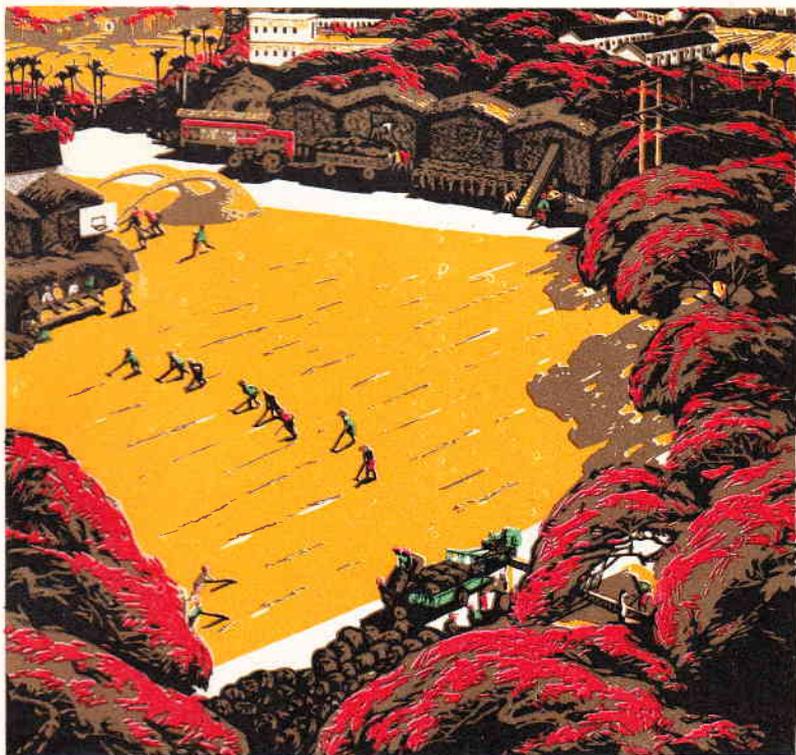


CHINESE LITERATURE



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STORIES

Tuan Jui-hsia

A Severe Test

A blazing sun hung overhead on September 30, 1975. Near the gate of the People's Refractory Brick Factory, groups of workers were standing before the bulletin boards on either side of the road, reading the big-character posters during what was left of their lunch hour. Several young men, their open shirts revealing robust chests, were flapping their denim jackets to fan themselves as they loudly discussed the posters.

A man in a snow white shirt left the office building and strode towards the bulletin boards. He glanced at them, then waved to the two young fellows behind him. "Come on. Paper them over." The shorter one bent to take the brush from the bucket of paste and began deftly dabbing it over the corners of one bulletin board. Meanwhile the taller one, after having dumped his big roll of red paper on the ground, whipped out one sheet from it and started sticking this up over the posters.

"Hey, what're they doing?"

"Probably putting up slogans to celebrate National Day."

"But why cover up the posters?"

The workers crowded round the three men to see what was going on. But oblivious to them, the man in the white shirt picked out the biggest writing brush from his jar of black ink, then stood waiting, his whole attention focussed on his two hard-working subordinates.

An old worker finally spoke up. "We'd like to ask you what you're doing, Tung Chih-ping?"

Tung turned and smiled slightly. "You'll see for yourselves." He fished around in his pocket and pulled out the note given him by Li Fu-chang, deputy Party secretary of the Building Materials Bureau.

Tung, a capable man in his forties, was head of the factory's mechanization technical innovation group. His face was pale and his eyes, narrowed under thin brows, now sparkled, for he was about to show off his fine calligraphy acquired during his university days. He wrote two slogans in large characters: "Study revolutionary theory to promote production and spark off a new upsurge of technical innovations!" and "A warm welcome to the leaders of the Building Materials Bureau and the representatives from brother factories!"

Deputy Secretary Li had been sent to the brick factory six months before to lead the work of technical innovation. He began by calling the technicians together for a series of discussions, telling them that he was open to all suggestions, no matter how unusual, for future innovations.

The meeting these newly posted slogans referred to was to be held that afternoon and its purpose was an exchange of experience on innovations. Although Tung was to be the chief speaker, Li had not only worked out his speech with him, providing the main ideas in his report and giving him numerous pointers; he had also told him how to introduce his innovation to the technicians and how to receive the leading cadres, reminding him that while being modest he must also give proof of his ability. After working six months with Li, Tung had the impression of travelling down on a lift, he went fast all right, but his heart was often in his mouth.

Before the Cultural Revolution, Tung had begun studying foreign reference materials so as to draw up plans for an automatic brick-making machine. After the Cultural Revolution began, he shut himself up in his office and continued the work for several years,

hoping to achieve spectacular results and gain a fine reputation. At one of the forums Li called, Tung exhibited a stack of blueprints and won his superior's confidence. As a result, Li made him head of the mechanization innovation group, saying, "I know nothing about the technical side of brick-making, Tung, so do as you think best. I have complete confidence in you. Just report to me regularly."

After that, everything went smoothly for Tung. Money, parts, whatever he needed, arrived without delay. And he lived up to Li's expectations: the automatic brick-making machine was soon finished.

If Tung was to be the "leading actor" at today's meeting, the deputy Party secretary could be considered the "stage-manager": he was already in the conference room greeting the visitors. The room, usually simply furnished, had now been transformed into an impressive exhibition hall. At the back stood an automatic brick-making machine decked out like a bride while green tea-cups and ash-trays lined the long table which was covered with a white cloth. Sofas and armchairs had been moved in from the Party committee reception room. Li, a man of average height in his fifties but still full of drive, was sitting on the middle sofa. His plump face bore a modest, pleasant expression as he chatted with the visitors.

The reader is probably wondering why Tung had not written the slogans before the visitors' arrival. In fact, it wasn't his fault. Li had not planned on doing things in such style until, just before lunch, Chang Pu, Party secretary of the Building Materials Bureau rang up to say he would be coming to the meeting too. That changes everything, Li thought, his mind in a whirl as he paced up and down in his office. After a while he went to his desk to write a note, which he gave Tung, saying, "Paper the bulletin boards over completely with these slogans. We want to create a warm, welcoming atmosphere." That was why the slogans had gone up so late.

As Li sat chatting with several people who looked like cadres, he lent an ear to the conversation going on around the machine:

"We can't afford machines like this. We'd have to buy a lot of auxiliary equipment, too, to use it." The voice sounded like that of an older man.

"There's nothing new about this machine. I saw designs of one just like it in a foreign journal ten years ago," a technician put in.

"This isn't what we need. It's too big and complicated," a young man spoke up.

They're just trying to find fault, Li thought. It's easy enough to criticize. . . . He flipped open his fan and said loudly to the two visitors sitting beside him, "You know, revolution means increasing production. To get industry going in a big way, we must think big. I know some people won't agree with me, but I'm not afraid of criticism. It's been nine years since the Cultural Revolution began. How can we go on ignoring production? We simply have to grasp production now and the important thing is technical know-how. Once you've got that it's as easy as leading an ox by the halter. I've been working in industry for a long time now, more than twenty years, in fact. But when it comes to technical know-how I'm still as ignorant as the day I was born. That doesn't matter, however, because I know how to get the technicians to do their best.

"At a meeting of the whole bureau last January, some young workers from Workshop No. 1 thumped their chests and said they were going to design an electronic-controlled brick-making machine by the first of October, their way of celebrating National Day. I told them: Just get your quota of bricks made and that'll be good enough. Tomorrow is National Day, but we haven't seen hide nor hair of their machine."

The two cadres had been listening attentively and now nodded thoughtfully. But suddenly one looked up with an expression of doubt. "Didn't Chang Pu say that we need a mass movement when he spoke at the mobilization meeting called by the bureau Party committee?"

Surprised, Li retorted, "Aren't technicians part of the masses? Our innovators are all representatives of the masses."

Convinced, the two hastened to nod in agreement. However, in the crowd round the machine, people turned to look at him sceptically.

Just then Tung hurried in frowning and went up to Li. "Hsu Chang-sheng from Workshop No. 1 wants to tear down the slogans.

I tried to stop him, Deputy Secretary Li, but he won't listen to me."

"How dare he!" Li's face clouded. Tapping his fan against the palm of his hand, he replied, "Those young workers in his innovation team are like wild horses. That's because our factory regulations aren't strict enough and the leadership's let them have their own way too often."

"Exactly," Tung replied. "I said that you were the one who asked me to put them up and even showed him your note. But that didn't make any difference. He simply retorted, 'Go and tell Li Fu-chang to come here himself. I'll tear down these slogans in front of him.'"

"Very well." Li jumped up and pulled a long face. But a moment later, affecting an air of assurance, he said to Tung, "Let's go and have a look."

They strode out, one in front of the other. This scene had attracted the visitors' attention and they followed the two men. Li and Tung crossed a wide yard, then came to the main factory road. Ahead at the gate, they saw an excited crowd. Tung pointed to the throng and quickened his pace. But the deputy Party secretary slowed down.

As they approached someone in the crowd shouted, "Here they come."

Li looked intently and was startled by what he saw. A big man in a grey shirt was removing the red paper with the words "Leaders of the Bureau" from the slogan "A warm welcome to. . ." Having placed the red paper on the ground, the man turned to Li and grinned. It was the bureau Party secretary, Chang Pu, behind whom stood Hsu Chang-sheng.

The original big-character posters were now visible. Chang glanced at them, then pointing to the words "Leaders of the Bureau" lying on the ground, he turned to Li: "We cadres can't cover up these posters, Old Li."

The visitors crowded round and began reading; some took out notebooks and pens and jotted down notes. The poster entitled "Can Ordinary Workers Be Innovators Too?" was signed by both the theoretical study group and the young workers' spare-time innovation team of Workshop No. 1.

Li had never dreamed that his carefully organized meeting could get off to such a poor start. Though aggravated, he answered with a show of indifference, "Oh, they've just put back up a poster they wrote a month ago. What's the point of that?"

"Take a good look first," Hsu spoke up gruffly. "We've rewritten it, brought it up to date and made it more to the point." He was about to continue when the bell rang for his shift. He quickly condensed his thoughts into one sentence, "I tell you, you shouldn't look down on us brick-makers." At that he strode away.

His eyes on Hsu's retreating figure, Chang murmured, "Now, why do the masses find it necessary to put up posters to set us leading cadres straight again and again? Now why?"

Tung, who had stood silently to one side until then, looked anxiously from Li to Chang. "What about our meeting?" he asked.

Chang smiled. "It seems to me the meeting's already begun."

Li turned to Tung. "Let people read the posters if they want to. Tell everyone to be back at the meeting room by two o'clock."

2

Chang had not originally planned on attending the meeting, but had changed his mind at the last minute. To explain why, we must go back to the events of the previous day.

It was only two days before National Day and workers from the various factories under the Building Materials Bureau came in a long stream to report their achievements to the bureau Party committee. This was their way of celebrating the ninth National Day since the start of the Cultural Revolution. The enthusiastic drumming and beating of gongs continued almost all day before the Party committee office.

The sound made a special impression on Chang, not because he had much interest in festive music but because the staccato rhythm of drums and gongs struck a chord in his heart and brought back memories. Drums and gongs had sounded in the streets when his father was marched to a scaffold, built over the piled up bones of the poor, and executed for having broken a landlord's leg with a blow from his

shoulder-pole. They had sounded on the night of the Dragon Boat Festival when Chang, barely fifteen, had stabbed the landlord and left to join the New Fourth Army, the bloody knife stuck in his belt. There had been drumming and gonging, too, the day Chang had entered the city, marching in the ranks of the People's Liberation Army. Not long after, he was appointed deputy head of the Building Materials Bureau. With victory came the flattery of the bourgeoisie, no less pleasing to the ears of certain people than the sound of drumming and gonging. It had turned the head of Li Fu-chang, then Party secretary of the bureau. Li thought that taking over state power was the final victory in revolution and he stopped advancing. Instead of studying Marxist-Leninist works and Chairman Mao's teachings, he behaved like a bureaucrat, isolated himself from the masses and ran the factories in a bourgeois way. In 1958 when the mass movement to promote technical innovations was developing vigorously, he looked down his nose at the masses' initiative. In 1960 he issued an order which put a stop to many worthwhile innovations, consigning them to the scrap-heap. All this pained Chang Pu who struggled against Li's errors but to no avail, for at that time the revisionist line originating in the Party Central Committee ran right down to the factory level. Then began the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution initiated and led by Chairman Mao. Chang repudiated the revisionist line along with the masses, but it was only after much criticism and struggle that Li admitted he was wrong.

Drums and gongs sounded the day that the Bureau's revolutionary committee was set up and the new Party committee appointed, with Chang as Party secretary. Li went to study in the cadres' school. On his return in 1974 he was appointed deputy Party secretary.

Did drumming and gonging mean that the struggle was over? For Chang, it simply signified a lull between battles. A new struggle would soon begin.

That day Chang received and sent off group after group of workers coming to report their achievements. As he gazed at the enthusiastic youngsters receding into the distance, he felt profoundly moved. Then he suddenly remembered Hsu Chang-sheng's team and returned to his office to ring up the brick factory and ask whether they had

succeeded in finishing their new machine. When he learned they hadn't, three deep wrinkles creased his forehead.

Some time later, a black car raced along the asphalt road leading to the brick factory. Inside sat Chang thinking of a fine young man. He seemed to see the lock of black hair straying down the youngster's forehead and the serious expression on his round youthful face. Chang Pu had seen him for the first time during a mobilization meeting called at the beginning of the year to launch a technical innovation movement among the workers of the bureau. Towards the end of the meeting, a young man leaped on to the platform.

"I used to be a Red Guard; last year, I finished my apprenticeship at the brick factory," he told the audience. "Making bricks is a damn hard job, but we're not afraid of work or hardships. However, there is one thing we aren't satisfied with — the method. It's too slow and primitive. Not only does it hobble us but it affects production as a whole. My master says bricks have always been made this way, not only in his time but in the time of his master's master too. Everything's done by hand: mixing, moulding, charging, unloading the kilns — the whole lot. In the past when our workers wanted to change this backward state of affairs, they were thwarted by the revisionist line of Liu Shao-chi and Lin Piao. It's been nine years since the Cultural Revolution began and we won't stand for this any longer! We must free our hands! My master and his master Old Ching-kuei both agree that this should be done. So we young workers have set up our own innovation team. We are determined to experiment on an electronic-controlled brick-making machine and build it in time to celebrate National Day this year."

Amid the warm applause that greeted those words, Chang went over to grip the young man's big, callused hands. Chang knew well how rough and heavy some of the refractory materials were — and a worker had to handle tons of them a day. Those work-hardened hands spoke for themselves — there was no need to look at his clothes nor at the intense expression on his face. The young man himself was being tempered in the furnace of class struggle.

"What's your name?" Chang had asked kindly.

"Hsu Chang-sheng."

Chang nodded and smiled. "You'll have to use your hands if you want to free them, young man. Remember, you'll run into plenty of difficulties. In the end, though, you'll be able to lick them all."

That had been in January. The willows had turned green and the peach-trees had blossomed and borne fruit since. But what about the young workers' innovation? Why hadn't they come with drums and gongs too? Why hadn't they succeeded? Chang felt that he was responsible for their failure. He recalled how after the mobilization meeting, the bureau Party committee had discussed the question and decided to send Li down to the factory. Some time later, Chang had been told that Li was doing his work well and had therefore not given the matter more thought. But now he decided it was time he went and had a look for himself.

The brick factory was in the suburbs. The car was now speeding past towering poplars and fields where cicadas were chirping shrilly. Then Chang spotted piles of bricks of various shapes and sizes. Ahead, on the factory grounds stood a light tower with a long streamer fluttering from it: "Long Live the Victory of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution!" The driver slowed down, then stopped at the gate. As Chang was getting out, he noticed the big-character posters. The one entitled "Can Ordinary Workers Be Innovators Too?" caught his eye. He read it and was both sad and happy, happy to see such a lively, sharp-worded article thoroughly criticizing the theory that the productive forces are all-important, a fine article written after the study of the theory on the dictatorship of the proletariat — but at the same time sad to see signs of Li's old trouble cropping up again.

Big-character posters are weather-cocks in any political struggle. But why was there a poster like this in the factory where Li had been working for six months, Chang wondered. As he reflected on the failure of Hsu's team and the meeting about to be held, a series of questions flashed through his mind. Why were methods criticized at the start of the Cultural Revolution reappearing to thwart Chairman Mao's revolutionary line? Why were new socialist things still meeting with so many obstacles nine years after the start of the Cultural Revolution? He was still turning these questions over in his mind as he

made his way to Workshop No. 1. He knew the place well, for soon after Liberation when the factory was being built the bureau had sent him there more than once to keep an eye on things. He was the one who had told the workers they could leave the yellowed ruins of a fort standing by the door. The sight of the fort made him recall an incident from the past.

Chang had first met Li in the spring of 1949 when the People's Liberation Army had encircled the city. Chang was a deputy regimental commander and Li, a cadre of the city's underground Party organization, had gone out to meet his regiment. Chang was busy working out a plan to take the enemy-held fort blocking the highroad to the city, but Li objected, "There's no need for force now — the enemy's as good as defeated." He picked up a megaphone and shouted to the enemy, "Listen to me, you soldiers of Chiang Kai-shek. Your commanders have fled. Lay down your arms and be quick about it. The Communist Party is lenient to prisoners. . . ."

As expected, a short while later a white shirt hung from a gun appeared from an embrasure. Overjoyed, Li dashed from the trench. Chang shouted, "Stop!", but Li was already climbing out into the open. Chang sprang on him, pinning him to the ground and was rolling him back towards the trench when the enemy fired, hitting Li's left arm. The crafty enemy had raised the white "flag" in a pretence of surrender, while training their guns on the people's army. Chang had observed the enemy's treachery through binoculars. Later, they silenced the enemy's machine-gun with a charge of dynamite, and stormed the fort.

Of course that was not the one left by Workshop No. 1. But the particular fort was of small consequence. For on our road of progress, many forts, large and small, still lay ahead. The Cultural Revolution itself was a battle led by Chairman Mao to take the fortifications occupied by the bourgeoisie in the superstructure. Was it not, in fact, a continuation of the battle against the Kuomintang reactionaries? But today's battle was more difficult because within the enemy camp there were some muddle-headed comrades of our own, in whose minds the enemy had built up strong ideological fortifications. Today's struggle went deeper, was more complex, more cruel

and would last longer. The ruins of that fort before the workshop might not have the grandeur of the ancient pyramids but at least they made people stop and think.

In the setting sun, the wall of the fort cast a long shadow. There, stripped to the waist, Hsu was hammering away at a box to use as feed box for his machine. A moment later a middle-aged woman came out to ask him for help. Leaving his work, he followed her into the shop.

When Hsu came back out again he was startled to see a big man in a blue vest hammering at the box, his brawny arms flashing up and down. A closer look at his face and Hsu saw that it was the Party secretary of the bureau. The young worker gazed at him, overcome with emotion. At this moment, the Party secretary stretched out his hands warmly. These hands had once given Hsu such strength and confidence. Now he gripped them again. Tears welled up in his eyes, then he spun round and rushed into the workshop before Chang could even begin to speak. Hsu wanted to get everyone to come to meet the Party secretary — his young mates from the innovation team, his master and his masters' master, Old Ching-kuei himself. They all had so much they wanted to talk over with the Party secretary.

It was after midnight when Chang returned home, but he was too excited to sleep. He opened one of Chairman Mao's books.

Linking his study with the struggles he was confronting, he thought of the immense practical significance and the deep-lying historic meaning of the struggles unfolding before him. Studying until very late, he finally decided to attend the meeting at the brick factory.

The next afternoon Chang arrived at the factory when Hsu and the other workers were ripping off the slogans covering up their poster. And so the Party secretary joined them and took a militant stance in the unique opening ceremony of that meeting.

3

By two o'clock, all the visitors were in the meeting room. Li had imagined that once the meeting started, everything would go as planned. His programme was: first, a look at the new machine; second,

a talk by Tung; third, a general discussion; and then some concluding remarks by Li himself. But, contrary to his expectations, the representatives had no sooner sat down than they began arguing about the poster they had been reading. They didn't even want to look at the machine. Some quoted the poster to express their own opinion: "The quality of a machine is of secondary importance. Our first consideration should be whether the political line is correct or not."

"Empty talk!" Li muttered to himself.

Tung, however, was listening attentively and gazing in embarrassment at the machine standing forlornly at the back of the hall. He hardly ever read the posters the workers put up, but just before the meeting he had stood with the others and carefully read Workshop No. 1's poster. He now listened uneasily to the arguments. Everyone was talking about political line while he, having listened to Li for so long, was adrift like a kite with a broken string. He recalled how one day as he was passing the wall newspapers, he had noticed a crowd standing before them, reading. He was about to join the throng when Li came up and nudged him, saying, "The upheaval that characterized the first period of the Cultural Revolution is a thing of the past. We need stability now. Come on, there's nothing worth reading." And so Tung had walked off with Li.

Li tapped his fan on the table and raised his voice, "The meeting has begun, comrades. Why such a hubbub? After all, you're all leading cadres where you come from."

Chang chuckled and stood up. With a sweep of one hand, he called, "Please be quiet, comrades. You'll be given plenty of time to argue this out later on." A hush fell over the room. Chang turned to Li, "Let's get on with the meeting as planned."

So Li was able to follow his plan. There were boisterous comments as the visitors were guided round the machine, streaming past it so quickly that it was like "viewing flowers from on horseback". Then it was time for the second part of the programme. But Tung leaned over to Li and whispered that he didn't want to make his speech.

"Why?" Li stared at him.

"It seems to me that there's something . . . wrong with it," Tung muttered.

"Something wrong with it?" Li hissed. "What on earth are you afraid of now that you've finished the machine? You intellectuals are always vacillating. Go ahead. I'll take full responsibility."

However, Tung still refused to give his talk.

"I have a suggestion," Chang put in with a smile. Taking the written speech from Tung, he handed it to a girl sitting near him. "You read the speech. I'd like everyone to listen carefully."

"You really are the limit!" Li glared at Tung but could only let matters stand. Tung lowered his head sheepishly.

The girl began reading and soon a buzz of whispered comments rose in the hall again. She caught on to the situation and whenever the hum of voices grew too loud, she raised her voice rather ironically. As he listened, Chang's expression became grave. Though the report was a bit long, it boiled down to something which could be expressed in one word: "Special." It proposed that a group of specialists should be freed of all other work to concentrate on the innovation, that the group must be headed by a specialist with special funds set aside to finance the work and Party leaders co-operating fully with the specialists' group to ensure the carrying out of all their proposals. . . . Chang frowned.

The three wrinkles on his forehead became deep creases as he observed the complacent look on Li's face.

At the end of the speech an animated discussion broke out again, this time even more heated. Glancing at Li, Chang commented, "Interesting debate, huh, Old Li?"

"I don't see what's so interesting about it," Li grumbled. "The facts speak for themselves. I see no point in arguing." Arrogantly jerking his double chin, he indicated the machine.

"But you see our people refuse to take temporary success or failure as a criterion," Chang replied. "What would you say to our going to Workshop No. 1 now. Let's have an on-the-spot investigation."

Thinking it would be to his advantage if they all saw the "hopeless mess" there, Li agreed, "All right. If you want to see some revolutionary drive, that's the place to go. But, believe me, technology is the key to innovations."

In the golden rays of the setting sun, the ruins of the fort again cast a long shadow. There was no one near the shop door and even the humming of the motors seemed somewhat subdued. Everyone was busy testing the electronic-controlled brick-making machine. Many of the workers stared at the visitors in surprise but Hsu and a few veterans were so involved in a discussion that they didn't even notice the new arrivals. Chang walked over to the small group. "How are things going?"

"There's a small, but key point that's holding everything up," Hsu replied and lifted a rough finger to press the button. Signal lights of different colours winked on the control panel. The die rose, the automatic feeder extruded clay in the mould, and the ram of the press came whanging down. Suddenly the visitors cried out in alarm for, before the mechanical arm could remove the brick, the die came swinging down again. Hsu switched off the machine only just in time to prevent the arm from being smashed.

"That was a close thing!"

"It's no easy job!"

"If a man's hand were caught it'd be crushed."

Indifferent to the pessimistic comments, Hsu turned calmly to Chang. "The machine works all right except that the processes don't co-ordinate yet. There's probably something wrong with the electronic control."

"Don't worry," Chang smiled. "You'll soon have it co-ordinating." He scanned the crowd until he spotted Tung. "Hey, Tung, come and give them a hand."

"Oh, I'm not up on electronic control," Tung replied uneasily. "I've told him more than once that it'd be much safer to use mechanical control."

Meanwhile, Li was lounging around behind the crowd with a smug look on his face, as if he had known all along that this would happen. In fact, when the die went shooting down, he had held his breath, hoping it would smash the arm. If that had happened, then he needn't care about the poster or what Chang had to say. He meant to issue a circular to the whole bureau, playing up the incident and citing it as a reason to press for a change in factory management, for the res-

toration of the rules and regulations done away with during the Cultural Revolution. Then people would see that he, Li Fu-chang, knew a thing or two about industrial production.

Of course he didn't let on what he had been thinking. He just pulled a long face and shook his head indignantly. "What a mess!" he finally exclaimed. "I've told you time and again that by allowing you to experiment on this we're subjecting the state to a lot of expense. See, we've let you have the necessary manpower, the materials and everything and it's only so much scrap. We've learned such lessons more than once. But of course we can't blame the lads. They're full of drive and that's a good thing. However, we leading cadres mustn't lose our head. There's no place for emotions when it comes to technology. After only a couple of years of brick-making these lads want to use electronic control. What happens? So many have to stop their work and all for nothing. Does this place still look like a workshop? I've got to put a stop to it. Now all of you go back to your posts and do some useful work. The leadership will take care of things here." As he talked, Li tried to make the workers disperse.

"Why can't we try to find a solution together?" protested one of the workers.

"We've finished our shift," said another. "What we do in our free time is none of your business."

"You won't be allowed to carry on like this!" Li bellowed. "Where're your leading cadres?"

Li's remark made Chang burn with anger. "True enough," he thought to himself. "We did learn a few lessons before the Cultural Revolution. Many innovations made by workers ended up on the scrap-heap. But that was due to Liu Shao-chi's revisionist line. Didn't Li criticize himself for carrying out that line during the Cultural Revolution? Why shift the blame now on to the masses and make unfounded charges? He's still in the same old rut after all." Chang could no longer keep silent.

"Speaking of leading cadres," he declared, "I suppose I count as one." He made his way over to Hsu. Everyone gasped and looked at Chang with a mixture of astonishment and joy.

Chang gazed from the machine to the control panel, and then at the workers. His eyes met theirs in sympathy. Without a word, the spirit, determination and strength of the workers were renewed. However, some people lowered their heads before that gaze and others looked away. . . .

After a pause Chang went on, his words pouring out now like a rushing river: "Comrades, I feel I should be the first to assume the responsibility for what has happened here. Remember how bravely Young Hsu stood up at the meeting and declared they would design a new machine? He dared to thump his chest because he was counting on the support of the leadership and the masses as a motive force. The workers of Workshop No. 1 have indeed given them tremendous support—I'm deeply moved by that. But can we say the same thing about the bureau Party committee? What reason have we to break up this enthusiastic group of supporters at a critical moment like this?"

He paused an instant. "Through my study of the theory on the dictatorship of the proletariat, I've realized that the 'old force of habit' which is simply the ingrained prejudice of the exploiting classes always comes down sharply against anything new. When it's a matter of old, foreign-style bourgeois constructions, no matter how many shortcomings they've got, some people are reluctant to pull them down—they won't even agree to making minor improvements. But when the proletariat wants to construct a brand-new building, there're bound to be people who pick fault in every possible way. As if a thing is not allowed to appear unless it's perfect right from the start. But how can a new thing be flawless? Can a new-born infant speak or sing or operate a machine? Should we smother it in the cradle just because it hasn't learned to do all that yet? Still, queer things like this keep happening in the realm of the superstructure even after the Cultural Revolution. And it's not surprising either. It simply means that the Cultural Revolution must be continued and deepened. Come what may, we must topple the old structures of capitalism from top to bottom and eliminate them from the face of the earth. With our own hands, we'll build the grand edifice of



communism. When ordinary workers take part in innovations, they are actually reducing the difference between manual and brain work. Understood in this way, the temporary failure of Young Hsu and his mates is a thousand times more glorious than any success of the bourgeois experts.

"Comrades, this isn't an exhibition but a meeting to exchange experience. We shouldn't act like spectators who've come just to have a look at something new, but should give new socialist things our active support. Instead of dousing them with cold water, we must water them with our sweat."

There was a long silence in the workshop. No one heard the chirping cicadas in the distance nor the humming machines near by. Their ears rang with Chang's soul-stirring words and they held their heads higher. Their gaze brightened as they looked at their Party secretary: it seemed to them that their hearts were beating in rhythm with his.

Then everyone began thronging round Hsu and the other young members of the innovation team. A bond sprang up between the young workers and the visitors as questions were asked and answered. Enthusiasm for new experiments and new departures fired everyone in the workshop.

Pleased, Chang slowly made his way through the crowd to the phone. He picked up the receiver and dialled, his every move as deliberate and tense as if he were commanding a battle. He got the Party secretary of the Electronic Industry Bureau on the line and asked him to send them some veteran workers to help them fix their control panel. The answer was immediate, enthusiastic agreement to support the worker-innovators.

Meantime Li slipped out of the workshop all by himself, well aware that few if any of these people so carried away by enthusiasm would listen to him now. However, he was by no means ready to admit defeat. He had decided to take the struggle to the bureau Party committee. Yes, he would capitalize on Hsu's failure today by raising a number of questions tonight when the Party committee met for political study. Wasn't it right to grasp production in the factories? Shouldn't they do something about the present disorderly situation? What right had Chang to stand in his way?

As Chang cradled the receiver, he spotted Li idling near the ruins outside. Frowning, he walked out to speak to him.

"Well, Old Li, this spirit is sure to fire the Party committee too, eh?"

"I had already decided to bring the problem up for discussion," Li replied slowly. "Chang, how am I to go on with my work if it's considered wrong to boost production? It's been nine years since the Cultural Revolution started, shouldn't we be allowed to grasp production without interference?"

Chang scrutinized Li's discontented face. The case was serious, he thought and reflected a while before replying, "We can't straighten things out in our heads unless we first examine our attitude towards the Cultural Revolution. Well, I'll invite Ching-kuei and some other veteran workers to the Party committee meeting and ask them to tell us what they think about the Cultural Revolution. Each of us will think back to what we've learned from the Cultural Revolution."

"Why talk about the Cultural Revolution?" Li turned with a start to gaze at Chang's stern face. Then he heaved a long sigh. "Old Chang, why be so cutting? You're always trying to touch people on the raw."

"If the wound has healed, we don't want to reopen it," Chang replied coldly. "But if it's suppurating, we've got to clean it up. This holds true in political struggles as well as in medicine."

"I don't get you," Li retorted stubbornly.

Chang's face was stern. "I don't understand you either. The machine Hsu and his mates are working on is ten years ahead of Tung's. One day, we'll be using electronic control for a series of machines, not just one. What a difference it'll make in our building materials industry. Besides, it's not as if this is a height that can't be scaled. It's easily feasible, and you're quite well aware of all this, Old Li. You talk about production all the time, but when there's an innovation that'll help to develop production, why are you so apathetic? Why try to suppress it? Why? Do you really want to boost production or is there something else on your mind?"

"What do you mean by that?" Li made a great effort to appear composed.

"You know, Old Li, I remember you have a scar on your arm."

"Scar?" His thoughts elsewhere, Li automatically fingered the scar from the wound he had received before the enemy fort. He rarely thought about it as it no longer hurt.

Chang walked over to the ruins and laid his rough hand on the wall tinged gold by the setting sun. "In the past, we stormed many a stronghold like this. During the Cultural Revolution, Chairman Mao led us to smash the bourgeois headquarters of Liu Shao-chi and Lin Piao and we stormed many more strongholds, literally and figuratively.

Before the revolutionary onslaught of the proletariat, the capitalist-roaders hoisted white flags and admitted defeat. But aren't there some among them who kept their machine-guns at the embrasures and took advantage of every opportunity to try and reverse correct verdicts, get even with the masses, and attack the achievements of the Cultural Revolution?"

"Who are you referring to?" Li started, staring at Chang. Cold sweat broke out on his forehead despite the heat.

Near by stood the factory light tower with the long red streamer bearing the slogan "Long Live the Victory of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution!", a slogan that will always be bright, come rain or shine. That crimson streamer was dazzling in the sunlight. Pointing to it, Chang said, "It's only been nine years since the Cultural Revolution began, but no matter how many years go by, whether ninety or nine hundred, our attitude towards the Cultural Revolution will always be a severe test for revolutionaries."

A pale green car pulled up at the shop entrance. The veteran workers sent by the Electronic Industry Bureau had arrived. Chang hurried over and warmly shook hands with them.

Darkness was beginning to fall and Chang had other business to see to at the bureau. However, before hurrying back, he invited Ching-kuei and other veteran workers to join the bureau Party committee in their political study that same evening. Then he turned to Hsu, "I'm on duty in the office tonight. I'll be waiting for your good news, so call me no matter how late it is."

4

The heated debate in the Party committee had still not ended when Hsu rang up after midnight. Chang placed the receiver on the table. In the stillness of the night everyone seemed to be holding his breath and straining to hear Hsu's report on the successful completion of the machine.

In high spirits Chang recorded the good news, then wrote a big red poster announcing it, which he put up in an eye-arresting place outside on the wall. The morning sun rising on the ninth National

Day since the beginning of the Cultural Revolution would cast its first rays on the poster and Chang himself would beat the drum to welcome the young workers when they came to report their good tidings. However, he would never lose sight of the fact that the sound of drums and gongs only signified a lull between battles, that a new struggle was brewing quietly while they were jubilantly celebrating this victory.

Illustrated by Tai Tun-pang



The Radiance of Youth

One summer day in 1968 a burning sun beat down on the highway leading to Seaside State Farm. Willows by the roadside drooped languidly as if they too were overcome by the heat. There was not a breath of wind. Even the cicadas had stopped droning. The sultry noon heat must have made them sleepy too.

Suddenly, from a distance, came a brisk order: "One, two, one, two, three, four!"

A detachment came marching briskly down the road, headed by a red flag with the words "Vanguard Company" embroidered in gold. The lad holding it, who looked no more than sixteen, seemed to be the youngest and shortest member of the group. Wearing an old army cap much too big for him and a red singlet, his arms bare, the young standard-bearer thrust out his chest as he marched. Though perspiration trickled down his flushed cheeks, he stared steadily ahead and kept his arms straight, the picture of stern resolution. This boy Liang Hsiao-ping was also messenger of this vanguard company of Red Guards. Keeping step behind him marched about a hundred

young men and women, rucksacks on their backs, their scarlet armbands dazzling in the sunlight. Though they were dripping with sweat their faces shone. In the rear of the contingent came a maintenance squad carrying cooking vessels and buckets.

A tall, broad-shouldered and very husky young man in a faded army tunic was in command. Though he carried three rucksacks on his back he strode along as lightly as if completely unburdened, calling out orders in a loud cheerful voice.

"Ma Yung-chiang, what about a break!" came a clear crisp voice from the tail end of the procession.

Ma turned round to give his assent then shouted, "Attention, halt!" Before he could finish with "Fall out! At ease!" the tooting of a horn was heard.

A jeep was approaching them from the state farm's headquarters. As it braked to a stop beside them, the door opened and a short stout man nearing fifty stepped down. His thinning hair was neatly flattened against his head and smiles wreathed his loose-fleshed face.

"Ah, Red Guards, young pathbreakers, how tired you must be!" he exclaimed, raising one arm to greet them.

The Red Guards, including Ma Yung-chiang, were taken aback by his ceremonious manner. What kind of a character was this fellow, they wondered.

The man bowed and bobbed his head, then introduced himself.

"I'm Chi T'eh-ho. I'm in charge of production at Seaside State Farm. Since Ku, chairman of our revolutionary committee, is at a conference in the city, our Vice-chairman Chih Chi-yung is in charge at our farm. Old Chih has charged me with the task of coming to welcome you young Red Guards. I didn't expect you to come at noon under such a fiery sun and on foot too. Ah, I really must take my hat off to you . . . ah . . ." Chi faltered at this point as he realized that the Red Guards were eyeing him with impatience. So he cut himself short and asked smilingly, "Which of you is Vice-chairman Yu?"

When nobody volunteered a reply, Chi looked at their commander. The big husky young fellow simply stared at him blankly. It couldn't be him then. He turned to look at the ranks. The young men and

women all stared back at him in silence. He glanced at the standard-bearer, Liang Hsiao-ping, who had one hand on his hip while in the other he held the red flag. Liang was eyeing him curiously.

"Ha, imagine bringing a child like that along!" Chi thought with irritation although he went on beaming affably.

"Didn't you hear? I'm looking for your Vice-chairman Yu. I mean Comrade Yu Pei-ying of your Red Guards' Congress. She's been appointed a vice-chairman of our revolutionary committee." Chi raised his voice for all to hear.

"Oh, so it's Yu Pei-ying you want," said Ma heartily. "She's there in the back. Come with me." Ma signed to the youngsters to sit down and rest, then put down his rucksacks and led Chi off towards the tail end of the detachment.

By then the small maintenance squad had caught up with them. It was headed by a Red Guard who looked no more than twenty with short plaits, a round face and thick black eyebrows. She was carrying a shoulder-pole with several rucksacks at one end and a medical kit and wash-basins at the other. The shoulder-pole, a supple green bamboo, was sagging under the heavy load. But the girl stood erect and walked steadily with firm steps.

"There she is, weren't you looking for her?" Ma pointed to the girl.

Chi stopped abruptly in his tracks. For some unknown reason the scarlet armband on the girl's arm offended his eyes and the easy way she carried her heavy load made his heart sink. Young as she was she looked tough! His eyebrows flickered for a second but quickly he put on a fresh smile. Stretching out both hands to Yu, he said loudly, "So you are Vice-chairman Yu? As they say, heroes spring from the young."

Yu Pei-ying put down her load and eyed the newcomer, then shot Ma a questioning glance.

"My name is Chi," Chi Teh-ho went on before Ma could open his mouth. "I'm in charge of production at the farm. Vice-chairman Chih learned that you were coming today and sent me to give you a lift." He pointed to where the jeep was parked.

"My name's Yu Pei-ying," replied Yu. "I'd prefer you to call me that in future. Please go back and tell Vice-chairman Chih that we shall be at headquarters in an hour's time."

"Vice-chairman Yu, won't you put down your load and come in the jeep with me?" Chi persisted. "You now count as one of the leaders of our farm so I'm sure everyone will understand."

Ma Yung-chiang burst into laughter at this and several of the Red Guards joined in, continuing their mirth until Chi looked thoroughly embarrassed.

"Comrade Chi Teh-ho," said Ma in his straightforward manner. "You ought to know that ever since we started on this trip, Yu Pei-ying has not let that shoulder-pole out of her hands. If you think she'll put down her load and ride back with you, you've come to the wrong person. Don't waste your time here, you might as well go back first." With that Ma strode off towards the Red Guards resting by the roadside.

Chi produced a handkerchief to wipe his perspiring brows. He kept his eyes averted from Yu Pei-ying's frank gaze but muttered, "I suppose so. Yes, I'll do that." He went back to the jeep.

The car went off with a toot, the Red Guards' mocking laughter chasing after it in a swirl of dust.

But Yu Pei-ying was not laughing. She stood with her hand on the shoulder-pole looking meditatively into the distance.

Some time before they decided to come to the state farm, the Red Guards' Congress had called a rally at which Yu Pei-ying was one of the first to go up to the rostrum. She had spent six months at Spring Wind State Farm, taking part in farm work and the struggles there. Her vivid and enthusiastic description of these experiences aroused her Red Guard comrades-in-arms' interest. After the rally a number of new school-leavers came to Yu proposing that they start a movement to sign up for work at state farms. This revolutionary proposal won the support of workers and revolutionary cadres. After a short period of consultation and preparation, contingents numbering nearly ten thousand youngsters were ready to march to different state farms to do revolutionary work. Yu and two thousand of her comrades were assigned to remote Seaside State Farm. To make arrangements

for settling these two thousand newcomers at the farm, it was decided that Yu Pei-ying and a Vanguard Company should go and start work there a fortnight before the others.

On the eve of their departure, Old Chiao who was in charge of state farm affairs in the city got hold of Yu Pei-ying and introduced to her Ku Chen-hsiang, chairman of the revolutionary committee of Seaside Farm who was attending a conference in the city. Yu was also told that the leadership had decided after some discussion to appoint her a vice-chairman of the farm's revolutionary committee too.

The girl was quite taken aback by this decision. "Am I up to it?" she asked.

Ku smiled. "If you go all out in struggles and in daily work you'll manage all right."

"That's it," said Old Chiao. "With the guidance of the Party and Chairman Mao's revolutionary line, you'll surely manage. Haven't you had six months' experience already?"

Yu's heart was warmed by the leading comrades' words. She looked closely at Old Ku. He was about fifty. Tall and sturdy with a ruddy face, he looked so full of energy that it was obvious he was a cadre who did plenty of work in the fields.

Although Ku was no longer young and had been a cadre for many years he was a new member of the leading group set up after seizing power from the capitalist-roaders in the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution. Before that he had been deputy Party secretary in a people's commune near the farm. He was very pleased indeed to have young Red Guards come to his farm.

"Our farm really needs young people," Ku told Yu Pei-ying with a sigh. "We're rather behind there — haven't yet started cleaning up our ranks. The revisionist way of running the farm pushed by the capitalist-roaders has left a poisonous aftermath. You'll understand all this once you come to us. We've really complex struggles ahead."

"Young Yu," said Old Chiao significantly. "This Seaside State Farm is a really stormy place. Dare you brave the wind and waves there?"

"Sure!" Yu spoke with conviction, raising a clenched fist.

"Good," the two old cadres approved together.

Now Yu Pei-ying remembered this and linked it with what had just happened. "The struggle's unfolding," she said softly to herself.

Turning to Ma Yung-chiang who was conducting the youngsters in a song, she said, "Ma, let's fall in now. We must get to headquarters in less than an hour."

Liang Hsiao-ping raised the red flag high in the air; the contingent got ready to start.

Yu Pei-ying picked up the bamboo pole and steadied it on her shoulder.

2

They could hear the sound of drums and gongs from quite a distance. When they reached headquarters, a number of workers and staff members were standing by the roadside to welcome the Red Guards. A few were eagerly beating drums and cymbals.

When Ma Yung-chiang took his detachment into the courtyard, they were promptly surrounded by veteran workers and cadres who greeted the youngsters and helped them unload their packs. In the midst of this cheerful bustle, Chi Teh-ho popped out.

"Now that you've accomplished your task, you can go back to your brigades," he shouted to the workers. Then he turned to the Red Guards to give them a hearty welcome and lead them to a tall building covered with thatch but with windows on two levels.

"I'm sorry, but our farm hasn't got high-rise buildings like those in a city," said Chi with an apologetic air. "You'll have to manage in this thatched house."

Ma Yung-chiang stared at the queer looking row of thatched apartments. Before he could enter with his contingent, a man of about forty with square jaws covered by dark stubble dashed up to them. His feet were bare and he was hatless but he appeared to have just come from the fields for mud was spattered all over his legs. Putting a hand on Chi's arm, he said, "Listen Chi, you mustn't put the Red Guards in there."

"That's true, they shouldn't live in that building," some of the other workers and staff chimed in.

"Why not?" Chi pulled a long face. "This is Vice-chairman Chih's decision. Didn't you hear what he said at the meeting?"

"I didn't agree with him," said the newcomer.

"You didn't agree? Should I listen to the leadership or to you?" asked Chi with a touch of scorn.

The man was so angry that the veins on his forehead throbbed. After staring furiously at Chi for a second, he stamped his foot and left without a backward glance.

By then Yu had given her load to someone else. Coming up to Chi she asked, "Who is he?"

Chi waved a hand disapprovingly. "He's always making trouble for the leadership. He's Yang Ah-hsing, leader of Brigade Six and a member of our revolutionary committee. Somehow he can't get rid of the narrow-minded views of peasants. He isn't even properly warm to you young Red Guards." Then he waved his hand to the youngsters. "Now then, young pathbreakers, you must come in and not stand there in the hot sun." Turning to the people who had come to welcome the Red Guards, he said, "You needn't stick around anymore, go and get on with your work."

As soon as they entered the building, the youngsters discovered that it was by no means as rustic as it looked outside. The walls were white-washed and the floors were of beautifully polished wood. It was a fine two-storied building.

"So!" said Ma understanding now. "You'd hardly expect something like this from the way it looks outside."

"Conditions here aren't too good," put in Chi. "Although this house is better than the others, it can hardly compare with what you are used to in the city. Well, young pathbreakers, you'll have to make do here. Your rooms are right upstairs. But have a rest here first." He ushered them into a large meeting-room.

Electric fans were whirling overhead and on a long table laid with a snow-white table-cloth were glasses of cold tea and slices of succulent water-melon. The chairs were upholstered. . . . All this made the Red Guards gape in wonder.

"Do sit down now. We haven't much to offer you. Just have some water-melon to quench your thirst." Chi was all hospitality.

The members of the Vanguard Company had started out at three o'clock that morning and had had a long march. With a burning sun overhead, the march of fifty *li* or so had left them all soaking with sweat. The standard-bearer Liang in particular had drained the last drop from his canteen but his lips were still cracked and parched. However, not a single person moved towards the laden table.

For a second Yu Pei-ying's lips curved in a cold smile at sight of Chi's look of embarrassment. "I'm afraid you've gone to quite some trouble and given a lot of thought to arrange all this, Old Chi."

"Not at all, not at all," said Chi, fishing out his handkerchief again. Perhaps it was his obesity that made the perspiration just ooze from his pores.

Yu turned to face her comrades. Swinging an arm she said, "We mustn't stay here."

Ma Yung-chiang blew on his whistle and the youngsters stepped into line.

As she walked out, Yu said decisively to Chi, "Please arrange accommodation for us similar to that of the other farm workers."

Chi threw out his hands, looking thoroughly perplexed. "But we haven't any empty rooms. Even those upstairs had to be vacated specially for you yesterday."

Yu was silent for one minute. Suddenly she asked, "Have you got mats and bamboo poles?"

"Of course!" Not understanding her idea, he blinked.

"That'll be fine," said Yu swinging back her plaits. She walked to the head of the contingent.

Some of the workers were still standing outside. When they saw the Red Guards leave the building, they came up to see what was happening. Facing the Red Guards, Yu asked in a loud voice, "Comrades, what have we come here for?"

"To strike roots at the farm and make revolution; to steel ourselves in this vast countryside!" This loud answering chorus so full of determination reverberated across the yard and over the fields. The few people lingering in the yard began to applaud.

"Tonight, we shall camp out," announced Yu Pei-ying.

Chi was struck dumb by this announcement.

"Ma Yung-chiang!" cried Yu.

"Yes."

"Take five Red Guards with you and go with Comrade Chi to borrow mats and bamboo poles from headquarters."

"Right!"

"Tung Li-chun!"

"Here."

"Take two comrades with you and select a proper site for our camp. Then clear up the grounds."

"Right."

"Liang Hsiao-ping."

"Here," answered the young standard-bearer crisply, very pleased that he too was being called upon for an assignment.

"Here, drink up this bit of water in my canteen." Yu unslung her water-bottle.

"What?" Liang was on the verge of refusing when he saw Chi standing there and watching him. Clicking his heels together, he answered smartly, "Very good!" and stretched out a hand for the canteen.

"The rest of you at ease and eat your rations." The contingent dispersed.

The workers who had remained exchanged comments in low voices.

"These Red Guards sure got revolutionary spirit."

"Just look at that Red Guard leader. She's a slip of a girl but she talks like a commander deploying troops."

Chi walked towards the storeroom with bowed head followed by Ma Yung-chiang and several others. His mind was in a whirl.

By evening, with the help of some old workers, the Red Guards had pitched camp on the threshing ground of Brigade One not far from headquarters.

After some discussion with Ma, Yu Pei-ying decided that the Red Guards must be ordered to bed right away to recover from their long march and the exhausting work of pitching camp. They needed

to be well rested to throw themselves into the battle against weeds scheduled for the next day.

By the time the western sky turned a deep purple the Red Guards were sleeping, tired out but with triumphant smiles on their faces.

Sitting by a small stream to the east of the threshing ground, Yu was quietly cleaning the muddy shoes of her comrades and mulling over all they had seen that day. The queer two-storied building with its thatched roof, the succulent water-melons, Chi Teh-ho's sycophantic smile and that Yang Ah-hsing, leader of Brigade Six who had come in anger and left in such indignation. . . .

She couldn't forget the throbbing veins on his forehead. And there was Vice-chairman Chih too, who had not yet put in an appearance but who had sent Chi Teh-ho to fetch her in the jeep and probably had approved the kind of reception offered by him. All these people and incidents flashed through her mind. Once again Old Chiao's voice sounded in her ears: "Young Yu, the farm is a really stormy place. Dare you brave the wind and waves there?"

She placed the cleaned shoes in a basin, picked it up and hurried towards the threshing ground. When she had finished putting the shoes out to dry, she saw Ma Yung-chiang and Tung Li-chun coming from headquarters with mattocks over their shoulders.

"Why aren't you two resting?" she asked, going up to them.

Ma put down the mattocks and wiped his face. "We'll be fighting the weeds tomorrow, our first battle on the farm. We want to be well prepared so that we'll come out on top in this first battle."

Yu shook her head. "Our first battle won't be fighting weeds."

"What's that? Aren't we going to the fields tomorrow?"

Yu took the two of them to a big boulder where they all sat down and held a whispered consultation. Then the three decided to go and seek out Brigade Leader Yang.

The fields of the farm stretched flat along the seaside. Half of them were paddy, the other half sown with cotton. Walking along the narrow path between the fields they noticed that both paddy and cotton fields were overgrown with weeds. The cotton fields were nearly choked with them. Going on, however, past a road for tractors,

they found the fields on the other side totally different. Here proper hoeing and weeding had been done and not a weed was in sight.

In these fields, they saw workers with sprayers on their backs spraying the cotton plants. Yu walked up to an older man. "Why aren't you resting yet, uncle?" she asked.

"It's no use resting when our minds can't feel at rest. You see, this is the season when weeds shoot up and insects swarm. Unless we fight hard now we'll harvest less come autumn."

"Why is it your fields here are so well-tended while those on the other side of the road are choked with grass?"

"Ha," the older man snorted angrily. "Some people are out only for profit and don't put their hearts into farming. How can their land not lie waste? Here on our side, if our brigade leader hadn't stood firm and fought against their way of doing things, it would have been the same."

"Which brigade are you in?"

"Brigade Six."

"Where's your brigade leader?"

"There he is." He pointed to a man who was bending down to open a gap in the ditch to bring water into a square of paddyfield.

"Brigade Leader Yang," cried the three Red Guards as they ran towards him.

Yang straightened up. When he saw the three youngsters he looked very pleased and hurried towards them. "So it's you, welcome! This must be Comrade Yu."

Yu stretched out her hand, but Yang spread out his big muddy hands helplessly. The mud didn't bother the three youngsters who grasped both his hands tightly.

"I've heard about your refusing to live in their thatched mansion. That's the spirit! I meant to come and see you when I got through here." Yang rubbed his hands to get rid of some mud.

Ma was a little puzzled by the term thatched mansion and wanted to know what it meant.

"Well, that's a long story." Yang sat down by the path, rolled himself a cigarette and lit it. Taking a deep puff, he began meditative-

ly, "Where shall I start? Let me tell you first the jingle our workers made up about the three queer things in Seaside State Farm: A high-class mansion topped by thatch, a capitalist-roader you'll easily catch, and a speed in squandering money no amount of profit can match. That thatch-topped mansion is the first queer thing. It was designed before the Cultural Revolution by Chi Teh-ho when he was section chief in charge of production and capital construction. From outside, it looks like a building with a thatched roof and mud walls to give the impression of a very frugal and simple style of living. But inside it's quite luxurious. This building won Chi the approval of Chih Chi-yung, formerly director of our farm and at present a vice-chairman of the revolutionary committee. It was specially built for the farm's leading cadres to live in, but during the Cultural Revolution when the masses rebelled they had to move out. When they proposed putting you youngsters in there, I opposed it. I think it would have started you off on the wrong footing."

Gazing at Yang's honest, sincere face, Yu's heart was stirred. "How right you are, Brigade Leader Yang," she exclaimed.

"But it was no use my protesting." Yang took a long drag on his cigarette. "The capitalist-roader you'll easily catch was Vice-chairman Chih. Before the Cultural Revolution he pushed a revisionist line in running the farm and was later criticized for taking the capitalist road. But he quickly admitted his mistakes and appeared repentant. Since his attitude wasn't too bad, when the revolutionary committee was set up, he was included in the new leading body. He hadn't really learned a lesson though and continued to take the capitalist road."

"What about this squandering money?"

Yang tossed away his cigarette butt, stamped it out and spat with disgust. "That refers to a revisionist way of running the farm. Instead of working hard in the fields, these people were always thinking of making money. They took a lot of manpower away from farming to concentrate on side occupations. The result was, year after year, weeds and insect pests played havoc until they had to hire peasant labourers to come in and help. Of course they squandered money that way. Every year we have a deficit and have to ask the state for

aid. Though Chi Teh-ho's no longer section chief, he's still in charge of production and still hankers after profit though pretending not to. Just you watch, now that the weeds are growing rank, he'll be up to his old tricks again."

"What about Old Ku?" Yu asked, raising her eyebrows.

"Luckily we now have Old Ku. He stands four square behind the revolutionary demands of most of our workers and staff and opposes going along the old road. Chi and his old tricks are losing ground more and more. But Ku is still new here, and our clearing of ranks has not yet started. The turbulent class struggle hasn't been touched off yet. Now that you young people are here, Little Yu, you must dare to shoulder the load." Yang said this meaningfully.

"We are still too inexperienced," Yu answered with sincerity. "We must learn properly from you veteran workers and cadres, learn from the poor and lower-middle peasants."

Sitting by the fields the four of them had a lot to talk over together. Yu felt filled with fresh strength and determination. After more discussion with Ma and Tung, she decided that tomorrow evening they would encourage all their fighters to go and visit the old workers and poor peasants and carry out investigations. They would launch a movement to learn from the revolutionary workers and staff of the state farm.

The veil of night descended in silence. Stars studded the ink-black sky. This first evening of the Red Guards' arrival at the farm was a serene, peaceful one but already Yu and her comrades realized that underlying the tranquillity were deep-seated struggles.

3

"That won't do, won't do at all!" cried Chi Teh-ho, speaking so vehemently that his spittle sprayed the face of the man sitting opposite him at the long table.

Since Yu's arrival at the farm this was the first time she had seen such agitation on Chi's face which was usually wreathed in smiles.

Presiding over the meeting at one end of the table, Chih Chi-yung kept silent, as if completely indifferent to the outcome of the discussion.

He was nearing fifty and, perhaps because he had spent too much time convalescing from one illness after another and taken too little part in manual work, was corpulent and flabby. Chih had taken a dislike to Red Guards in general, probably due to the fact that he had been criticized by them in the early days of the Cultural Revolution. When he learned from Ku on the telephone that a Red Guard was coming to be one of their vice-chairmen, he involuntarily knit his brows. This was not altogether an emotional reaction, for in Chih's view young people had plenty of drive and spirit which made them a useful reinforcement as labour power but it would be simply a joke to allow them any hand in running the farm or give one of them the post of a vice-chairman.

But talking to Ku over the phone, he did not say this. Instead he just rejoined, "Very good. I welcome their coming."

When Chi Teh-ho suggested sending a car to fetch Yu the day before, Chih had said, "Is it necessary to send a car for such a vice-chairman?"

Chi told him in all seriousness, "This is a question of your attitude towards the new vice-chairman." In a lowered voice he added, "You're an experienced old cadre, what is she compared to you? Of course she'll have to listen to you. But we must be very kind and hospitable. We shouldn't be stiff with them."

Chih nodded his agreement. Ever since the building of the "thatch-topped mansion" he had admired Chi's way of doing things. He decided to give Chi a free hand in managing the reception of the Red Guards.

When the Red Guards reached headquarters, he had watched them from his office window. He did mean to go down to meet the new vice-chairman but when he saw it was a very young girl with short plaits who addressed the contingent like a leader, he muttered, "What are we coming to? A slip of a girl can be a vice-chairman too. What does she know besides slogan-shouting and charging? Can she direct farm production?" He decided to remain where he was instead of going down to welcome the new arrivals.

Chih never expected that at her very first plenary meeting of the revolutionary committee this new vice-chairman would make such a stormy scene that even an old stager like Chi flared up.

There was only one item on their agenda: the question of fighting the weeds. A proposal was tabled by Chi Teh-ho, the man in charge of production. He emphasized the fact that all the brigades, with the exception of Brigade Six which was doing all right, had a large number of their people away working at the weaving plant, so they were very short of hands. The only way to solve this urgent problem of combatting weeds was to get help from outside.

"What do you mean by getting help from outside?" Yang retorted angrily. "Why don't you say straight out that you want to spend money on hiring labour."

"If you ask people to come and work, of course you've got to pay them. Otherwise wouldn't we be exploiting them?" Chi retorted as if right was on his side.

It was at this point that Yu Pei-ying cut in. "Comrade Chi, if we run our farm by hiring labourers, could you tell me what line we are following?"

"What line?" Chi had not expected such a sharp question and felt rather flustered. "Well, this is not a question involving a line. I'm just suggesting a temporary measure to tide over this emergency."

"Isn't there any other way to solve this problem?"

"No, there is no other way." Now Chi felt that he had a good point. "You're new here, of course, you don't know how things stand. We've tens of thousands of *mu* of land, and at present we've no more than a thousand or so workers who can go down to the fields. What can we do unless we get help from peasant labourers?"

"That's it. Even if we put all our existing labour force on this task we still don't have enough people." Chi shook his head and looked helpless.

Most of the other members of the committee were also against hiring labourers, but Chi insisted that the question of fighting the weeds was an urgent and desperate one and the hiring of labourers was merely a temporary measure to see them through. The discussion resulted in a stalemate.

"Well, suppose we just use this method to tide us over this year. Next year we must find some other way," suggested one committee member.

Chi was overjoyed. "That's it. That seems to be the only way out to me too."

"No, you can't do that." Yu sprang to her feet. She swung one arm and her red armband made an arc of red light. "Don't you dare restore a revisionist line thoroughly debunked in the Cultural Revolution! I say no!"

Chi was so startled that he could only gape. "Don't try to scare people with such big labels," he protested. "What we need now is a way out."

"A way out?" Yu kept her eyes on Chi. "You should ask Brigade Leader Yang and all the revolutionary cadres and workers of our farm what to do. They've long been demanding that all our labour power should be concentrated on fighting the weeds. Why did you, the man in charge of production, pay no attention?"

"But we just haven't enough manpower." As Chi begged the question like this he spread out his hands.

"That's not true. If only we mobilize the masses to criticize the revisionist way of running a farm and encourage their initiative and enthusiasm, we'll be able to solve this problem," Yu said curtly. "What's more, our two thousand Red Guards can march in right away to launch an attack on the weeds."

Yu's proposal won the approval of several committee members. "Good, we back you up to the hilt!" cried Yang Ah-hsing.

It was then that Chi had sprung to his feet and cried, "That won't do, won't do at all."

Raising his hands he counted on his fingers. "First of all, the grass grows so fast that if we only start to fight it three days from now and it should happen to rain in the meantime our cotton and our paddy will both be done for. Secondly, materials for living quarters for the two thousand Red Guards are not yet available — we've neither enough bricks nor tiles to build them houses. Thirdly, even if we were to get hold of the material needed, it'll take at least a fortnight to get the houses built, and by then it'll be too late to fight the weeds."

Yu tossed her plaits. "Don't think you can silence us with your firstly, secondly and thirdly. If you haven't bricks, we can use mats. If you haven't mats, we can put up sheds covered with reeds."

"Good," said Yang Ah-hsing and several others at this point. "We and all the farm workers will support you. If we go all out together on this, we can certainly get the houses built in three days' time."

Chi sank down on his chair without another word.

People turned their eyes then to Chih Chi-yung who said hesitatingly, "Well, if that's what everybody agrees to, so it shall be."

Not even bothering to announce the conclusion of the meeting, Chih picked himself up from his chair and drifted out of the room. Chi glared balefully at Yu and Yang who were busily discussing with the others how to erect temporary quarters, stuck his proposal for hiring labour under one arm and stamped off in search of Chih Chi-yung.

Chih had no sooner reached his office and sat down when Chi came in.

"That girl Yu Pei-ying is a terror all right!" Chih slapped his own shiny forehead with a sigh of annoyance. "And that pigheaded Yang Ah-hsing too."

Chi slammed his folio on the table. "They may be tough but we're not weaklings either." Seating himself in a chair, he sank his head in his hands to think.

"Hell, let them do what they like," said Chih with a resigned air. "When they come to the end of their rope, we'll have our say."

"Let them do what they like? Now, Vice-chairman Chih, I've been working with you since before the Cultural Revolution. How much thought we've spent on running this farm and it certainly hasn't been easy to keep it going. If we tackle the weeds Yu Pei-ying's way they'll be able to debunk us again. Who'll be willing to follow us then?"

With an exclamation of disgust Chih slapped his brow again. He closed his eyes, but before him flickered a ball of flame which on closer scrutiny turned out to be the red armband on Yu's sleeve. The illusion disappeared when he opened his eyes. Chih sighed. "These Red Guards can sure be a headache."

Chi waved his proposal to hire neighbourhood peasants in front of his superior. "The key lies here," he said. "If we can't pull this off, we'll simply have to wait to be criticized."

"Then what do you think we should do?" Chih leaned back in his chair.

"Go ahead in spite of her. Let her do what she likes, we'll carry out our plan. I'll go now and contact the various brigades in our neighbouring communes."

That made Chih sit up to take notice. "You can't do that. Didn't everyone agree to Yu's proposal at the meeting?"

Chi bent down to whisper in Chih's ear: "Even building those rush sheds of hers won't be all that easy. Rain's been predicted for the next few days. Besides, where will she find so many large bamboo poles? Without living quarters, more Red Guards won't be able to march in. Then we'll be short of hands to work in the fields. By that time, she'll just have to agree to our hiring peasant labourers."

"Don't we have a big batch of large bamboo poles in the storeroom?" Chih looked dubious.

Chi frowned. "Those are top quality poles. It would be a waste to use them for sheds."

"Well, you'll have to let them have those, I'm afraid," said Chih, anxious to avoid trouble. "Otherwise when Old Ku comes back and asks about it you'll not be able to explain. As for hiring peasant labourers, you might feel your way about a little to begin with."

"All right, since our Vice-chairman Chih has learned through the Cultural Revolution to be so much more careful now," said Chi approvingly but with a touch of scorn.

"This is what people mean by 'fall in a pit and gain in wit'. The thought of the lesson I learned in the Cultural Revolution still makes me wince." Chih Chi-yung sighed.

Meanwhile Chi was saying to himself: You're just a crafty old fox, that's what you are. You want to eat fish but don't like to be tainted by the smell. We used to go along together, but now you stay in the saddle and expect me to be your willing horse. We'll soon see who comes out on top. Still, with your consent I can handle this all right. . . . His face still wreathed in smiles, he thrust the folio into his bag, then nodded and bowed himself out of the room.

Early in the morning while a light mist still veiled the fields the loud-speaker system was turned on in Seaside State Farm.

"This is the broadcasting station of Seaside State Farm. We now bring you Comrade Yang Ah-hsing's speech at a rally of our revolutionary workers to repudiate the revisionist way of running our farm. . . ."

Inside the Red Guards' "barracks" the broadcast roused young standard-bearer Liang Hsiao-ping from sleep. When he looked round him he discovered all the other pallets were empty. He scrambled to his feet and went outside. Only two tall stacks of rushes met his eyes; the tools that had been piled on the threshing ground were now gone.

"I call this a dirty trick. Not even waking me when they go off to work." Liang stamped his foot angrily and clenched his fist, then let out a cry of pain. He had forgotten his injured hand which Yu Pei-ying had bandaged so carefully the night before.

Liang recalled with relish that mighty battle in the reed marshes the previous night and the wonderful time he'd had following close on the heels of Yu Pei-ying, carrying load after load of reeds. Though dripping with sweat he had never lagged one step behind. The green bamboo pole on Yu's shoulders sang a squeaky tune which seemed to be calling on Little Liang to go all out. But then, unfortunately, he had cut his hand badly while binding reeds and it had bled so much that he was discovered. It was Yu who compelled him, against his will, to leave the fiery battlefield.

"Hey, Little Liang, what are you doing there gazing into space?"

Liang turned to discover that Ma Yung-chiang had brought in another load of reeds.

Turning his back on him, the youngster pouted. "You call yourself my comrade-in-arms and yet you ditch me."

Ma Yung-chiang unburdened himself and walked over with a smile. "Who ditched you? Comrade Yu's orders were to let you sleep. You sprained your ankle the day before yesterday and cut your hand

last night. You've been over-doing it these last two days, so she wants you to stay in and have a rest."

"It's all very well for you to talk. You're having a fine time. But you want me to stay here twiddling my thumbs. Nothing doing."

"Don't holler," said Ma. "I can give you a very important assignment without anyone knowing."

"What is it?" At once the young Red Guard cheered up.

Ma pointed to the rows of adobe walls in the distance and the skeleton roofs. "See there? It'll soon be time to put up the roofs and cover them with reeds. Make a trip to the Production Section. Tell Chi Teh-ho he simply must bring those large bamboo poles by noontime at the latest. I've reminded him three times. If he delays any longer he'll hold up our work."

"Fine. I'll see that he brings them." Liang thrust out his chest confidently, then dashed off.

By the time Yu and her Red Guards brought back the last load of reeds the sun was high in the sky. The youngsters were tanned and sun-burnt from working in the sun those past two days and their shoulders were rubbed raw. Their hands too were blistered. But the hard work only called into full play their revolutionary fighting spirit. Yang Ah-hsing and several other brigade leaders had brought in reinforcements to give the youngsters full support. With their help enough reeds were cut and brought in, earth dug and tamped into walls so that now the framework of the houses was finished, just waiting for the large bamboo poles to arrive. Then the roofs could be put on and the reed covering spread.

Yu sat with Ma Yung-chiang and Brigade Leader Yang on two stone rollers, drawing up a plan for the allocation of labour in the coming fight against weeds.

"Fine!" Ma exclaimed, slapping his thigh. "As soon as our two thousand comrades arrive, we'll pitch in with all the farm workers and conquering the weeds won't be any problem."

Yu looked broodingly at the grey clouded sky. "It's not as simple as you make out, Comrade Ma. Our first battle here is only just beginning. . . ."

As they talked, a tractor came down the road dragging behind it a dozen or so bundles of slender young bamboos. Liang jumped gleefully down. "Hey, here come the bamboos."

Yang Ah-hsing went up to examine the bamboos. His brows knit in a deep frown. "Green bamboo tips!"

"Chi said these are all he has," blurted out young Liang. "There aren't any larger ones."

"If we put these up, the roofs will collapse," retorted Yang angrily.

Other Red Guards crowded round them. Several voices chimed in:

"What's that wretch Chi trying to do?"

"How could you be so stupid as to be taken in by him, Little Liang?"

Liang stamped his foot. "I'll go and drag Chi here," he cried.

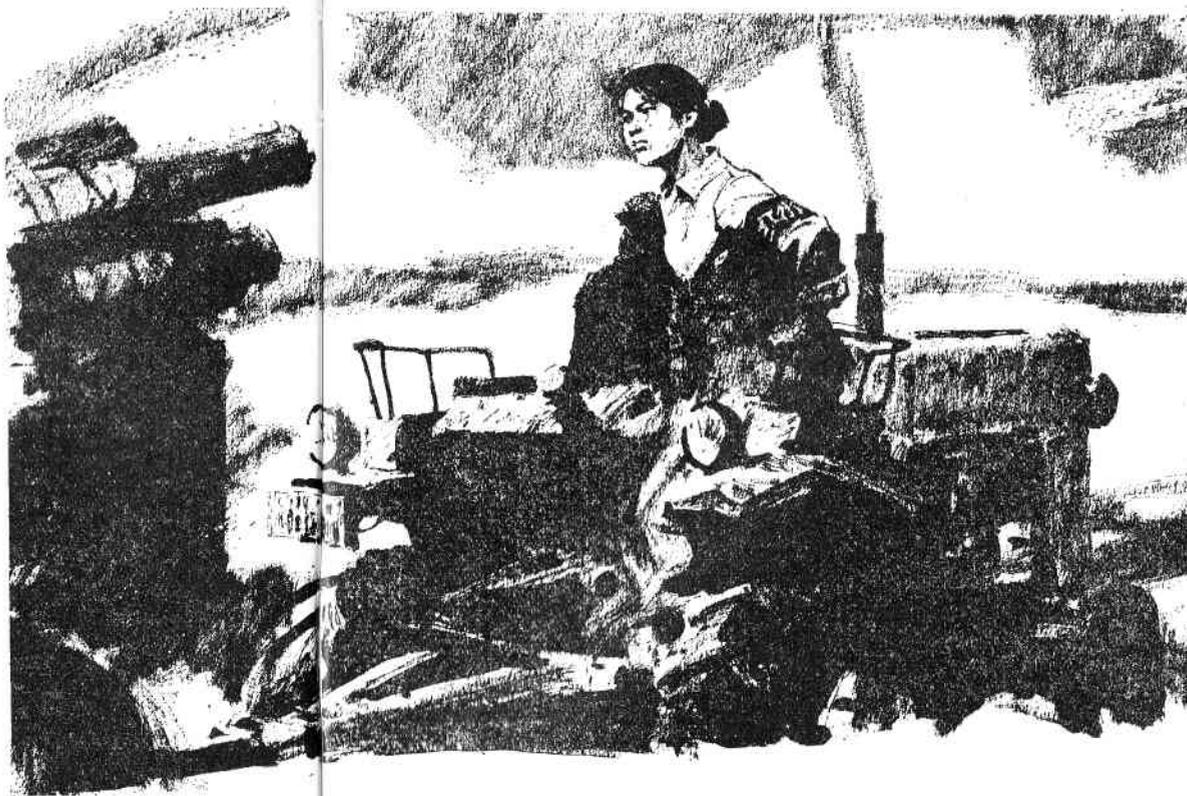
"Wait." Yu turned to Ma. "A storm's brewing, we must hurry to complete our houses."

Yang gazed towards the horizon. "I'm afraid there's going to be rain and quite a gale too. We'll have to get the reeds tied and weighted down." He told Yu, "I'll go to notify the brigade leaders. We must ask all the workers who were assigned here to help to come right away. You tie the reeds into sheaves first."

"Good." Yu nodded. "I'll go this instant to fetch bamboo poles."

She rushed to the tractor and jumped on, saying, "Comrade, please take me to headquarters." The driver stepped on the gas and the tractor chugged off, the bundles of bamboo tips making a long tail of dust behind.

Yu looked everywhere for Chi at headquarters. But he was not to be found. Vice-chairman Chih was not around either, and she was told that he had gone to hospital. She made straight for the storeroom.



Old Wang of the storeroom recognized her as the newly appointed vice-chairman. "You need something?" he asked.

"Do you have any large bamboo poles left?"

"Yes, about three hundred of them."

"It was decided at the last plenary meeting of the revolutionary committee that these large bamboos should be used to build houses for our Red Guards."

"Chi Teh-ho told me to keep them for something more important."

"Never mind him, we'll do as the plenary meeting decided."

"All right." Wang took up his keys.

At this moment Chi Teh-ho suddenly appeared. "Oh, Vice-chairman Yu, were you looking for me?" he asked with a show of concern.

Yu tried to suppress the anger in her heart. "Why did you send us green bamboo tips instead of sturdy bamboo poles?" she demanded. "Can we use those to build houses?"

"But you used so many poles in making the framework there aren't many large ones left and we need them for other purposes." Chi looked as if Yu had done him an injustice. "This is Vice-chairman Chih's decision and I must do as he says."

"It's not as if you weren't at the plenary meeting the other day," Yu spoke with authority. "These three hundred large bamboo poles must all go into building the houses."

"I'm afraid you can't do that!" There was a hint of menace in Chi's tone. "Vice-chairman Chih is an old revolutionary who's been thirty years in the Party. People will talk if you don't respect such an old cadre."

Yu compressed her lips, her eyes flashed fire. "Who's going to talk? Let me tell you whom we Red Guards listen to — Chairman Mao! This is not a question of respecting or not respecting old cadres. It's a question of whether we abide by the Party's principles. The decision of the plenary meeting was a correct one, why are you out to sabotage it?"

Chi was stunned by this retort. He stood gaping as if he'd lost his faculties, unable to understand how a slip of a girl no more than twenty years old could have such daring and spirit.

Without paying him any more attention, Yu went off with Old Wang to get the bamboo poles.

Chi headed for headquarters, hanging his head and dragging his feet. But looking up accidentally, he brightened, a smug expression appearing on his face. "You've managed to get the bamboo poles," he muttered. "But I stalled long enough to get you drenched. Let's see whether you can finish your houses when it starts pouring with rain."

By the time they got all the bamboos tied into bundles and loaded on the trailer, dark clouds hung low in the sky. Yu felt as if her heart was on fire. She kept urging the driver to make haste as the tractor sped towards the threshing ground.

When they arrived, the waiting crowd swarmed round before

the tractor had come to a stop. Eager hands unloaded the bamboos and carried them to the rows of unfinished houses. Yang and the other brigade leaders had already divided their task-force into two groups: one to fix the poles in place and the other to spread the reeds. There were Red Guards and farm workers in both contingents. The veteran workers would supply the technical know-how while the young pathbreakers would be their assistants.

"Hurry up everybody, the rain's coming!" boomed Yang Ah-hsing. "We must get the roofs up before the rain starts."

Immediately, work started all along the rows of tamped walls, some climbing up and others running up and down fetching reeds.

The fire burning in Yu's heart sent a wave of warmth through her, surging up to her throat. "Brigade Leader Yang... uncle..." she cried, running up to Yang and gripping his hand.

Yang could see the glitter of tears in the young girl's eyes. His heart too was warmed. An invisible tie seemed to link them after the battles they had been through together in the past two days. "Come, Young Yu, let the two of us carry this crate of bricks over there. After covering the roofs with reeds, we must put bricks on top to weigh them down. It'll keep the wind from blowing them off."

Yu looked down and saw her own slender bamboo pole laid atop the crate. "The bricks are heavy, will my little pole be able to stand the weight?" she asked dubiously.

Yang gave her a long look. "Sure it will," he said meaningly. "It's just a bit young but supple enough. You see, the more you use it, the tougher it gets."

Yu understood the significance of the old brigade leader's words. She bent down and put the pole on her shoulder. Behind her, Yang picked up the other end of the pole and with one hand steadied the crate. The two of them stood up together and strode down the road.

5

The storm finally broke. But the last layer of thatch had been laid and properly weighted down with bricks. Most of the workers and staff had returned to their own brigades. Only Yu and some of her

comrades-in-arms were still at work, in spite of the rain, checking up on the new houses and giving them the finishing touches. On the morrow, two thousand more Red Guards were coming to join them in the battle against wild grass. At the thought of this Yu Pei-ying's heart leapt with excitement.

Suddenly Liang Hsiao-ping pierced the curtain of rain before their eyes and dashed over from his "barracks".

"Sister Pei-ying," he shouted. "The rain's got into our mat shed."

Yu hurriedly turned to her comrades. "Two of you stay here to finish up, the rest come back immediately."

The wind and rain had arrived in full force. By the time they got back to the "barracks" they found both mat sheds, which had been firmly closed and secured with ropes, now torn open by the wind. Mud and water had seeped in and made a thorough mess of their sleeping quarters.

In the girls' barracks, a Red Guard plonked down on her mud-spattered quilt and sobbed. The morale of some of the others had also slumped.

"What a mess! My notebook's soaked through and all the ink's run."

"Look at this quilt. How'll I ever sleep in it?"

"Here at the farm we don't even have a proper place to sleep. How can we carry on like this?"

Gripping a length of rope tightly, Yu's round eyes blazed with fury. In a voice that quivered a little she said, "Comrades, remember our slogan? Didn't we say, 'Strike roots at the state farm and make revolution'? We mustn't fear hardships when making revolution. We must dare to fight, not only nature, but primarily the class enemy and the erroneous line. Otherwise why call ourselves Red Guards? Just think, everybody, what a fight we've had to put up already in these two days and a half that we've been here. Why did someone want us to live in that 'thatch-topped mansion' built by capitalist-roaders? Why are there people who clamp down on us by holding back the bamboo poles needed to build our houses? It's true our barracks have been messed up, but this isn't really due to the storm. No, it's due to sabotage by the class enemy."

"What?" Her words startled them all.

"Just look here." Yu raised the length of rope in her hands. "This wasn't torn off by the wind. No! It was cut. They know that tomorrow we're going into battle against the weeds and they've made use of the storm to dampen our militant spirit."

The Red Guards were now thoroughly enraged. "What bad egg did that? We'll get him."

"Don't shout," said Yu Pei-ying coolly. "Let's first tidy up here. The sabotage will be thoroughly looked into."

The telephone installed when the shed was put up now rang insistently.

Yu picked up the receiver. A warm, frank voice sounded by her ear: "I'd like to speak to Yu Pei-ying."

"Old Ku," cried Yu, her hands tightening on the receiver. "This is Yu."

"I've heard a little about things your end. Well, how goes it now? Very difficult, eh?" Concern and sympathy rang in his voice.

Yu nodded, her heart warming, but quickly shook her head again. Only when Ku raised his voice questioningly did she realize that she was on the telephone. "We have the masses," she said aloud. "We have the farm's revolutionary workers and cadres. We wouldn't be afraid even if the situation were more difficult."

"Good!" Old Ku seemed pleased. "As soon as the conference finishes, I'm coming back with the two thousand Red Guards. Once we've wiped out the weeds we'll immediately launch a movement to clean up our ranks."

"That'll be wonderful."

"Listen, Young Yu, keep close tabs on fresh developments in the class struggle. I've written down some important information which I'm rushing back to you by a messenger."

"Yes, I understand." Yu hung up thoughtfully. Turning to Liang she said, "Little Liang, go and fetch Brigade Leader Yang." To Ma Yung-chiang and Tung Li-chun she said, "Come on, let's discuss the situation."

While Yu was talking to Ku on the phone, Chi Teh-ho walked

into Chih Chi-yung's house, twiddling the handle of his black umbrella and humming discordantly.

Chih sat gazing gloomily at the leaden clouds, his face as overcast as the sky.

"I've contacted the peasant labourers, Vice-chairman Chih. I can get three hundred to come in at once to deal with the grass. As soon as it clears up tomorrow, they're ready to go to work in the paddy fields." Chi sounded quite proud of himself.

"Haven't Yu and her lot finished their houses? Aren't they ready to start weeding tomorrow?" The vice-chairman sounded perplexed.

Chi could no longer hide his complacency. "Them?" he chortled. "They've set up their reed shacks, but their mat sheds have all but collapsed. I doubt if they'll get enough sleep tonight to go to the fields tomorrow."

This good news made Chih's face brighten. He felt it was only right for cocky Red Guards like Yu Pei-ying to take some hard knocks. Shaking his head wisely, he said, "The trouble with these Red Guards is they're too hot-headed. They won't see sense unless they fall flat on their faces a couple of times."

"That's just it, just it." Chi nodded vehemently. "Some people won't worship Buddha till the devil's got them. This is how to make her see the error of her ways."

"With these Red Guards here we'll have no peace at the farm. In future, Old Chi, you must put yourself out more to see to everything. It's no use relying on these chits or those headstrong young men." Chih Chi-yung's brows were tightly knit and his face woebegone.

"Don't worry, Vice-chairman Chih, I'll do all I can."

By evening the rain stopped. When Chi left the vice-chairman's house his eyes were caught by a red glare to the east. He rushed towards it and discovered that it came from three bonfires on the threshing ground of Brigade One where the Red Guards' "barracks" were. The youngsters sat round the fires drying their wet quilts and clothes. The laughter and singing which drifted to Chi's ears sounded to him like a deliberate challenge.

"We'll see who comes out on top tomorrow morning." Chi ground his teeth viciously. "Before your Red Guards arrive I'll

take the peasant labourers to the fields. I don't see how you can drive them out one by one. So you think hiring labourers is a revisionist line, eh? All right, I'll just act revisionist." A sudden gust of wind brought down a spattering of raindrops from the trees. The cold water made Chi duck his head. Swearing, he bent low and disappeared into the darkness...

The next morning a rosy dawn appeared in the east. The rain-washed trees and fields were a fresh green. Along a path between the fields came Yu Pei-ying and her friends. It had been decided by the brigade leaders the night before that they would start work in the paddy fields of Brigade Two where the weeds were most rampant.

Last night's bonfires still warmed the hearts of the youngsters. While their hands were busy drying their clothes and quilts, their hearts were stirred by revolutionary fervour. They were getting a good taste of the delights of struggle. When Brigade Leader Yang came with a group of veteran workers bringing their own clean quilts from home for the Red Guards as well as dry rice-straw to spread over their pallets, the youngsters were very moved. The veterans also insisted on taking home the mud-splashed quilts to wash and dry them. "Don't lose heart because of this bit of a storm," they urged the Red Guards. "After all, our farm is your home now." That night although the dry quilts had to be shared between them, the Red Guards felt that they slept more comfortably than ever before. This morning they had woken in the highest of spirits. The red bands on their arms seemed from a distance like flashing balls of flame.

"Comrade Yu, Comrade Yu," cried a veteran worker running in from headquarters. "Chi Teh-ho has hired three hundred peasant labourers. They're on their way to Brigade Two — nearly there now!"

"So?" Yu turned to issue the order: "Quick! Race them there."

By the fields, Chi Teh-ho, his hands behind his back, paced impatiently to and fro. When the Red Guards arrived at a run, Yu Pei-ying in the lead, Chi was thoroughly dismayed.

Yu strode forward to confront him. "Chi Teh-ho, what do you mean by hiring labourers behind our backs?"

"Uh . . . uh . . . this is something that Vice-chairman Chih approved." Chi was more than a little flustered.

"But you know all the revolutionary workers of the farm oppose this and the plenary meeting of the revolutionary committee decided against hiring outsiders!" Yu's voice was cutting. "Don't think you can persist in pushing this revisionist line. That's impossible!"

"Impossible!" cried the Red Guards in one voice.

"They are quite right," a deep voice rang out behind Yu. The youngsters turned round to face a middle-aged cadre who had arrived with a number of neighbourhood commune members. As he shook hands with Yu and the Red Guards, he said, "Chi Teh-ho came to our brigade to ask for help in combating the wild grass. He said the farm's in serious trouble and he was ready to pay us on the principle of to each according to his work. We told him we were willing to come and help out. You see, our broad masses of poor and lower-middle peasants have raised their political consciousness during the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, and they realize that for a farm to hire labourers is taking a revisionist line and shouldn't be allowed. So we've come to help free of charge, using our action to debunk the revisionist way of running a state farm."

The Red Guards were all tremendously moved.

"Learn from the poor and lower-middle peasants," cried Yu Pei-ying. "Salute the poor and lower-middle peasants!" All the Red Guards joined in.

"Learn from the young Red Guards," cried the commune members. "Salute the young pathbreakers!"

Head hanging low, Chi Teh-ho stood transfixed, like a stick of wood.

By then Yang Ah-hsing had arrived too with other farm workers. They were thoroughly outraged by the dirty tricks Chi Teh-ho had played.

"You must make a clean breast of your crimes," Yu told Chi firmly, pinning him down with her eyes.

"Crimes?" Chi's legs quivered and nearly buckled under him.

"Don't think people don't know about the things you've been doing. The eyes of our revolutionary workers are keen because we stand on

the side of Chairman Mao's revolutionary line. Now own up! When it was pouring yesterday, what were you doing on Brigade One's threshing ground?" demanded Yang Ah-hsing indignantly.

"I . . . I . . . wasn't doing anything!" Perspiration streamed down Chi's neck.

"That's a lie. I saw you with a sickle and asked you what you were doing with it and you said you were helping the Red Guards to cut some reeds. Nothing of the sort! You used the sickle to cut the ropes securing the mat sheds," one of the workers denounced Chi to his face. "And I saw all this with my own eyes."

Chi Teh-ho hung his head so low you would think his neck tendons had snapped.

"Don't you dare try to wriggle out of this! You must make a clean breast of all your crimes." Yu Pei-ying's voice was cold and firm. She had read the note sent by Ku Chen-hsiang which told her that according to the written confession of a capitalist-roader in a certain unit, this Chi Teh-ho and the capitalist-roader were both renegades to our Party and had both signed recantations, then helped the enemy to persecute Party comrades.

"All?" Chi Teh-ho looked up with panic in his eyes.

"Yes, all! From way back in the past up till today."

Chi Teh-ho could no longer stand up. He slumped down on the ground.

Yu beckoned. "Ma Yung-chiang, send two men to take him back to headquarters and keep him under surveillance. See that he settles down to write his confession."

Chi staggered off on unsteady legs, hanging his head. Behind him Ma and Little Liang marched vigilantly with clenched fists.

"There goes a wolf that sneaked into our farm," said a worker watching Chi's retreating figure.

"But don't forget the person who let the wolf into our house," added Yang Ah-hsing significantly.

Just then a jeep came from the direction of headquarters. Yu walked to the roadside and stretched out a hand. The jeep stopped. The driver popped out his head.

"Where're you going?" asked Yu.

"I'm taking Vice-chairman Chih to the hospital."

"Ask him to step down for a minute," Yu said calmly.

Chih Chi-yung opened the door and stepped down, his face ashen. Ku Chen-hsiang had called him on the phone the previous night to tell him firstly that hiring peasant labourers was a return to the revisionist line and, secondly, that Chi Teh-ho had been exposed as a counter-revolutionary. This message had overwhelmed him and left him so limp that today he felt he must go to the hospital.

"Has your trouble recurred?" asked Yu meaningly.

"Oh yes, it seems worse than ever this time. I can hardly move my legs." Chih sounded on the point of collapse.

Just then red banners appeared in the distance followed by a long line of marchers with Ku Chen-hsiang's tall form at their head. The Red Guards approached, marching in orderly ranks, their red armbands swinging like dancing flames.

The vanguard company, the farm workers and the commune members all cheered.

Chih felt he was going to have a nervous breakdown. Flames danced before his eyes, rushed towards him and converged into a ball of radiance. He pulled himself together to find that the flame was merely the light from Yu's scarlet armband.

"I feel so dizzy, I must go to hospital," he cried and scrambled back into the jeep.

"You must clear up this trouble of yours," said Yu. "If you let it drag on, it'll only get much worse." With that Yu sent Chih off. The jeep disappeared from view.

The marching contingent drew nearer.

Cheers resounded over the green fields by the seaside.

Yu Pei-ying eyed her newly arrived comrades-in-arms with a full heart. These young men and women were the new masters of the farm.

"Come, comrades! The struggles here are barely beginning. Let our youth shine with radiance in the fiery flames of revolution. . . ."

Illustrated by Huang Ying-bao

An Uninvited "Delegate"

The county revolutionary committee had called a meeting at which each brigade would announce its determination to further mechanize agriculture. Though it wasn't yet time for the meeting to start, many delegates were arriving.

A man hurried across the street towards the auditorium. He paused to mop the sweat from his face, then walked up to the door where the man on duty stopped him politely. "Your ticket, comrade?"

"What?" The man looked up in surprise, then said apologetically, "I haven't got one."

"Your letter of introduction?"

"I haven't any either."

The man on duty began sizing him up. He was an ordinary-looking peasant in his fifties, with honest eyes and a tanned face rather unlined for his age. However, his stubby, black moustache gave him an obstinate look. The man on duty noted that his cloth shoes and rolled up trousers were spattered with mud, for the roads were still wet from the previous night's rain.

"You're planning on participating in this meeting?" he asked the peasant sceptically.

"Sure am. I've walked a long way to get here."

Suddenly a loudspeaker boomed: "Please take your seats. The meeting will soon begin." The peasant started and turned to go in. But the man on duty barred his way. "I can't let you go in. Tell me, what right have you to attend this meeting?"

"What!" the peasant exclaimed angrily. "You're asking that question too?"

"Haha! . . . Of course people are going to ask you that, Comrade Yang. Do you think I'm the only one stopping you?" Someone piped up beside him.

The man on duty turned round and recognized Li Shan-ming, head of the research section of the county's agricultural mechanization office. "Hi, Old Li," he greeted him warmly. "I bet you've designed a good seedling-baler after your long stay in the countryside. We've all been waiting to hear your report. Go ahead in."

The peasant snorted and now snapped back at Li, "I figured I'd see you here. In fact, I've come to tell you what I think of you. You won't be able to keep me out. It was Old Han who told me to come."

"Old Han?" the man on duty broke in, puzzled. "You don't mean our county Party secretary?"

Yang pointed to his chest as he replied, "I haven't come because of Old Han but because this is a meeting after my own heart."

Li ran his fingers over his thinning hair. "Your heart?" he growled. "Okay, okay, but everybody's got a heart."

Yang glared at him. "But mine won't take no for an answer."

A Peking jeep screeched to a halt before them and the door flew open. A husky middle-aged man jumped out. It was Han Cheng, secretary of the county Party committee. "You certainly left early, Old Yang," he called out. "I just made a trip out to your brigade for nothing."

Yang hurried down the steps and shook his hand. "I'm not a cripple, Old Han. You shouldn't have bothered."

Li gaped, wondering how the obstinate old peasant could have got to know the county Party secretary so well. Han Cheng took



Yang's arm and headed for the meeting hall. The conscientious fellow at the door decided that he had to do his duty. "Comrade Han," he protested, "he isn't a delegate and doesn't even have a ticket."

Han laughed heartily. "I know. Comrade Yang here is an uninvited delegate. But here's his ticket." He produced a paper the size of a merit certificate and held it out. It was a yellowed title-deed with funny diagrams pencilled on the back. The man on duty couldn't understand. Call that a ticket? he thought.

Li, however, had flushed scarlet at the sight of that paper. His face bore a rueful expression.

2

In Yangchiachai, the big village where Yang lived, most people only knew him by his nickname, the Honest Carpenter, a name given him before Liberation. He'd learned carpentry from his father, who, worn out from slaving in the landlord's shop, had died at his bench one day, leaving fifteen-year-old Yang his saw and plane. With these

crude tools, Yang slaved in his turn to eke out the barest of livings. But though he remained dirt poor, he became well-known for his skilful work. The incident that won him his nickname occurred two years before Liberation. When a landlord died in a neighbouring village, the son asked Yang to carve a memorial arch. However, Yang refused time and again, no matter how the landlord's son insisted. Finally, the latter gave up and fumed, "Just you try and find work from now on — I'll see to it you don't get any!" At that, Yang rushed to the well in the centre of the village and smashed his tools on its stone coping, swearing as he did so, "I won't make memorial arches for landlords even if I have to go hungry!"

After Liberation, Yang was given a plot of land and was able to marry. His life improved swiftly, just as sesame plants shoot up in flower before one's eyes. Two years later, when their agricultural co-operative was set up, he was the first to put down his name. Knowing him to be a skilled craftsman, the other members asked him to be their carpenter. In 1960, when two well-to-do middle peasants wanted to drop out, Yang tried to persuade them to stay in the brigade. One retorted sarcastically, "If I were a carpenter and got a lot of workpoints like you, I'd sing the praises of the co-operative movement too." Furious, Yang whipped off his cap and declared, "I won't be a carpenter a minute longer, nor accept all those workpoints. I'm working for socialism, not for money — only a skinflint works for money." And from then on, he refused to accept workpoints for the carpentry work he did from time to time.

"Honest Yang certainly lives up to his name," the brigade members commented, and continued to call him the "honest carpenter" though he was no longer employed by the brigade as such.

After the Cultural Revolution began, he became a Party member. He rose even higher in the villagers' esteem. He was not only an honest man, they said, but loyal to socialism too.

But the reader is probably wondering how Yang and Li met. The previous May, when the spring rice was being transplanted, Li and several technicians had gone to Yang's brigade, to try out a new seedling-baler. They had chosen this brigade to try out their machine because, they said, it was an advanced unit in learning from

Tachai and was known for its scientific farming as well as for the speed with which it adopted new ways of doing things. Actually the real reason was a bit more complicated: one ingenious brigade member had made several farm machines, including a ditch-digger and a rice-transplanter; and the county Party committee had challenged the scientific research team by citing these machines and saying that they would never accomplish much if they just stayed in their office. So now Li wanted to show them what they'd accomplished. But of course, Li kept the real reason to himself.

From early morning, the villagers had been on the look-out for the new machine but it was only in the afternoon that they heard the chug-chug of its motor. After a talk with the brigade leaders, Li had one of the technicians drive the machine into a field of seedlings while he stood watching, his hands behind his back, smiling at the people clustered eagerly around the seedling-baler. Now and then, he smoothed back his well-groomed hair neatly parted on one side.

Li was getting plump now that he was in his forties. However, had it not been for his wrinkled forehead and his thinning hair, he would have looked much younger. Before the Cultural Revolution he had been a section head in the county Party committee office, but he was quite happy now that he had been transferred to the research section. As he once put it, "In this work I can't make political mistakes. As long as I don't have a servile attitude to foreign things and don't rely solely on experts, I've nothing to worry about."

But one must always be prepared for the unexpected. During the movement to learn from Tachai, his section was criticized for not having kept up with the political situation. Many of his section's technicians proposed modifying old machines or inventing new ones so as to make a contribution to the new movement. And so Li found himself caught up in a torrent instead of rocking gently at anchor in a calm harbour. Under the circumstances, the completion of his section's seedling-baler was a great source of satisfaction for him, as it proved that his "ship" was sailing with the tide.

Li continued to let his thoughts wander as he waited beside the field. But suddenly he realized that the cheerful din had died down. Looking round, he saw that the villagers who had been so excited at first

were now leaving — even the children were scampering away. Two cadres passed Li, quietly commenting on the machine.

“It isn’t up to the mark yet. It pulls the seedlings up all right, but it doesn’t bale them properly.”

“That’s right. The way they’re scattered, a lot would be wasted.”

In fact, the machine had left a good many seedlings floating behind it. Li noticed a middle-aged man wading through the field, picking up the seedlings one by one. Who’s that? he wondered, drawing closer to have a look. The man’s brand-new suit had been splattered with mud although he had rolled up the sleeves and trouser-legs. . . . No cadre from the commune office would go to the fields dressed like that, Li thought, wondering if the man wasn’t a county leader. But he decided that wasn’t possible since he had never seen him before. Then he remembered an article he had read in the bulletin a few days before. Technicians from the Provincial Agricultural Research Institute were coming to their county. That must be it! This man must be an expert from the provincial capital. And how interested he was in their machine! Li pulled off his shoes and socks, rolled up his trousers and sloshed over to join him. At Li’s courteous “Hello, comrade”, the man straightened up, his tanned face shining. It was Old Yang, though Li didn’t know him then. Sizing up Li, he asked, “You’re the one in charge of this machine?”

Li shook Yang’s muddy hand and introduced himself, “I’m Li Shan-ming, head of the county research section.”

Pleased, Old Yang gripped Li’s hand. “That’s fine,” he replied. “This still has faults, and I was just figuring out what adjustments will have to be made.” Automatically feeling behind his ear for his pencil, he exclaimed, “I’ve forgotten my pencil. I’ll get it and show you how I think it could be improved.”

“I’ll go with you,” Li put in quickly. “I’m very eager to hear your ideas.”

Yang did not bother to reply, but picked up his shoes and made for the village. Li tried to keep up, but was soon outstripped. That was funny, he thought. The man’s pace was much faster than he would have expected of a well-dressed technician.

The two cadres who had been the last to leave greeted Yang as he hurried past. “Hi there, Honest Carpenter. We thought you’d gone to visit your daughter. How come you’re back so early?”

“To have a look at the new machine,” Yang replied without breaking his stride.

“Ha, ha! Your daughter’s certainly spruced you up,” one of them joked. “You look like a bridegroom.”

Yang laughed. “What could I do? She gave me this new suit and insisted on my putting it on immediately. As soon as I get home, I’ll take it off and give it to our cultural propaganda group.”

“All right, but why the hurry?”

Yang pointed over his shoulder and explained, “That’s not it. I want to give this comrade some ideas on how to improve their new machine and I’ve forgotten my pencil.”

The two cadres chuckled, “Where is this comrade of yours?”

Yang turned round. What he saw made him gape — Li was nowhere to be seen. After scanning the fields, Yang finally spotted a crestfallen figure plodding listlessly beside the field of seedlings, now far away.

3

Once home, Yang quickly changed his clothes, then pulling open a drawer, took out a pencil stub, a tape measure and a notebook and dashed out again.

“You’re running around as if your pants were on fire,” his wife exclaimed.

“I’ve got urgent business,” he threw back over his shoulder as he rushed off to the field. But when he arrived, there was no one there — even the machine had been taken away. His spirits undampened, he spun round and made for the commune farm machinery station where the technical group was staying.

The sun had not yet set when Yang came striding into the quiet courtyard. Spotting the new machine, he went over and squatted down. He tenderly ran his hands over it and with his fingers wiped the mud that had got into the grooves. Then he pulled out his note-

book and tape measure and carefully measured the whole machine and the parts, jotting down figures and making diagrams until he had several pages of notes. He was about to close his notebook, when a hand reached out from behind and took it from him.

Yang turned round to discover Li. "Oh, I've been waiting for you!" he exclaimed with pleasure.

Li flipped through the pages, a half-suppressed smile on his face. "What are these diagrams?" he finally demanded.

Yang smiled apologetically. "I've never been to school, but when I was a carpenter I invented my own system of recording data. Nobody else can make head or tail of it."

"You used to be a carpenter?"

"Yes, but I'm doing farming now."

Li snorted and averted his face coldly.

Li had been annoyed when after following Yang for some distance he slowly realized that Yang was neither a leading cadre nor an expert from the provincial institute. He had then walked off and returned to the commune office, where he at once called a meeting of the technical workers. He announced that their seedling-baler had proved basically successful and that they could now report to the county that it was ready for mass use. When the others brought up its shortcomings, Li retorted, "We can't make it one hundred per cent perfect overnight. Let's make it available for mass use first and make improvements later." However, most of the technicians were against this and Li finally had to agree to a compromise: Their whole section would work on the machine to try and improve it.

And now he thought it was just too bold and over-confident of Yang to come with his diagrams as if he could suggest an improvement for the machine. As Li returned his notebook to him he said, "Comrade Carpenter, you must understand that we're not hacking out a chair or making one of your crude, back-yard contraptions: we want to turn out a modern machine."

"Of course, you've been working in this field for a long time, Comrade Li, and you know more about it than I do, but still and all, this machine will be used in farming and I do know something about that. A peasant's suggestions could be of some use to you."

Seeing how persistent he was, Li led him into the office and produced a stack of blueprints which he waved under Yang's nose. "Here are the blueprints for the seedling-baler. Take a look at them. This is the design of the whole machine, and here are the drawings of the parts. For example, this is the gear-box and this diagram shows how it works. . . ."

Yang pushed them gently aside. "Don't bother showing me all that. I know nothing about blueprints. But after watching the machine operate today, I did note some shortcomings."

Putting the blueprints back into the drawer, Li drawled, "Thank you for your interest, but our technicians are capable of fixing things."

Yang sprang up, raising his voice, "You mean that since I haven't had much schooling, I should mind my own business, don't you? But I'm a born 'meddler' and I've got some suggestions to make about this machine."

Thinking that it would look bad if he got into a quarrel with the old peasant, Li quickly smiled and put his hand on Yang's shoulder. "Don't get so worked up, Comrade Carpenter. I'd be glad if you could help us. But first give me a blueprint showing the parts to be added or altered, then we'll discuss it."

"A blueprint?"

"Why, yes. Aren't they used in carpentry too?" Li stretched out his arms as if at a loss for an alternative.

Yang banged his fist on the desk. "All right! You'll get your blueprint!"

What an obstinate old fellow, Li thought, but decided that it would be better to try to smooth things over. "I don't want to make things hard for you, but you know, we need blueprints to make machines. In fact, you really needn't trouble yourself about this at all. We technicians are working day and night so that you commune members can farm scientifically. But don't think we aren't moved by your fine spirit."

Yang shoved back his chair and made for the door, but stopped half way and turned to stare at Li. Thinking he wanted to say good-bye, Li held out his hand. Yang glared at him for a moment, then blurted

out, "You're moved? No, you haven't budged an inch!" With that he stalked out.

4

It was dark when Yang returned to the village. Noticing that the lights were on in the brigade storeroom, he went up to the window and peered in. The place was packed. Brigade Party secretary Ah-sheng was giving a talk. The slogan on the blackboard, "Mechanization is the only way to improve agriculture", made Yang recall how he had begun to take a special interest in agricultural machines — for this was far from being a passing fancy. It had all started the previous winter when, as a representative of the poor and lower-middle peasants, he was sent, along with Ah-sheng, to a meeting in the county town on learning from Tachai. At the exhibition of new farm machinery, he had squatted beside a rice-transplanter, studying it in detail. He had finally stood up and commented to the guide that the machine could be improved, that as it was it would plant the seedlings half an inch too deep. The guide only nodded politely, but someone standing beside him exclaimed loudly, "Why, you're right!" Yang turned to see a husky middle-aged man who immediately seized his hand and added, "Well, comrade, you seem to be quite an expert." Yang laughed, "Not at all. We peasants know very little about this sort of thing. I was only making a suggestion."

"But this sort of thing has a lot to do with peasants. You can't mechanize agriculture unless you work closely with those who do the farming," the man replied. "And for us peasants, mechanization is of the greatest importance... Revolutionized thinking plus mechanized agriculture means that we're moving closer towards communism." When he learned that Yang had been a carpenter, he said, "That's great! Now you must apply your skills to mechanization." These warm words were not lost on Yang, who later learned from Ah-sheng that the man was the new county Party secretary.

When they returned to the village, Ah-sheng outlined the long-term plans for the countryside at their night-school sessions. Yang could hardly sleep and spent nights on end tossing and turning in bed.

Thinking he was ill, his wife finally got up one night, intending to fetch the barefoot doctor. However, Yang jumped out of bed immediately, exclaiming, "But there's nothing wrong with me." He threw a jacket over his shoulders and slipped into the next room where he switched on the light and began hammering something. Before dawn, he went to the brigade repair shop and persuaded two young men to lend him a hand. A few days later, Yang trundled a queer-looking contraption down to the fields. When the others saw what it was used for they gave it the name "home-made ditch-digger".

From then on, his pencil stuck behind his ear, Yang spent all his spare time wielding an axe or a saw. The brigade wall-newspaper soon carried an article entitled, "Veteran Carpenter Turns Inventor in the Movement to Mechanize Agriculture." Whenever anyone came to see him they found him rummaging through a pile of scrap-iron and left-over pieces of wood, which he would measure, murmuring to himself. People began to say that it was an obsession and they were not far wrong, for he often went without eating or sleeping while tinkering with one of his projects. If his wife complained, he would narrow his eyes and say, "Do you want me to buy you glasses so that you can see more clearly? Didn't you hear what Ah-sheng said? I'm trying to free our hands and raise production."

That was why he had rushed back from his daughter's house to see how the new machine worked, not even tasting the delicious lunch his daughter had prepared. He had come with fervour to lend the technicians a hand. Who would have thought that Li would react like that? Yang was still standing before the lighted window, fuming, when something said inside drew his attention. He listened, then let out a long sigh and muttered, "I'll show you it isn't so easy to dampen my spirits. I'll take that cold water you doused me with and make it boil. You want blueprints, eh? Well, you'll get them." He stomped home, his hands behind his back.

His wife had been thinking of scolding him, but on seeing his expression thought better of it, for she realized he had something important on his mind.

"Hi. Get me a big sheet of paper."

His wife never contradicted him at such moments. So she opened her sewing bag and took out the paper she had been saving to make a pattern for some new shoes.

"It isn't big enough."

She thought a moment, then went to the cupboard and took out a paper packet. She opened it, poured the seeds on the table, and handed her husband the crumpled brown wrapping paper.

"Are you dumb! I need a big sheet of white writing paper."

In a quandary, she tapped one hand against the palm of the other and tried to reason with him. "You've never been to school and neither have I. No one in the house can read or write for that matter. Where do you expect me to get a big sheet of writing paper from?"

Yang scratched his head and began pacing up and down. Then he climbed up to the attic and brought down a small wooden chest. Undoing the padlock, he opened the chest and took out the paper on top, a certificate for excellent work in learning from Tachai, given him by the commune the previous year. He picked up the next sheet. It was a certificate for being a model commune member awarded him two years before. The third sheet turned out to be a portrait entitled "The Foolish Old Man with Clever Hands" that an artist had drawn of Yang when they were digging irrigation ditches three years before. When he fished out the last sheet of paper from the chest, his lips under the stubby black moustache parted in a grin. It was a thick, yellowed piece of paper, with one side blank.

"I've found a clean sheet of paper!" he declared happily. But when he took a better look at it, his mouth dropped open. It was the title-deed given him during Land Reform. As he squatted over the chest holding the deed in both hands, memories of the past surged through his mind.

The year the elementary agricultural co-operative was set up, Yang talked his wife into joining and was the first to hand in his title-deed, for he was determined to take the road pointed out by Chairman Mao. His request was granted and the deed, now stamped with the words "put into the co-operative", was returned to him as a souvenir. He cherished this souvenir, remembering how poor his ancestors had

been — never had they owned land or houses. Their only possessions had been the two crude tools he had inherited from his father. Chairman Mao and the Communist Party had given him land, but he and all the others had decided to pool their fields to form a co-operative. He was now one of the masters of all the land in their co-operative! To him both that deed and the simple, distinct red stamp indicating that he was a co-op member were precious. They marked the starting point of a new life for him. . . .

Yang gazed thoughtfully at the deed, then looked up at the portrait of Chairman Mao. He finally put the deed on the table and smoothed it out, murmuring half to himself and half to his wife, "It'd be nice to use it to make a draft." Yang opened his notebook, took the pencil stub from behind his ear and began drawing on the back of the deed. As he worked, he pursed his lips, which from time to time curled into a smile, half hidden by his moustache. Each time his wife woke up that night, she saw him sitting over the "blueprint", with the same smile on his lips. Yang did not finish until the cock crowed three times and it was already light outside.

5

That morning, Yang went to the commune office and handed the "blueprint" to Li who was beside himself with astonishment. This old carpenter certainly keeps his word, he thought, but when he looked closely at it, he nearly laughed out loud. What kind of a blueprint was that? The "circles" were egg-shaped and the "straight" lines were crooked. How could any one use that to make precise calculations? But knowing Yang's character, he did not reject it outright. Instead, he pretended to study it attentively. At last, he nodded. "Just leave it here. The technicians will use it for reference. I'll call you if we need your help."

Yang looked Li straight in the eye. "You may think I'm only a country bumpkin, Comrade Li, but at least I don't beat about the bush. I know you're ready to burst with laughter at my clumsy drawings. I don't mind one bit. I just hope you'll consider my suggestions."

Li avoided Yang's gaze. "Certainly," he replied and watched Yang leave, shaking his head at that receding figure. Then he stuffed the "blueprint" away in a drawer and went on with his work.

Wasn't Li worried about the machine's shortcomings? He was in fact very worried. He had proposed that the technical group return to the county town at once to finish working on it, but the others had disagreed, saying that it would be like "building a cart behind closed doors". They claimed that they had failed for that very reason and that they could only improve the seedling-baler after working in the paddy fields themselves. Li countered that it would take too long, reminding them that the big meeting at which each brigade was to announce its determination to speed up mechanization was only two months away and that the machine absolutely had to be finished by then. He added that if they didn't finish it on time, as head of the research section he would be too embarrassed to show his face on the platform.

But in the end Li had to give in and let the others stay behind in the commune where they would help transplant seedlings in different brigades. Li himself was to return to the county town to hunt through their files for articles on similar machines invented in other counties or provinces. Before leaving, he made a pile of all his books and papers so as not to forget anything at the last minute, but Yang's "blueprint" remained in the drawer.

It so happened that the commune office was left unoccupied for over a month, for it was the busy season and most of the commune cadres had left for the brigades. The "blueprint" lay forgotten in the drawer — but not forgotten by all for it was never far from Old Yang's thoughts, though he was busy from morning till evening every day. Twice Ah-sheng phoned Li in the county town, but only got vague answers to his questions.

One day Yang decided he could wait no longer and hitched a ride on a brigade tractor leaving to fetch chemical fertilizer in town. He went straight to the county Party committee building, found the research section's office and opened the door without bothering to knock. Li looked up from the notes he was making for his talk at

the big meeting on mechanization. When he saw who it was, he suddenly remembered the "blueprint".

Li half stood up and greeted him awkwardly. "Well, well! Comrade Yang. . . . Please take a seat."

However Yang remained standing and asked pointblank, "Have you finished the machine, Comrade Li? I want to know if you've used my suggestions?"

Smoothing back his hair, Li replied coolly, "We've finished the new designs. Your ideas are interesting, but we haven't used them."

Yang took a deep breath and stretched out his hand. "Give me my 'blueprint' back then."

"What for?" Li laughed drily. "It's nothing but waste paper."

Yang stamped his foot. "How dare you call it waste paper? It's my most precious possession!"

"I know you must have spent a long time working on it," Li replied soothingly. "It probably kept you from your work in the fields.



You know what I'll do? I'll write the brigade a note so that you'll be given compensation workpoints for. . . ."

"You . . . you. . . ." Yang was trembling with rage. He clenched his hands until the knuckles whitened. "Did you design that machine just to get workpoints? That's no way for a leading cadre to talk."

Li's expression became grim. "Then I take back my offer. From now on, just stop butting in on our work."

Yang nearly choked with fury. Gasping, he cried, "I won't ever stop!"

"What right have you to say that?" Li laughed sardonically.

Yang thumped his chest with his fist as he retorted, "The right of a commune member advancing towards communism and a member of the Communist Party."

Though anger, annoyance and apprehension were welling up in him at once, Li kept outwardly calm. "Go ahead and tell the leadership what you think," he said coolly. "But please don't disturb me any longer."

"So I'm disturbing you, eh? But it's you who's disturbing us. You're not making things smooth for our movement to learn from Tachai and mechanize agriculture. I sure will tell the leadership what I think." At that Yang stormed out of the room.

When he got home, two unexpected visitors were waiting for him, Party secretary Ah-sheng and a stranger, who at second glance turned out to be Han Cheng, the new county Party secretary whom he had met before. Yang went up to shake hands with Han Cheng. "You're our county Party secretary, aren't you? What good wind brought you here?"

"Just call me Old Han, comrade," Han Cheng replied warmly. "I've come especially to see the comrade who's so set on innovating." He pulled a yellowed sheet of paper from his briefcase and showed it to Yang. "Look." It was the extraordinary "blueprint" Yang had drawn up over a month before.

Yang's moustached mouth split into a grin. "So you're the one who had it!"

"One of our commune cadres came across it while Comrade Han was in their office," Ah-sheng explained. "He was immediately intrigued by this stamped title-deed covered with diagrams!"

"I've shown it to several technicians," Han Cheng announced. "They understood your drawing and think you've put your finger on the problem."

Yang looked solemnly at the county Party secretary. "This drawing has brought me a lot of trouble, but I've learned something important from it all. We can't mechanize agriculture if we don't have a correct political line."

"That's right!" Han Cheng nodded.

6

The county meeting on mechanizing agriculture had been going on for two hours and the representatives on the platform had stood up one after the other to speak about their determination and plans. The audience noticed that the two men sitting beside the county Party secretary had still not spoken. One, a peasant in his fifties with a pencil stub stuck behind his ear, sat very straight, his head high. The other was a cadre in his forties. He held a roll of paper on his lap and kept his eyes on the floor.

Warm applause broke out as the county Party secretary rose to make the concluding speech. Han Cheng walked up to the rostrum holding Yang's "blueprint" and explained to everyone in graphic detail who the uninvited "delegate" was. Though he did not mention any names when he told the story of the "blueprint", the audience noticed that the cadre sitting beside the uninvited "delegate" bowed his head still lower.

Han Cheng concluded: "Land Reform put an end to the feudal exploitation and oppression of the broad masses of the peasants. The co-operative movement and the setting up of people's communes liberated us from the fetters of private property. Ever since the beginning of the Cultural Revolution, the movement to learn from Tachai has been progressing by leaps and bounds. This is another deep-going revolution; it will further liberate our labour power through

the mechanization of agriculture. But if we want to carry this movement through successfully, we must never forget the importance of a correct political line.”

At this point the uninvited “delegate” jumped to his feet, beside himself with excitement, and began clapping loudly. . . .

Illustrated by Liu Hsi-li



POEMS REBUTTING THE RIGHT DEVIATIONIST WIND

Teng Hsiao-ping, the arch unrepentant capitalist-roader within the Party, vainly hoping to reverse the correct verdicts made during the Cultural Revolution, was responsible for launching a Right deviationist trend. Righteously indignant, the Chinese people led by Chairman Mao and the Party's Central Committee joined in a mass movement to criticize and rebut Teng's counter-revolutionary revisionist line. Here we publish five poems chosen from many appearing in the daily newspapers during this movement.

— The Editors

Wang Tu

We Shall Charge On

To the accompaniment of wind and waves,
Our men and women, young and old, perform,
Singing aloud from the new model operas;
Such battle songs usher in the sunny spring.

Singing strengthens determination, warms our hearts,
Our eyes see clearly the road ahead.

Wang Tu is the militia leader of Hsiao-chin-chuang Brigade.

If someone starts an evil wind,
Boldly we'll sail against it.

Operatic heroes lift our hearts sky-high;
Staunchly we'll advance to crush revisionism;
Like Tachai, we'll grasp class struggle, the key link;
Loyal hearts and iron fists will transform our land.

We'll sing these model operas every day, never ceasing;
No difficulties, no dangers can deter us.
As revolutionaries why should we fear sudden storms?
We shall charge on against wind and waves.



Wei Wen-chung

We Poor and Lower-Middle Peasants Will Brook No Evil

We poor and lower-middle peasants will brook no evil;
Our eyes are keen; our determination firm as iron.
We are sure of the revolutionary road ahead;
Nine strong oxen cannot drag us from it;
Even if we face mountains of swords ahead,
We shall go forward.

Braving chill winds we go to night-school;
Stubborn as mules we persist in studying Marxism.
With voices untrained, we gaily sing the new operas;
With our calloused hands we dare to write new poems
Expressing our determination to keep our country red.

Wei Wen-chung is an old poor peasant of Hsiao-chin-chuang Brigade.

The road ahead is by no means smooth;
Some will always spread vile rumours, evil taunts;
But now, studying political theory, we realize
That all through this socialist period
There will be sharp class struggle.
Come on! Let's confront this new evil wind!

Our night-school is a beacon that lights our hearts;
So many new things brighten up our world.
Our girls all sing Tieh-mei's* arias;
Our boys all love to act Li Yu-ho;
Old couples coming on the stage together
Sing the parts of Granny Sha and Uncle Ah-chien.

We'll brook no evil, but dare to combat it;
Criticism meetings are enthusiastic!
Just look at our village, everything is new;
So numerous are the changes socialism has brought.
If there had been no Cultural Revolution,
How could we have enjoyed such happiness today?

We poor and lower-middle peasants will brook no evil;
We'll remember for ever Chairman Mao's instructions.
We'll resist this Right deviationist wind;
And outstrip the achievements of the Cultural Revolution.
Forward! We'll advance and brave this evil wind;
Step by step, singing our songs we shall win the victory.

*Tieh-mei and Li Yu-ho are heroic characters in the modern revolutionary Peking opera *The Red Lantern*; Granny Sha is a heroine in the opera *Shachiapang*; Uncle Ah-chien is a heroic character in the opera *Song of the Dragon River*.

Peals of Spring Thunder in Our Mill

Cotton is piled up in snow-white hills,
Woven fabrics roll from the looms in waves.
Our hearts sing with joy
For Spring has come to our mill.
Bright colours among the white cotton
Add to its beauty.

Look, the shuttles fly through a sea of silver threads,
Levers on the looms gleam like red camellias.
Here a girl is practising a new technique;
On the wall there's a new red poster.
This girl's brows are moist with sweat,
Her cheeks glow with excitement.

Lu Ping is a worker in the Shanghai No. 2 Cotton Mill.

She's a worker who was sent away to study;
Now she's returned to her former job,
To participate in the new spring production drive.
She's tied red and green markers on her loom,
It looks as pretty as a flowering bush.

See these youngsters who've come to help,
They're steady but full of life;
They all wear new red armbands
As bright as unfolding peony buds.
The Party secretary helps with the winding
Exerting himself and sweating too;
The numbers sewn on our uniforms
Are in bright peach-blossom pink.
So many colours intermingle
The scene is really a very gay one.

Listen! Listen to this new broadcast,
It's our denunciation of the capitalist-roaders:
"Grasp class struggle, overfulfill the target!"
Let's disperse the Right deviationist wind
Amid peals of spring thunder
And the roll of battle drums.
Tens of thousands of us women textile workers,
Using pens as weapons, are writing posters.
The big debate makes the spring even more lively;
Its warmth fills our hearts.

Ah! Caressed by the spring breeze
And nourished by the spring rains,

So many flowers are blossoming.
During these ten years of the Cultural Revolution
We have weathered many storms,
No longer have we any fear.
Even if rain falls as fierce as a flight of arrows
And frost is sharper than knives,
We shall stand proudly in the raging tumult
Our blossoming more glorious in the storm.
With our faces turned towards the sun
We feel the situation in our motherland is excellent.



Han Ching-ting

The School Entrance

A fine avenue leads to our school entrance,
So many people use it now.
I felled the pine used for the school gate;
I carried the stones to pave the road,
But, when I gaze at the entrance, tears dim my eyes;
Such hatred fills me, mixed with such strong love. . . .

In the past I herded sheep for the landlord,
Each day I passed that gate.
Once when I dared to look in through a window,
The landlord had me brutally whipped.
Angry tears fell as I went on my way;
Scars of the whipping I still carry on my back.
The landlord cursed: "Clodhopper, how dare you come here.

Han Ching-ting is a PLA fighter.

Don't leave your filthy footmarks at our school gate."
The searing pain of the whip
Lit hatred in my heart.
I stamped in anger till the school gate shook.
For me it was the gateway to hell.

The year before the Cultural Revolution
I took my son to the school entrance.
For lack of "marks" he was not admitted
But left outside. For him the gate was closed.
The capitalist-roaders sneered at me:
"Your son is only good enough to till the soil. . . ."
I beat the school gate with my clenched fists.
Rage and hatred filled my heart. For my son
It still remained a bourgeois stronghold.

The Cultural Revolution changed everything;
We took the whole school by storm.
Before it, we set up a platform
And we clodhoppers stood upon it,
Thoroughly denouncing the capitalist-roaders.
Now we poor and lower-middle peasants control education,
A new generation of students passes through these gates,
Training in the rural areas to be staunch revolutionaries.
These fine young saplings are sent out
To take root in the countryside.
I can never praise it enough;
This school entrance now leads to the furnace
Where revolutionaries are steeled and tempered.

Though spring has come and flowers are blooming,
Class struggle at the school entrance still continues.
Remember how students of worker-peasant origin were once dismissed.

The scars on my back refresh my memory;
Bitterness still fills my heart.

The capitalist-roaders are still on the capitalist road;
We revolutionaries must continue to keep up the fight.

Every day we must renew class struggle,
Defend our rights on the educational front.

Our school gate faces the sun; it must remain wide open;

We must never deviate from the correct line,

Which is to run schools in the open-door way.

Chairman Mao's revolutionary line must never be changed.

This school entrance is an advance post of the proletariat.



"I've Come to Learn" (New-Year Picture) by Kuo Hsien-li

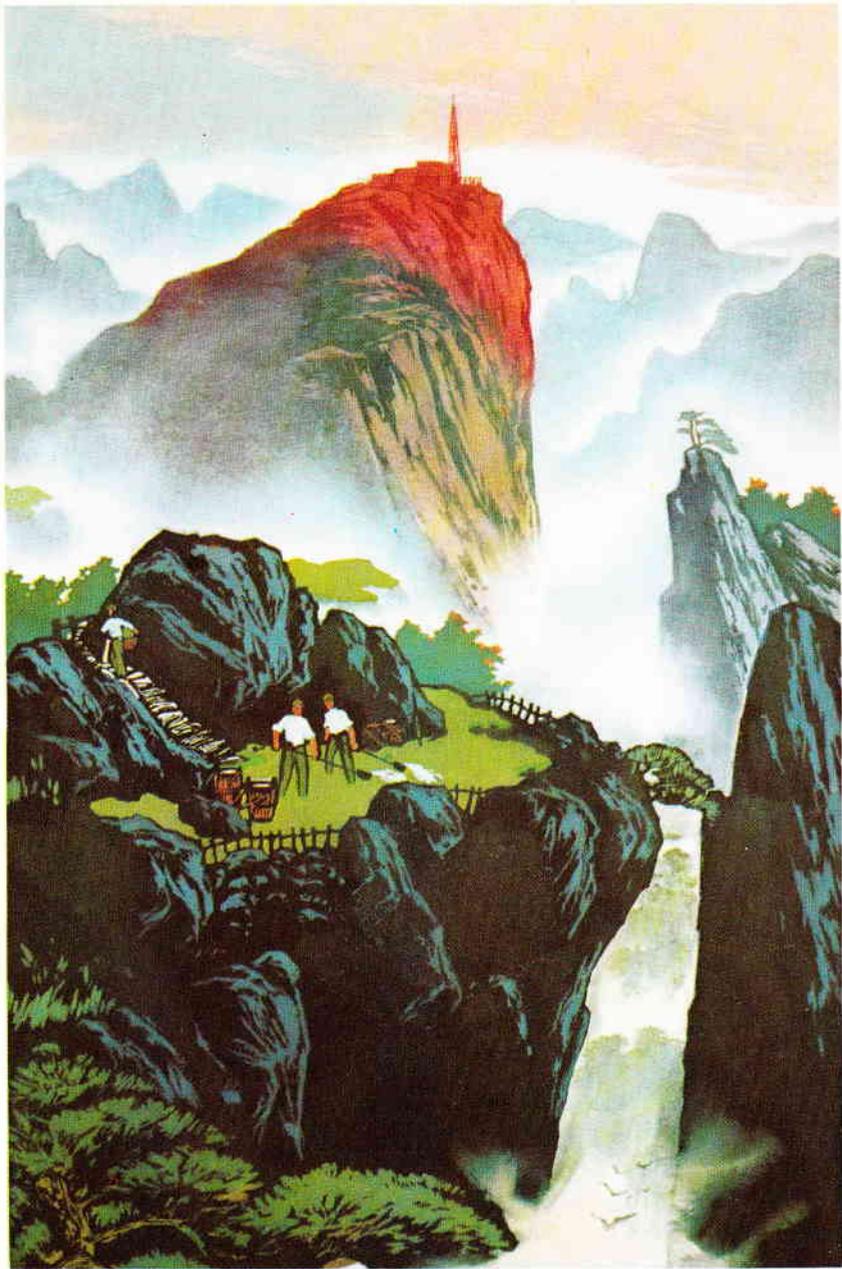
From the Exhibition of Art Works by PLA Soldiers



"You've Given Us a Good Lecture" (oil painting) by Sun Hsueh-yen



Our Army Advances Towards the Red Sun (woodcut) by an amateur art group of the Nanking unit



A New Landscape (woodcut) by Hsiao Cheng-kuo



After the Performance (traditional Chinese painting) by Chang Tzu-hu



On Manoeuvre (oil painting) by Shang Ting



Under the Apple Trees (gouache) by Wang Hsin-min

Yang Hsing-huo

Message from Tibet

This letter written with intense feeling
Comes from the snow-clad Himalayas;
It is sent to the Peking militia;*
From a militiaman in far distant Tibet.

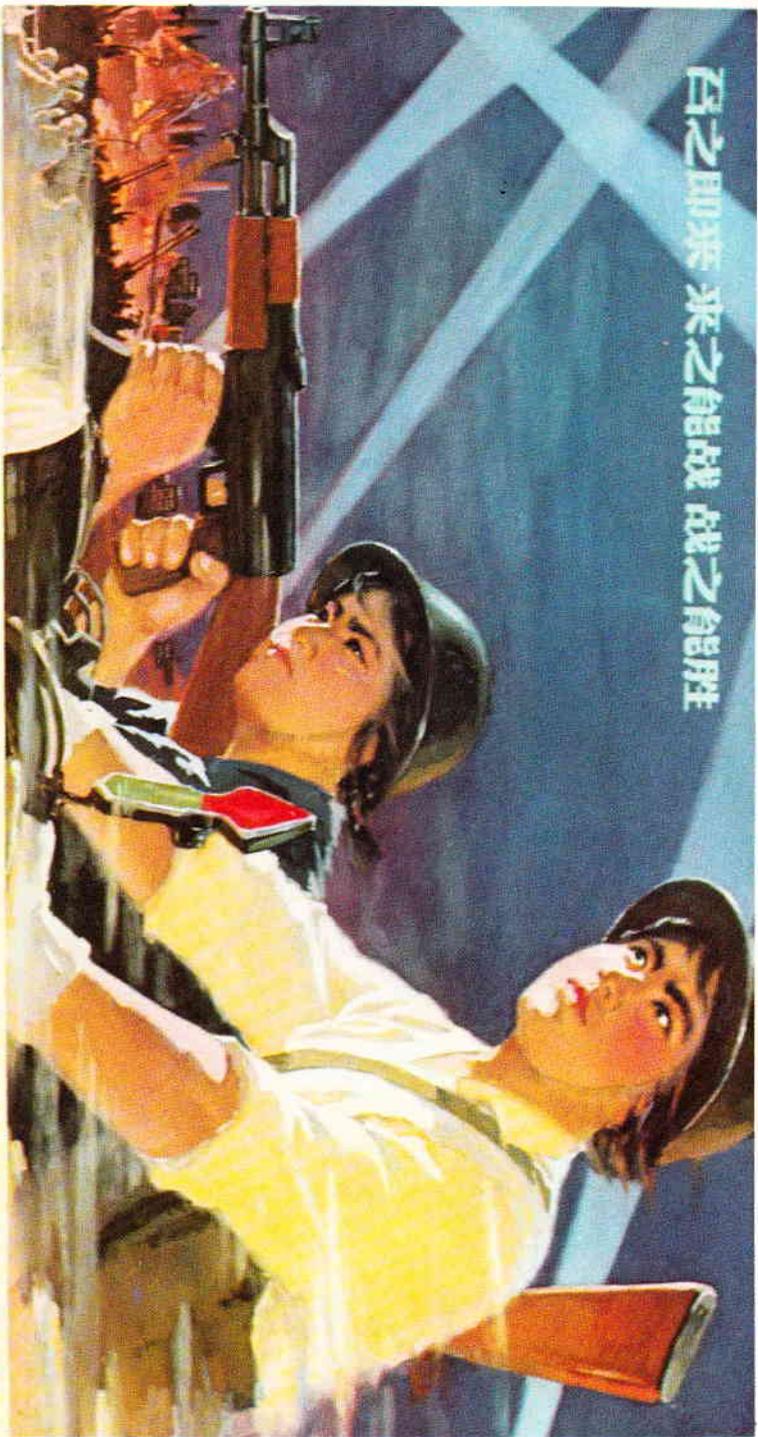
We want to send you a flame-red alpine flower;
And present you with a snow-white *hata***
To convey to you our heartfelt wishes,
You heroes and heroines of our capital city.

The Gate of Heavenly Peace is linked with our plateau;
Tien An Men Square is bound to our Tibetan frontier post,

Yang Hsing-huo is a PLA soldier.

*Influenced by the Right deviationist trend to reverse correct verdicts started by Teng Hsiao-ping, a small group of reactionary hooligans created a counter-revolutionary incident in Tien An Men Square on April 5 this year. Assisted by the police and local garrison, Peking's Workers' Militia swiftly smashed the enemy's attempt to cause disturbances.

**Scarf popular in Tibet.



百之即来 来之能战 战之能胜

加强民兵训练 做好反侵略战争的准备

We feel we were fighting beside you,
When you battled with those reactionary hooligans.

Storms over the capital are interwoven with those on our frontier;
We heard your songs of victory across the snowy peaks;
When you celebrated victory with red flags flying,
Crimson clouds rose above our boundless plateau.

Gazing at the pines along our frontier post
We are reminded of those at Tien An Men Square.
Our hearts are one; though thousands of miles stretch between us,
Together we dedicate our youth to our socialist motherland.



NOTES ON LITERATURE AND ART

Yen Feng

Continue to Advance Along Chairman Mao's Line on Literature and Art

— Notes on Studying the “Talks at the Yen-an Forum on Literature and Art”

Ten whole years have passed since the start of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution initiated and led by Chairman Mao. During these ten years, with Chairman Mao's *Yenan Talks* as the shining beacon, the proletarian revolution in literature and art exemplified by the model revolutionary theatrical works, an important component of the Cultural Revolution, has also won great victories.

Chairman Mao's *Yenan Talks* summarizes comprehensively the historical experience of the struggle between the proletarian and the bourgeois lines on the cultural front and criticizes all manner of bourgeois and revisionist ideas in literature and art. It has formulated for our Party the only correct revolutionary line on literature and art.

In his *Yenan Talks* Chairman Mao points out clearly: “**This question of ‘for whom?’ is fundamental; it is a question of principle.**” “. . . all our literature and art are for the masses of the people, and in the first place for the workers, peasants and soldiers; they

are created for the workers, peasants and soldiers and are for their use.” This line specified by Chairman Mao that literature and art must serve the workers, peasants and soldiers expresses the demand made on literature and art by the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat, the demand of the masses, and the clearly partisan principle of proletarian literature and art. It is by advancing along this line that the proletarian revolution in literature and art exemplified by the model theatrical works has won victory.

The start of this proletarian revolution in literature and art was by no means fortuitous but the inevitable outcome of the struggles between the two opposing classes, roads and lines during the socialist period. After our country advanced from the new democratic revolution to the socialist revolution the bourgeoisie within our Party, Liu Shao-chi and his ilk, whose counter-revolutionary aim was to overthrow the dictatorship of the proletariat, simultaneously carried out a revisionist political line to restore capitalism and a revisionist line in literature and art to oppose Chairman Mao’s revolutionary line. During the seventeen years before the Cultural Revolution the whole field of literature and art was dominated by this black revisionist line; the glorious teachings in the *Yenan Talks* were distorted, and Chairman Mao’s revolutionary line was not implemented. As a result, poisonous weeds grew apace and monsters were rampant, while a swarm of zombies emerged to fill our literary and art works — films, dramas, stage entertainments, fine arts, music and dance. The bourgeoisie, both inside and outside the Party, used all these literary and art forms to create counter-revolutionary mass opinion for the restoration of capitalism. With the backing of Liu Shao-chi, a small clique of revisionists usurped the leadership of literature and art, recruited a host of renegades and capitulationists as their followers, and put bourgeois intellectuals in control of all departments of art and culture.

Under the domination of this black revisionist line, the situation in the cultural field became extremely grave. As Chairman Mao pointed out sharply in his two instructions concerning literature and art in 1963 and 1964, **“The social and economic base has changed, but the arts as part of the superstructure, which serve this base, still remain a serious problem.”** *“In recent years, they have slid right*

down to the brink of revisionism. Unless they remould themselves in real earnest, at some future date they are bound to become groups like the Hungarian Petofi Club.” This serious warning issued by Chairman Mao pointed out explicitly that revisionism was currently the main danger. If we allowed the bourgeoisie both within and without the Party to occupy the realm of literature and art, this would inevitably lead to the complete restoration of capitalism, with the dictatorship of the proletariat turning into dictatorship by the bourgeoisie. **“We couldn’t do without the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution.”** A proletarian revolution in literature and art was also imperative and inevitable.

Chairman Mao instructed us in his *Yenan Talks*: **“In the world today all culture, all literature and art belong to definite classes and are geared to definite political lines.”** Politics, whether revolutionary or counter-revolutionary, means a struggle between classes. Revolutionary struggles in ideology and art must be subservient to the political struggle. Guided by the *Yenan Talks*, the revolution in Peking opera which started in 1964 raised the curtain for the revolution in literature and art. After this, Chairman Mao himself initiated and led the movement to criticize the opera *Hai Jui Dismissed from Office*;^{*} thus the attack against Liu Shao-chi’s bourgeois headquarters was launched by first criticizing representative figures of the bourgeoisie in the ideological and cultural spheres. The May 16, 1966 *Circular* of the Party Central Committee drawn up under the personal guidance of Chairman Mao laid bare the reactionary nature of the “February Outline Report”^{**} produced by the counter-revolutionary revisionist Peng Chen with the backing of Liu Shao-chi. A clarion call to start a great political revolution, the *Circular* called on the Party members and people of the whole country to raise high

^{*}A reactionary opera concocted by the bourgeois scholar Wu Han who used the story of the feudal official Hai Jui in Chinese history to attack by insinuation the Chinese Communist Party and the socialist system and to reverse the verdicts passed on the Right opportunist within the Party, Peng Teh-huai who was dismissed from office.

^{**}A reactionary programme produced by Liu Shao-chi, Peng Chen and their ilk to suppress the rising tide of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution and protect the capitalist-roaders in the Party.

the banner of proletarian cultural revolution, to thoroughly expose and criticize bourgeois representatives within the Party and to seize the leadership in various sectors which they had usurped. The great victory of the Cultural Revolution smashed Liu Shao-chi's bourgeois headquarters and eradicated the black revisionist line in literature and art. Rushing forward like a mighty torrent with the victorious tide of the Cultural Revolution, the revolution in literature and art swept away the filth in this field, bringing in new scenes to replace the old in our socialist literature and art. Profound changes of great historic significance have taken place in ideology and creative practice as well as in the contingents of writers and artists.

Chairman Mao has pointed out in his *Yenan Talks* that to start a struggle in the realm of literature and art **"requires our first doing so ideologically, our launching a struggle of proletarian ideology against non-proletarian ideology"**. Instances of class struggle in the realm of literature and art show that unless we criticize bourgeois and revisionist ideas in this field we cannot ensure the advance of our proletarian literature and art along Chairman Mao's revolutionary line. The rule of the revisionist line in literature and art during the seventeen years before the Cultural Revolution was manifested above all in the dominance of revisionist ideology opposed to Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought. Claptrap such as "truthful writing", "the broad path of realism", "the deepening of realism", "opposition to subject matter as the decisive factor", "writing about middle characters", "opposition to the smell of gunpowder" and "the merging of various trends as the spirit of the age" was typical of this revisionist line in literature and art; while its central slogan was "a literature and art of the whole people".

This slogan, derived from Liu Shao-chi's theory of the "dying out of class struggle", epitomises the reactionary nature of the revisionist line in literature and art. Politically, it denies that during the socialist period there still exist classes, class contradictions and class struggle; it opposes our Party's basic line. In literature and art, it denies the class character of literature and art and opposes Chairman Mao's proletarian revolutionary line in this field. In essence, this reactionary line aims at doing away with proletarian literature and art and going

all out for bourgeois and revisionist literature and art. The bourgeoisie and the revisionists who deny the class character of literature and art refuse to acknowledge the objective fact of class struggle, precisely so as to cover up the class struggle they are waging against the proletariat.

Chairman Mao pointed out: **"Liu Shao-chi advocated the theory of the dying out of class struggle, but he himself never ceased to wage class struggle. He wanted to protect his bunch of renegades and sworn followers."** It was the same in the realm of literature and art. The bourgeoisie inside the Party, Liu Shao-chi and his ilk, preached "a literature and art of the whole people" in order to oppose the line that literature and art should serve the workers, peasants and soldiers. They wanted literature and art to serve the bourgeoisie and those "high officials" who were carrying out the revisionist line, to protect those renegades and enemy agents and their accomplices within the Party.

During the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, the revolutionary literary and art workers and the revolutionary masses thoroughly debunked such revisionist theories as "a literature and art of the whole people", exposing their reactionary class nature and clearing up the confused thinking which had long prevailed in this field. Only then did Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought truly begin to occupy the ideological front in literature and art and clear away the obstacles to the proletarian revolution in literature and art, opening up a wide road for proletarian literature and art, expediting their flourishing and further development and ensuring that literature and art became really **"powerful weapons for uniting and educating the people and for attacking and destroying the enemy"**.

As a result of the Cultural Revolution, our writers and artists became quite clear through practice about the problem of what to depict and whom to eulogize, and the representatives of the exploiting classes who had long dominated our stage were swept away. Already thirty-four years ago in the *Yenan Talks* Chairman Mao had emphasized that revolutionary literary and art workers should depict the new people and the new world. Chairman Mao said: **"Why should we not eulogize the people, the creators of the history of mankind?"**

In 1944 Chairman Mao further pointed out in his letter to the Yenan Peking Opera Theatre: **“History is made by the people, yet the old opera (and all the old literature and art, which are divorced from the people) presents the people as though they were dirt, and the stage is dominated by lords and ladies and their pampered sons and daughters.”** To reverse this reversal of history and make the heroic images of workers, peasants and soldiers occupy the stage is the basic task of our socialist literature and art. Unless we solve this problem, we cannot consolidate the political and economic control of the proletariat. The landlord and bourgeois classes who had always monopolized culture would not allow the labouring masses any place either in politics or in culture. Even after their political and economic rule was overthrown, they tried to use their advantageous position in the ideological and cultural spheres to keep a stubborn grasp of the stage which they had usurped for centuries. The clearest manifestation of the black revisionist line in literature and art during the seventeen years before the Cultural Revolution was their desperate attempt to make lords and ladies and their pampered sons and daughters dominate the stage. Under the control of Liu Shao-chi and his followers, the Ministry of Culture turned into a ministry of “feudal princes and high officials, feudal young masters and young ladies, and dead foreigners”. This domination of the stage by the “dead” showed that the overthrown landlords and bourgeoisie were unwilling to relinquish their past position; it also showed the wild ambition of Liu Shao-chi and his henchmen, the bourgeoisie within the Party, to sabotage the dictatorship of the proletariat and to restore capitalism.

In our socialist society, workers, peasants and soldiers have become the masters of our country, but on the stage they were still presented as “dirt”. How could we tolerate such a situation? To do so would have been tantamount to allowing the landlords and bourgeoisie to reverse history and monopolize our culture, and giving free rein to capitalism and revisionism. The great achievement of the proletarian revolution in literature and art is that it has swept away all those feudal characters and zombies from the stage, and created more and more model revolutionary theatrical works which are enthusias-

tically welcomed by the masses, making the splendid heroic images of workers, peasants and soldiers dominate the stage. Inspired by the model revolutionary theatrical works, other forms of literature and art are now depicting and eulogizing the workers, peasants and soldiers too — this has become the new vogue. Now, for the first time, the masters of our socialist society have become the masters of our stage as well. This is of immense practical and historical significance in opposing and preventing revisionism and consolidating the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Another important achievement of our proletarian revolution in literature and art is that bourgeois intellectuals can no longer control our art and literature, and the foundation has been laid for establishing a revolutionary contingent of writers and artists for the proletariat. Chairman Mao has always paid great attention to this question. As he stated clearly in the *Yenan Talks*, **“To defeat the enemy we must rely primarily on the army with guns. But this army alone is not enough; we must also have a cultural army, which is absolutely indispensable for uniting our own ranks and defeating the enemy.”**

However, before the Cultural Revolution, many literary and art organizations and “associations” controlled by Liu Shao-chi’s clique had become strongholds of bourgeois rule. Thus a thorough transformation of our contingent of artists and writers was needed to avoid jeopardizing the cause of proletarian revolution. In the course of the Cultural Revolution the proletariat eliminated the renegades, enemy agents and counter-revolutionary revisionists who had infiltrated the ranks of our writers and artists and wrested the power from them, and during this struggle a contingent of revolutionary writers and artists grew up and gained in strength. The process of producing the model revolutionary theatrical works built up an important contingent of cadres for the proletariat; and new blood has been infused into it by the growth of a large group of writers and artists of worker-peasant-soldier origin; while as a result of the lessons they learned in the Cultural Revolution the majority of former literary and art workers have transformed their outlook.

These profound changes in the ranks of our cultural workers, especially the emergence of new forces, are fine achievements of the revolution in literature and art. We must consolidate and further develop them and, under the guidance of Chairman Mao's revolutionary line, build up our contingent into a powerful cultural army for the proletariat to unite our own ranks and defeat the enemy.

The proletarian revolution in literature and art exemplified by the model theatrical works has faithfully carried out Chairman Mao's revolutionary line in literature and art and has won through a splendid series of struggles. Since it is an important component part of the Cultural Revolution, every victory it has won adds to the achievement of the Cultural Revolution. To belittle it means belittling the Cultural Revolution. Teng Hsiao-ping, the arch unrepentant capitalist-roader in our Party, formulated the revisionist programme of "taking the three directives as the key link"* and fanned up a big Right deviationist wind to reverse correct verdicts. He fulminated that this, that and the other must all be "put right", including our literature and art. What he wanted, essentially, was to negate the revolution in literature and art, reverse the correct verdicts passed in the Cultural Revolution and settle accounts with it. As everyone remembers, before the Cultural Revolution when black clouds loomed over the cultural field and sinister winds were springing up on all sides, Teng Hsiao-ping never suggested that literature and art must be "put right". Instead, he and Liu Shao-chi were the men behind the scenes supporting the black revisionist line in literature and art. Today when the proletarian revolution in this sphere has won great victories, he wants

*A revisionist programme dished up by Teng Hsiao-ping in the spring of 1975. It is a distortion of Chairman Mao's instructions by putting his directives on promoting stability and unity and on pushing the national economy forward on a par with the directive on studying the theory of the proletarian dictatorship and combating and preventing revisionism, describing all three as the key link of all work. This trick of confusing the primary with the secondary and replacing the primary with the secondary is an eclectic sleight-of-hand aimed at covering up the contradiction between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie which is the principal contradiction under socialism. The programme opposes taking class struggle as the key link, distorts the Party's basic line and its essence is to restore capitalism.

to "put right" literature and art. Isn't his vicious scheme to negate the revolution obvious?

By "putting right" literature and art, Teng Hsiao-ping meant annulling Chairman Mao's revolutionary line which he had wildly attacked as incorrect. In essence, his attack was aimed at Chairman Mao's line in literature and art. The struggle between these two lines is irreconcilable. What Teng regarded as "correct" was the domination of the revisionist line in literature and art. It was because the revolution in literature and art ended the domination of Liu Shao-chi and his clique's revisionist line and faithfully implemented Chairman Mao's revolutionary line, winning a great victory, that Teng felt things were "wrong". By slandering our revolutionary line as "wrong", he showed that his purpose in "putting things right" was to sweep away the correct line. As a result of his counter-revolutionary instigation, fantastic ideas were spread in literary and art circles. Typical of these was the proposal for "a reevaluation of the literature and art of the seventeen years before the Cultural Revolution" — a blatant attempt to reverse the correct verdict on the former revisionist line. This proves beyond a doubt that Teng aimed at a return to the revisionist line which would make literature and art instruments to sabotage the dictatorship of the proletariat and to restore capitalism.

If Teng had succeeded in "putting right" our literature and art, all those feudal characters and zombies would have returned to our stage. The revolution in literature and art had sent them packing, and a very good thing too, approved of by the proletariat and the broad labouring masses. Yet Teng leapt to the defence of those old emperors, generals and ministers, vociferating, "Those old operas were shown for years, but the revolution succeeded, didn't it?" This fully discloses the hatred this bourgeois representative in our Party felt over the fact that worker-peasant-soldier heroes are now dominating the stage. Since time immemorial no reactionary class has willingly relinquished its rule. Teng's hysterical ranting makes it clear that his attempt to "put right" literature and art was aimed at driving away our worker-peasant-soldier heroes from the

stage and bringing back the old feudal characters by counter-revolutionary revanchism.

Teng Hsiao-ping is an excellent teacher by negative example. His deep-seated hatred for the model revolutionary theatrical works and the revolution in literature and art, as well as the Right deviationist wind he whipped up in order to reverse correct verdicts, give us a good lesson by negative example of what class struggle means. He enables us to see that the struggle between the two classes and the two lines in literature and art is long-term, complex and sometimes very sharp. As long as the bourgeoisie exists, the struggle on the literary and art front will never cease. When the proletariat wants to advance, it must wage struggles and make revolution. Chairman Mao has instructed us: **“Without struggle, there is no progress.”** **“Will there be need for revolution a hundred years from now? Will there still be need for revolution a thousand years from now? There is always need for revolution.”**

Our task is a great one and the path is long; we must be mentally prepared for a protracted struggle. We must persist in continuing the revolution under the dictatorship of the proletariat, persist in struggle, persist in going forward. We must oppose retrogression and capitalist restoration. In our present movement to hit back at Right deviationism, we must take Chairman Mao's *Yenan Talks* as our weapon and criticize Teng Hsiao-ping's counter-revolutionary revisionist line from a firm, unequivocal standpoint, exposing his criminal attempt to attack and negate the revolution in literature and art. We must defend and further develop the great achievements of our revolution in literature and art and of the whole Cultural Revolution.

Recalling our past victories, we are filled with jubilation; looking at the revolutionary path ahead, we are full of confidence. As long as we abide by Chairman Mao's revolutionary line and the correct orientation of our revolution in literature and art, we will surely be able to bring about a transformation in ourselves and in our works, **“to create many fine works which will be warmly welcomed by the masses of the people”**, and to go from victory to greater victories in our fight to seize the position of literature and art from the bourgeoisie.

New Paintings by Soldiers

On entering the club of the Eighth Company of a certain unit of the Chinese People's Liberation Army, we saw that the walls were covered with gouaches, woodcuts, paper-cuts and sketches by rank-and-file fighters. The themes were so clear and the colours so fresh that we felt as if surrounded by wild flowers, blooming in lovely profusion. These works dealt with a wide range of subjects: repulsing the Right deviationist wind, studying the theory of the dictatorship of the proletariat, supporting new socialist things, drilling and making preparation against war, soldiers and civilians building 'Tachai-type fields together. . . .

Under the Apple Trees, a gouache by Wang Hsin-min, political instructor of the Eighth Company, shows fighters drilling under fruit-laden trees with a hot sun overhead. Although parched and perspiring profusely, no one has picked an apple. The well-disciplined fighters' revolutionary spirit — their imperviousness to hardship and fatigue — manifests the love of the people's army for the people. This is just one of more than a thousand paintings which the officers and men of this company, taking class struggle as the key link, have painted

in their spare time in the past three years. Their works have been exhibited more than a dozen times. And many other PLA units in China are equally active in this way.

The Exhibition of Art Works by PLA Soldiers held in Peking from December 1975 to February 1976 was a review of the art work done by soldiers in the past three years. The more than 640 exhibits gave heartfelt praise to the great victories of Chairman Mao's revolutionary line, the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution and new socialist phenomena, and conjured up many vivid images of fighters. It is only since the Cultural Revolution that so many art works by soldiers — as well as by workers and peasants — have been produced, enriching our country's art with their distinctively militant style.

Chairman Mao Teaches Us to Paint Revolutionary Paintings, the oil painting which attracted most attention at the exhibition, records a stirring scene in 1926 when Chairman Mao opened a course on revolutionary painting in the National Institute of Peasant Movement founded by him in Kwangchow. That day, to the great joy of the students in grey army uniforms, Chairman Mao entered their classroom. They showed him their paintings *Down with the Imperialist Powers!*, *Long Live Peasants' Associations!* and others. Chairman Mao talked warmly to them, encouraging them to learn to paint revolutionary paintings to help carry forward the peasant revolutionary movement.

The revolutionary art work of the People's Liberation Army, developing under the concern and guidance of Chairman Mao as depicted in this painting, has entered upon a completely new stage since the Cultural Revolution. The small number of professional artists in the army have regained their youthful vigour, while many fighters whose strong hands are used to holding rifles have taken up brushes too and started painting.

These art works by soldiers are characterized by the strong spirit of our age and the rich flavour of army life.

You've Given Us a Good Lecture depicts in oils some officers and fighters seeing off a factory worker who has given their company's political night-school a report on studying the theory of proletarian dictatorship. Their happy expressions show that they enjoyed the

lecture. The striking figure of a soldier asking questions conveys his conscientiousness as well as the patience of the worker-teacher.

Two traditional Chinese paintings *The Political Commissar's Office* and *The Borderland Welcomes You* portray the new outlook of our cadres and soldiers after studying the theory of proletarian dictatorship. The former shows a senior cadre taking the lead in restricting bourgeois rights by moving his office to the company to live and study with the fighters and make investigations there. The latter with fluent brushwork and bright colours shows demobilized fighters who, instead of returning to their homes in cities, have volunteered to go and settle down in Tibet where conditions are harder. It pays a glowing tribute to the fighters' revolutionary spirit — their determination to help diminish the differences between city and countryside and to break thoroughly with traditional ideas.

"I've Come to Learn", a New-Year picture and *After the Performance*, a traditional Chinese painting, deal with the comradely relationship between soldiers and villagers while lauding new socialist developments. *"I've Come to Learn"* depicts a woman army doctor visiting a model co-operative clinic to find out how things are going and to learn from the experience of its barefoot doctor as soon as her unit stops at a mountain village during a field manoeuvre. Painted by a twenty-two-year-old nurse, the picture is original in concept and by using the bright colouring and clear-cut outlines which characterize New-Year posters it makes a strong artistic impact. Besides presenting the glorious tradition that the PLA should learn from the people of the whole country, it also reflects the enthusiastic support of the army for the barefoot doctors and the co-operative medical system, which have recently emerged in the socialist countryside. *After the Performance* shows an exuberant scene after an army cultural propaganda team has performed a model revolutionary theatrical work for Tibetan villagers: the actors, still with their make-up on, are helping old people and children home. This picture reveals the Tibetan people's love for the model theatrical works and the good relations between the army and civilians.

The People's Liberation Army and countless militia units are drilling hard in order to safeguard our socialist revolution and socialist

construction and to prevent imperialism and social-imperialism from subverting and invading our country. Some of the paintings by soldiers portray troops and civilians digging tunnels to build a great underground defence network; some show that the army is prepared at all times to wipe out invaders; some depict forced crossings of rivers by large contingents, while others show the soldiers' determination to plant the red flag on Taiwan. *Drilling* gives a concise and powerful depiction of a company commander teaching a fighter to demolish a tank. Their expressions clearly manifest our army's daring to fight and to win.

Our Army Advances Towards the Red Sun is one of a series of woodcuts depicting the life of our sappers. To be ready to resist aggression these vigorous fighters, singing militant songs, march briskly towards a river to be trained in building bridges of all kinds under the actual conditions of modern warfare so that they can go to the front at any time and help their fraternal units to cross rivers and wipe out the enemy. *Be Prepared to Fight Against Aggression*, a poster, is a good portrayal of fighters without uniforms. The picture shows the militia drilling after dark. Searchlights rake the night sky in quest of enemy planes. Anti-aircraft guns are trained skyward in readiness. With loaded tommy-guns, militia men and women speed along the highway on motorcycles ready to fire as soon as they discover the enemy. The expressions of two militia women whose vigilant eyes are sparkling in the glare of the searchlights project the dauntlessness of our militia.

Besides safeguarding our socialist motherland, the People's Liberation Army helps in construction work. *The Flowers of Tachai Bloom at the Sentry Post* and *A New Landscape*, both woodcuts, affirm the PLA's tradition of hard struggle and self-reliance. *A New Landscape* shows a radar station deep in the mountains where green vegetables, growing in stony gullies, add new life to the rugged landscape. Hard-working fighters are watering the plots; a fiery sun beats down on the radar position; and a sturdy pine on the cliff facing it symbolizes the tenacity of our PLA fighters.

The broad masses of our fighters, by taking up painting brushes, have brought about a fundamental change in the old situation in which

art work was limited to a handful of professional artists. They are fighting with their painting brushes, just as with their rifles, to consolidate the proletarian dictatorship and realize communism. They practise with their brushes as they do with rifles and have created many moving works of art with their strong hands. **"Nothing is hard in this world if you dare to scale the heights."** *My Family History*, a series of woodcuts, is a good example of this. An Yi soldier Aniuwat's family had been slaves for generations until Liberation. After he joined the army, Aniuwat studied hard and his class consciousness was greatly raised. In the movement to criticize Lin Biao and Confucius, Aniuwat who had never touched an engraving knife before created *My Family History*. It shows how his family was broken up by the cruel slave owner and how his parents fought back. "Heavy was class oppression; deep the hatred of the fighters." With his engraving knife Aniuwat has made a scathing exposure of the class enemy's plot of restoration and retrogression. *Denunciation*, *Fight Back* and other works are directed against the crimes of the promoter of the Right deviationist wind, the arch capitalist-roader in the Party, Teng Hsiao-ping. They spur the fighters to struggle to the end against the Right deviationist wind.

These amateur painters are revolutionary fighters. Their paintings reveal to us the lofty spirit of our people's fighters so that we seem to hear the militant tramp of feet as the People's Liberation Army marches forward.

Some Taiping Stone Carvings

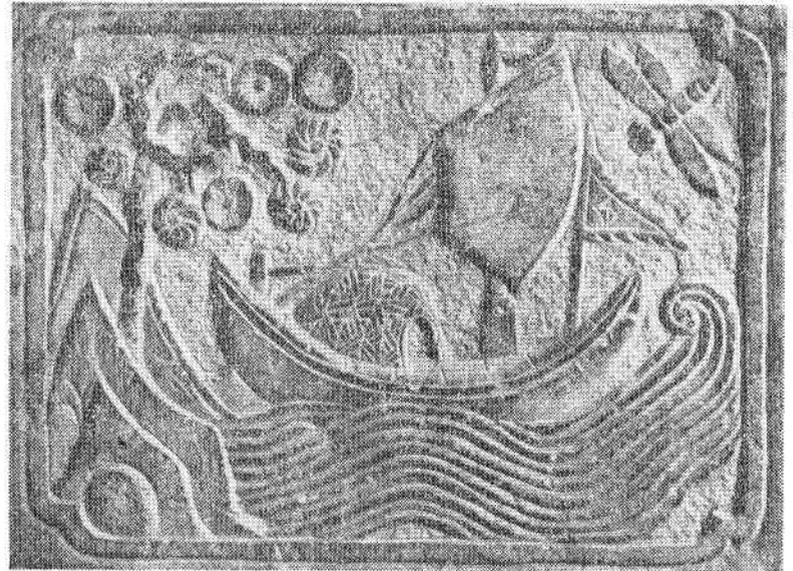
Twenty carved hexagonal and octagonal stone pillar bases were recently excavated on the site of the Main Communal Storehouse of the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom (1851-1864) on present-day Shengchou Street, Nanking. The height of these pediments ranges from 42 to 49 centimetres and all their sides are carved in bas-relief. In addition to ornamental floral designs they present 98 separate scenes dealing with a wide range of subjects but avoiding feudal concepts. The strongly militant style of many scenes is characteristic of the art of the Taiping Revolution.

The Taiping Revolution was the biggest peasant uprising in Chinese history and one of the most tempestuous struggles against imperialism and feudalism in nineteenth-century China. The insurgents took Nanking and set up a peasant political power there; but because of the joint suppression by foreign imperialists and Chinese feudal rulers, they were finally defeated. Nevertheless this great revolutionary movement wrote a glorious page which can never be effaced in the annals of China's revolutionary history.

In strong opposition to the reactionary concepts of Confucius and Mencius and the patriarchal-feudal system as a whole, the leaders of the Taiping Revolution put forward clear-cut political and economic programmes in order to build up an ideal society in which all peasants would be equal, free from exploitation and oppression. The carvings on the stone pillar bases reflect to some extent the social life and the revolutionary ideas of the peasant masses and the soldiers and commanders of the Taiping Uprising in their fight to overthrow the feudal rule of the Ching Dynasty (1644-1911) and to build and consolidate their peasant political power. One of these scenes in relief depicts the publication of *The Taiping Heavenly Book*, a revolutionary document which was issued with the approval of Hung Hsiu-chuan, leader of the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom.

Other carvings such as "The Battle Vessel", "The Watch-Tower" and "The Conch" depict the peasant revolutionary war. "Woodcutting", "Bumper Harvest", "Ploughing" and "Fishing" deal with agriculture and side-lines in production. In addition, there are many

The Battle Vessel





The Conch

vivid representations of plants, animals and birds. All these carvings, simple in design and fresh in style, give us a graphic picture of the life and mental outlook of these labouring people with high aspirations.

Armed struggle is the chief means to build and defend a revolutionary political power. "The Battle Vessel" and "The Conch" conjure up the fiery days of the Taiping revolutionary war. In the former a junk ploughs forward through huge waves, its triangular battle-flag fluttering in the wind, vividly conveying the intrepidity of the Taiping Navy performing a manoeuvre. A dragon-fly is depicted dropping from the sky. Since the Chinese characters for dragon-fly are *ching-ting*, a homophone for the characters meaning "Manchu court", this symbolizes the impending doom of the reactionary Ching Dynasty.

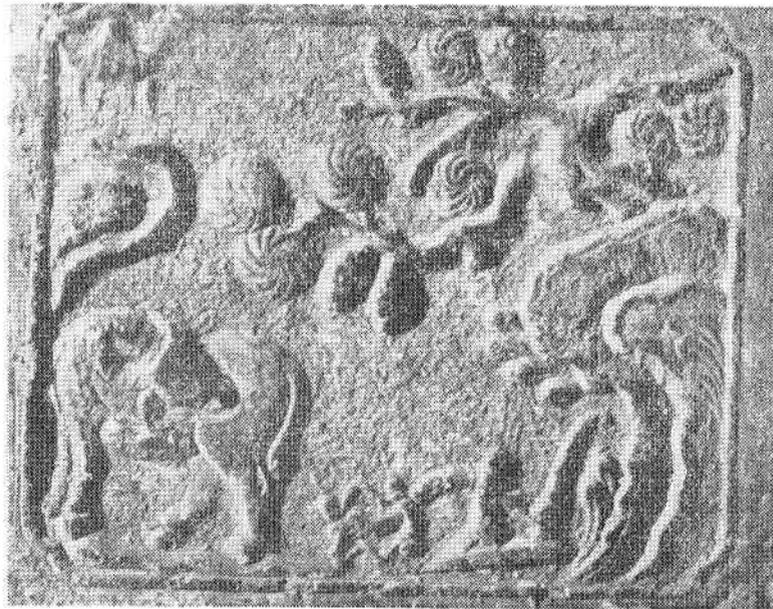
The Taiping Navy was a formidable force. According to historical records, "When their ships ply the river, their sails are like great snow-drifts; when they moor, their masts seem a forest; the roar of their guns reverberates far and wide." "They scud swiftly before the wind and are ever victorious." This navy patrolled the far-stretching

Yangtse River and waged a protracted fight against both Chinese and foreign reactionaries, writing a magnificent epic by its defence of the newly-born peasant revolutionary political power.

"The Conch" shows in the centre a tripod with clouds of smoke and an animal-head above it; to its right are a pen and a fan, and to its left is a conch. This carving is a sharp contrast to the work of feudal artists obsessed by the interests of the literati. The most eye-catching object in it is the conch used as a bugle by the Taiping revolutionary army. According to a historical record, the soldiers and commanders of the Taiping Army "assembled, manned their posts on the city walls or launched an attack all at the call of the conch". The Taiping Army had strict discipline. "The Conch" symbolizes their discipline as well as their unity and triumphant advance.

"Ploughing" and "Woodcutting" graphically show the great emphasis laid by the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom on developing both agriculture and side-lines. In "Ploughing" the powerful ox is turning

Ploughing





Woodcutting

back to look at the plough behind it. Unlike the paintings of oxen by feudal literati, this carving is forceful and animated, showing that the labouring people were no longer enslaved and oppressed. And the strength of the ox also indirectly reflects the improved conditions of the Taiping peasants.

“Woodcutting” shows woodcutting on a mountain. An eagle perched on a rock is watching intently, and the two bundles of faggots by the slope indicate that one woodcutter is ready to leave, while the saw hanging on a tree and the axe and coil of rope on the ground mean that other woodcutters are still at work. This scene of collective woodcutting clearly reflects the love of the labouring people for their new life.

These newly discovered stone carvings are not only valuable historical relics but also important materials for the study of the ideology and art of the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom.

CHRONICLE

Song Recitals in Peking and Tientsin

In celebration of the tenth anniversary of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, song recitals were held in Peking, Tientsin and other parts of the country in May this year to praise the great victories of the Cultural Revolution, the struggle to beat back the Right deviationist wind to reverse correct verdicts, and the revolutionary line of Chairman Mao.

The Peking song recital was jointly sponsored by the editorial boards of the magazines *Poetry*, *People's Literature* and *Peking Literature and Art* and thirty items were performed, while at the Tientsin recital sixteen were presented by workers, peasants and soldiers. The items focussed on eulogizing the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution and new socialist phenomena and on criticizing the capitalist-roader Teng Hsiao-ping, as well as on portraying the struggle to defeat the Right deviationist wind to reverse correct verdicts. They were full of militancy and the vigorous spirit of our times. Performed in a variety of forms — recitation, recitation with actions, poetic drama, solo, duet and chorus singing — the items were vivid and lively. The participants in these performances were not only professional literary workers but also amateur writers and reciters from the masses of workers, peasants and soldiers.

Fight to Defend Chairman Mao and the Party Central Committee, a ballad composed and performed collectively by workers of the Peking Gear

Factory, fully showed the determination of the worker-peasant-soldier masses to carry through to the end the great struggle of criticizing Teng Hsiao-ping and beating back the Right deviationist wind to reverse correct verdicts, to safeguard and develop the victories of the Cultural Revolution. The commune members of Hsiao-chin-chuang in Paoti County near Tientsin enlivened the Tientsin recital by presenting a number of fine poems written by themselves such as *Denouncing Teng Hsiao-ping* and *We Poor and Lower-Middle Peasants Will Brook No Evil*. The Tientsin Drama Troupe staged *Never Extinguish the Fire of Struggle*, a poetic drama showing the struggle of China's workers against capitalist-roaders in the Party.

New Films on Show

In celebration of the 34th anniversary of the publication of Chairman Mao's *Talks at the Yenan Forum on Literature and Art*, twenty-three new films were released in China.

Among them is a colour film *Investigation of a Chair*, a revolutionary modern Peking opera staged by the Peking Opera Troupe of Shanghai. It reflects one aspect of the sharp struggle in the countryside in the period of socialism, vividly portraying the heroic image of Ting Hsiu-chin, a production brigade leader who has high consciousness of class struggle. While remaining faithful to the stage version, the film is more effective artistically.

A Hundred Flowers in Full Bloom, also in colour, records the various dance and music items presented by the Performing Arts Troupe of China. The arts troupe created these items after making a conscientious study of the experience gained in creating the model revolutionary theatrical works. They concentrated on carrying out the principle in literature and art **"Make the past serve the present and foreign things serve China"** and **"Let a hundred flowers blossom; weed through the old to bring forth the new."**

A colour feature film *Railway Builders* depicts the class struggle and the two-line struggle in railway construction. It shows the revolutionary spirit of the working class, its self-reliance and hard struggle.

The Red Army Fears Not the Trials of a Long March -- a vocal suite is a colour film recording the performance by the Song and Dance Ensemble of the Political Department of the Peking Unit of the People's Liberation Army. Enthusiastically extolling the great victory of Chairman Mao's revolutionary line, it presents on the screen the sublime and heroic spirit of the Red Army in the historic Long March in 1934-1935.

Spring Comes Early to a Small Shop is the screen version of a local opera. It criticizes the bourgeois way of running a rural shop and praises the commercial workers for their revolutionary spirit of serving the people whole-heartedly.

A great number of the new films are documentary and science films.

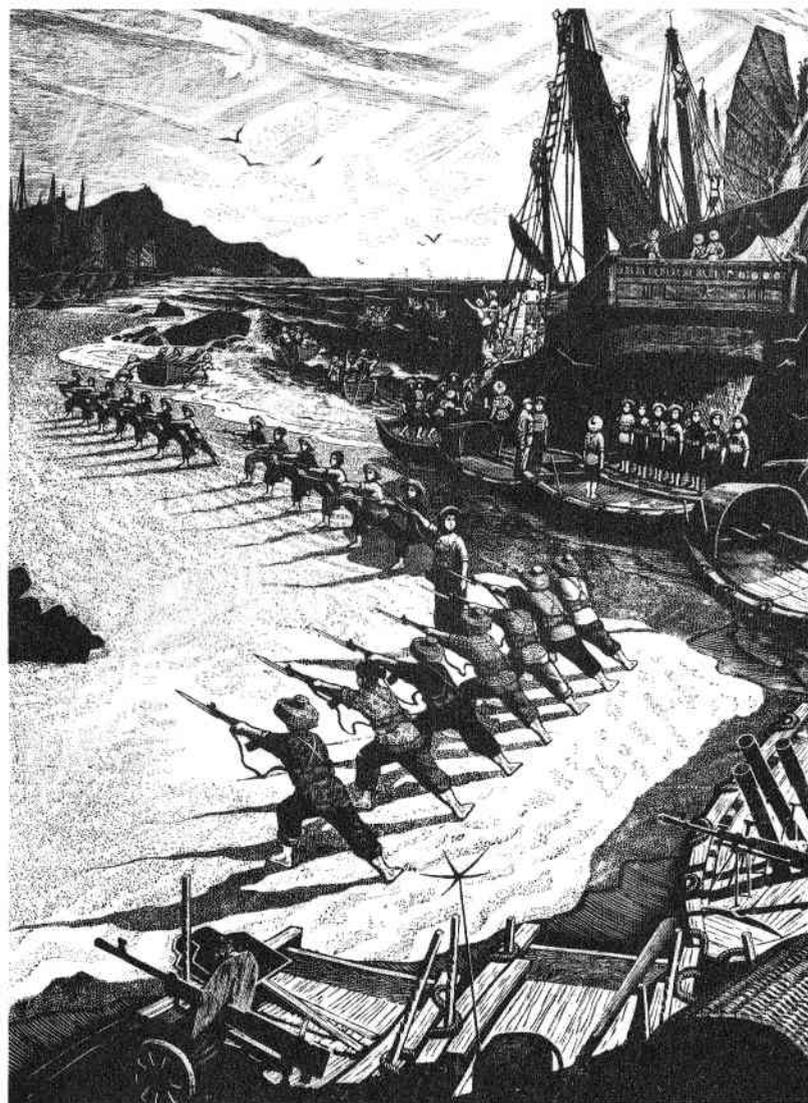
Exhibitions of Fine Arts and Photos Held in Peking and Shanghai

The Peking Fine Arts and Photos Exhibition and the exhibition of paintings and photos entitled "The Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution Is Fine" were held in Peking and Shanghai in May this year.

At the Peking exhibition nearly six hundred art works and photos were displayed, while more than 160 paintings and 240 photos were exhibited in Shanghai. The exhibits paid enthusiastic tribute to the Chinese people's great leader Chairman Mao and his revolutionary line, portrayed the militant course of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution and praised the new socialist things. Depicting many heroic workers, peasants and soldiers they showed that the situation was excellent on various fronts in China in the movements to learn from Taching in industry and learn from Tachai in agriculture, as well as to criticize the crimes of the capitalist-roader Teng Hsiao-ping and the counter-revolutionary revisionist line he pushed.

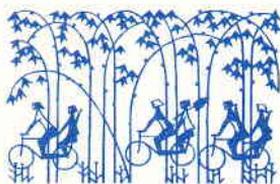
Taking an unequivocal stand, these exhibitions reflected the current class struggle and the two-line struggle, fully displaying the fighting role of revolutionary art.

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Militia-Women (woodcut)

by Lo Yuan-chien



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