

Raise Our Ability to Distinguish Marxism From Revisionism

by Pai Wan-hsi

I CAME from a peasant family and have been a cadre doing rural work for a long time. Since I went to Hsiuyen County in Liaoning Province in 1957, I have taken up various posts, such as secretary of a commune Party committee, deputy county head and deputy secretary of the county Party committee. Though I have worked in the rural areas for many years, I realize I have only a superficial knowledge of the socialist revolution in the countryside. This is even more so theoretically. In carrying out my work, I often fail to see clearly the two-line struggle between Marxism and revisionism.

When I was in the Hsinglung People's Commune in 1962, a severe natural disaster hit our area, bringing great difficulties to the peasants' life. How should I lead the masses to overcome the difficulties and how to mobilize the masses' initiative? One way was to enhance the people's enthusiasm for socialism through political and ideological work so that, by concerted efforts, they could quickly rehabilitate and develop the collective economy. Another was to stimulate their "initiative" by giving more work-points and material incentives. I followed the second method and stressed that those who did more work would get more work-points and those who did good work receive rewards. In pursuance of this arrangement, I worked out several ways of allotting work-points and giving rewards. The

result was: the masses were led astray; they began to care only about individual interests instead of the collective and the future of the country, while a few commune members went so far as to engage in speculative activities in order to make a fortune. In this way, the capitalist tendency began to spread in the countryside.

When the Great Cultural Revolution started in 1966, I was criticized by the masses for having followed the revisionist line. Since I had not really distinguished the Marxist line from the revisionist line from a high theoretical level, I repeated the same errors in my work later. In spring 1973 when I was working in the county Party committee, a model workers' meeting was held in the county. While discussing whether prizes should be given to the model workers, I was all for it, saying that it was an encouragement to them for their contribution to socialist construction and therefore must not be regarded as "putting work-points in command." My proposal was adopted and over 10,000 yuan were spent on buying prizes for the model workers. With the county Party committee taking the lead, many organizations below followed suit. So the wind of giving out prizes swept the county. Later, this was sharply criticized by the masses who said that it was in essence the same as material incentives and was therefore revisionist.

The question which often perplexes me is: I want to work with my heart and soul for the cause of socialism, but why is it that I am often affected by the revisionist trash?

In September 1974, I went to the Liaoning Provincial May 7 Cadre School and studied there for one year. While taking part in manual labour, I eagerly studied works by Marx, Engels, Lenin and Chairman Mao's works and their important expositions on the theory of the dictatorship of the proletariat. Using the revolutionary theory, I summed up the lessons to be drawn from the two-line struggles and linked them with my own thinking. I found a major reason why I had committed the error of resorting to "material incentives" was that theoretically I did not have a clear understanding of the principle of "from each according to his ability, to each according to his work" which is implemented in the socialist period. Without revolutionary theory to guide my action, I was just like a blind man.

In the historical period of socialism today, the rural people's commune is collectively owned by the working people. In distribution, the "work-point system" or the principle of "from each according to his



Pai Wan-hsi (centre) mapping out a long-term plan for development together with cadres and members of a production team.

ability, to each according to his work" is practised. This is historically a great progress, for it has changed the situation prevalent in the old society in which the labouring people starved while the exploiters gained without doing any work. However, "to each according to his work" is still within the limits of bourgeois right, and is actual inequality covered up by equality in form. As Marx said: "Just as it [socialist society] emerges from capitalist society; which is thus in every respect, economically, morally and intellectually, still stamped with the birthmarks of the old society from whose womb it emerges." (*Critique of the Gotha Programme*.) This factual inequality is a birthmark left over from the old society and provides the soil for engendering capitalism. Under the dictatorship of the proletariat this can only be restricted, and must not be strengthened and expanded.

In the people's commune today, this is also the principle followed in distribution. If, instead of putting politics in command to promote the commune members' enthusiasm for socialism and achieve "from each according to his ability," we onesidedly emphasize "more work, more pay" and "stimulate" enthusiasm with work-points and bonuses, we will lead the peasants astray to the capitalist road of seeking personal gain and getting rich. Extension of bourgeois right in distribution will inevitably lead to class polarization and weaken and disintegrate the socialist collective economy, and the result will be just as what the masses criticized me: "The more you practise putting work-points in command, the more selfish people become; you just disintegrate the collective and deviate from the correct orientation." Therefore, we must persevere in putting proletarian politics in command, mobilize the masses through political and ideological work, and encourage them to work with a will for socialist construction. It is essential to look at the principle of "to each according to his work" dialectically. While acknowledging that it exists inevitably in the period of socialism, we must be aware that it is still a bourgeois trammel. Throughout the historical period of socialism, we must restrict it under the dictatorship of the proletariat and gradually abolish it so as to realize the communist principle of "from each according to his ability, to each according to his needs."

Another reason why in the past I was little aware of the danger of "putting work-points in command" was that I had a poor understanding of the fact that small production is the soil engendering capitalism and the bourgeoisie. Thanks to agricultural co-operation and the setting up of people's communes after liberation, the broad masses of peasants, who were formerly small producers, are now members of collectives. But because in socialist society there are still classes and class struggle, there is still the influence of bourgeois ideas and there is bourgeois right, these peasants inevitably still retain certain characteristics inherent in the small producers, and the capitalist tendency often manifests itself among a part of the peasants, especially among the well-to-do peasants. This is precisely what Chairman Mao has pointed out: "Lenin said that 'small production

engenders capitalism and the bourgeoisie continuously, daily, hourly, spontaneously, and on a mass scale.'"

Formerly I thought that once individual peasants become collective peasants, the transformation of small producers is accomplished. Such a viewpoint often finds expression in my work, as for instance I sometimes failed to firmly adhere to the Party's basic line, to grasp class struggle, and to pay attention to educating the small producers in communist ideas and remould their world outlook. Instead of repudiating capitalist tendencies in the countryside, I practised "putting work-points in command," this helped promote spontaneous capitalist tendency among the small producers.

Last September I returned to Hsiuyen County from the cadre school. Since then I have enhanced my consciousness in putting into practice Chairman Mao's policy of "grasping revolution, promoting production." Our county is located in the hilly regions in southeast Liaoning, so farming conditions are not very favourable. Together with other comrades of the county Party committee, I grasped class struggle as the key link and sharply criticized revisionism and the capitalist tendency in the countryside. This has greatly increased the county people's enthusiasm in building socialism and the mass movement to learn from Tachai in agriculture is developing vigorously. From last winter to spring this year, we have built 15,000 hectares of terraced fields, or 49 per cent of the county's hilly land, thereby creating favourable conditions for increasing grain output by a wide margin.

Be a Worthy Successor to Revolutionary Cause

by Pan Kuei-chin

I AM 23 this year. I served as an attendant in the Shenyang Restaurant and was transferred in 1974 to the provincial committee of the Communist Youth League to be in charge of organization work.

I am a worker coming from a worker's family. Is it still necessary for me to temper myself in labour? The answer is in the affirmative, as facts have shown. From childhood I studied in schools dominated by the revisionist line and since I seldom took part in farm work, I knew practically nothing about the peasants who constitute the vast majority of China's population. Upon entering the cadre school, my first lesson was rice-harvesting. I had never handled a sickle before. Though I tried hard and did my level best, I trailed behind others. From this I realized that every grain harvested involves a great amount of labour on the part of the peasants. I can still recall those days when I worked in the restaurant. I often became impatient and annoyed when I was criticized for tardy service by the peasant customers who, much pressed for time, were in a hurry to resume their journey after taking a meal. At that time I thought that our work was strenuous, running back and forth and attending to the wants of the



Pan Kuei-chin returning to the Shenyang Restaurant to take part in labour.

customers. I did not realize that the peasants who grew crops worked much harder. Since I did not share their thoughts and feelings, I did not cherish any love for them and of course did not work wholeheartedly for them.

Obviously, if a leading cadre does not identify himself with the working people's thinking and feelings, it would be a far more serious question. With this understanding, I was determined to temper myself through farm work. In addition to doing physical work assigned by the school, I did odd jobs in the piggery during my off-hours.

I constantly remind myself that I can't be a worthy successor to the revolutionary cause if I don't take part in physical labour and if I am not familiar with the workers and peasants and do not share their thinking and feelings. As a cadre of the Communist Youth League, my task is to educate the young people to be good successors to the cause of proletarian revolution. To educate others, I must first be educated and earnestly remould my world outlook. Otherwise, how can I shoulder such a glorious and arduous task?

Besides taking part in physical labour in the cadre school, I conscientiously studied works by Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin and Chairman Mao's works and,

linking my study with my own ideas, wrote down what I had gained ideologically. A major question I often pondered was how to consciously resist erosion by ideas of bourgeois right now that I had taken up a leading post. One incident is still fresh in my memory. When I worked in the Shenyang Restaurant, I had a small table which served as my desk. It was old and in disrepair, but I didn't mind about it. When I became a leading cadre in the provincial Communist Youth League committee, I was first given a new desk and a larger one instead a few days later. When I moved to another office, the desk there was not so good, so I had the large one moved in. There were similar examples which seemed to be insignificant, but they showed the change in my ideology. If I did not take steps to remedy this situation, I would eventually go astray and seek personal fame and gain as well as special privileges.

Why is it that a part of the workers and even Communist Party members sometimes degenerate into new bourgeois elements?

After studying theory I became aware that the existence of the influence of the bourgeoisie, international imperialism and revisionism is the political and ideological root cause of the emergence of new bourgeois elements, and the existence of bourgeois right is an important economic base giving rise to these new bourgeois elements. We young workers who have become cadres must consciously reject the material inducements of the bourgeoisie and all the blandishments of the ideology of bourgeois right. We must in no way think that because we were formerly workers, it is not necessary for us to remould our world outlook.

At the Ninth National Congress of the Chinese Communist Party held in 1969, Chairman Mao earnestly instructed the young leading cadres to "see to it that they do not divorce themselves from the masses or productive labour and that they must perform their duties." I have gained a better understanding of the significance of this instruction after being tempered in the cadre school. Since my return to the provincial Communist Youth League committee, I have taken every opportunity to do voluntary work in the Shenyang Restaurant. On weekends and especially during festivals when work in the restaurant is very busy, I often work with the other comrades serving the workers, peasants and soldiers. I also swap experience with other attendants on our work and what we have gained in our political studies. I am determined to retain for ever the fine qualities of a common labourer.