the red sun dawned thousands upon thousands of revolutionary people queued up in front of the Hsinhua Bookstore in Lhasa, loudly singing the revolutionary song *Sailing the Seas Depends on the Helmsman* and cheering "Long live Chairman Mao, the great leader of all nationalities in China!" and "A long, long life to him!"

Many Tibetan workers, peasants and herdsmen after hearing the news arrived early from distant factories, villages and pasturelands in order to get the book at the first opportunity.

Thubtag Gamtan, one of the first batch of Tibetan construction workers from families of former serfs, said excitedly after he got the treasured book: "Chairman Mao teaches us that the working class must exercise leadership in everything. What does the working class depend on when doing so? It is, of course, the invincible Mao Tsetung Thought." Some other workers said enthusiastically: "Chairman Mao has captured through his verses the high revolutionary spirit and aspirations of the working class."

Pal Gyur, an emancipated Tibetan peasant of Tagtze County, said: "We warmly respond to Chairman Mao's great call '**grasp revolution and promote production and other work and preparedness against war.**' We must fortify ourselves with the revolutionary mettle embodied in Chairman Mao's teaching to '**vie with heaven,**' resolutely conquer the forces of nature and reap the eleventh bumper harvest since the democratic reform on the Tibetan highland."

Daba Tsering, a Tibetan fighter belonging to a unit of frontier guards, after buying ten copies of *Chairman Mao's Poems* said: "Mao Tsetung Thought is most powerful and Chairman Mao's poems are full of revolutionary vigour. The Soviet revisionist renegade clique, which brazenly colludes with U.S. imperialism and frantically opposes China, has repeatedly encroached upon China's inviolate territory. We frontier guards are armed with Mao Tsetung Thought; we must increase our vigilance a hundredfold and be combat-ready at all times. If the enemy dares to invade, we will deal with him in the way that Chairman Mao teaches, '**Away with all pests! Our force is irresistible.**'"

New Successes in Printing Chairman Mao's Works and Portraits

In order to ensure the accomplishment of their glorious task of printing Chairman Mao's works and his portraits faster, better and in larger quantities, the workers related to the printing industry throughout the country have gone in for technological innovations

and technical revolution in a big way and as a result have gained great successes.

The revolutionary workers and administration of the Peking People's Machine Works, under the illumination of Chairman Mao's revolutionary line, spent only a little over four months' time in successfully trial-manufacturing China's first rotary press for printing full-size sheets on both sides. The new machine does the printing on both sides of the paper simultaneously at a high speed. Its success makes possible the turning out of the red treasured books at greater speed.

In Nanking the revolutionary workers and cadres of the Nanking Printing Machines Plant, displaying the spirit of self-reliance and going all out for improvements, pooled their wisdom and efforts together, fearlessly attempted difficult tasks demanding high technique and successfully completed a new-type machine for developing plates in a continuous process. This machine formerly had to be imported from abroad which involved difficulties in its repair and maintenance. The new equipment now successfully trial-manufactured, however, greatly facilitates printing in large quantities the works and much admired coloured portraits of our great leader Chairman Mao.

The revolutionary workers of the Ipin Printing Machines Plant in Szechuan Province, by bringing into full play the revolutionary spirit of daring to think and to act and overcoming all kinds of difficulties caused by the factory's limited size and comparatively inferior equipment, have completed a semi-automatic threading machine and a roller-type collating machine. Being machines of importance for a printing plant, the new equipment will to a great degree raise the efficiency and quality in binding volumes of Chairman Mao's writings.

In the Yenpien Korean Autonomous *Chou*, Kirin Province, the revolutionary workers of the Shihhsien Paper Mill have recently made a fine-grade pulp from the waste fibres of deciduous pines. Paper made from such a pulp is thin enough yet opaque, white enough to be pleasing to the eye and when it is made into the leaves of a book no rustling is produced when the pages are turned. This paper is now being used to print the precious works of Chairman Mao and is liked by the readers.

The workers of the Red Guard Paper Mill in Kunming, Yunnan Province, persist in putting revolution in command of production, and, in spite of their more or less out-dated equipment, have successfully trial-produced a special paper for printing the four-in-one single-volume edition and pocket-size edition of the *Selected Works of Mao Tsetung*. Their achievement ensures that a still quicker and greater supply of the writings of our great leader will be available to the people of all nationalities in Yunnan Province.

Album of "Struggles on Ching kang Mountains" off the Press

Recently an album entitled *Struggles on Ching kang Mountains* came off the press. The publishing work was done by the Hsinhua Printing House in Kiangsi and Kiangsi Printing Office. Containing many fine pictures, the album vividly and realistically presents historic scenes of the great leader Chairman Mao leading the Workers' and Peasants' Red Army to establish China's first red base during the early part of the Second Revolutionary Civil War period (1927-1937). It shows Chairman Mao himself and illustrates his revolutionary practice during his stay in the area of Ching kang Mountains, highlighting at the same time the great revolutionary truths expounded by him, namely, "political power grows out of the barrel of a gun" and "a single spark can start a prairie fire."

When the revolutionary workers and administration of the two printing houses were given the honourable task of printing this album, everyone of them was overjoyed. Throughout its production they immersed themselves in the work with deep proletarian feelings of utter loyalty to the great leader Chairman Mao. With their revolutionary spirit commanding production, they vigorously grasped class struggle and repudiated the big renegade Liu Shao-chi's revisionist fallacies, such as the policy of servile dependence on foreign countries for everything and of going at a snail's pace, "relying on specialists to run the factories" and "putting vocational work first." They also displayed the proletarian spirit of waging a revolution in a thorough-going way and with concerted efforts boldly set about making technological innovations and technical revolution. Finally,

in about a month they completed what had been originally scheduled to take four to six months.

Photo and Commodities Exhibition of China Held in Tokyo

On March 1, a Photo and Commodities Exhibition of the People's Republic of China, sponsored by the Koto area chapter of the Japan-China Friendship Association (Orthodox) in Tokyo, was inaugurated in the building of the Kinshi Cho Station in the Japanese capital.

A portrait of the Chinese people's great leader Chairman Mao was put up in the centre of the exhibition hall. A wall tapestry woven with Chairman Mao's important inscription written for the Japanese worker friends attracted the spectators who while looking at it read aloud the words: "The Japanese revolution will undoubtedly be victorious, provided the universal truth of Marxism-Leninism is really integrated with the concrete practice of the Japanese revolution."

Among the more than thirty thousand exhibits are photos showing the brilliant victories of China's great proletarian cultural revolution, pictures of the clay sculptures *Rent Collection Courtyard* and over six hundred special products of different kinds.

At a forum held specially on the exhibition, Japanese friends and trade people unanimously asserted that the holding of the present exhibition is another victory of the Japanese people in their resolute struggle against various obstructions and forms of sabotage by the reactionary Sato government. It is of great significance in promoting friendly relations between the peoples of the two countries, they said.

Chinese films, including one on China's successful nuclear testing, were shown at the exhibition.

WORKS OF MAO TSETUNG

Pamphlets in English

A selection of his works written between 1945-1949:

The Situation and Our Policy After the Victory in the War of Resistance
Against Japan
On the Chungking Negotiations
Talk with the American Correspondent Anna Louise Strong
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