



# RED STAR

ORGAN OF THE RED WOMEN'S DETACHMENT

## OPEN LETTER TO WELFARE WOMEN

The Red Women's Detachment is a women's liberation group but it's very different from the other groups in several ways.

We are not a petty-bourgeois women's group consisting of social-workers, teachers, professionals, etc. We have proletarian working women and welfare women working together, quite well too.

We want women to be liberated but we realize the only way it will be achieved will be by having a revolution bringing in socialism and Communism. It will never be done by begging the imperialist government to repeal the work laws concerning women or the abortion laws or begging for an increase in our checks.

We totally support our welfare comrades in their struggle but we have many objections to the way it's been handled. For many years, we have been fooled and tricked but the phoney Welfare Rights groups completely controlled by the Communist Party revisionist clique such as the NWRO. Even though they have helped informing us of our "rights," they never tell us who our real enemy is, the U.S. Imperialist government. They never tell us that we will never get what we want except by armed revolution followed by socialism. They just

want us to be involved in the welfare struggle, never concerning ourselves with any other struggles, especially uniting with other proletarian working sisters.

We are not a separatist group hating men. We realize that workingclass men are not our enemies; instead, armed workingwomen and armed workingmen are uniting to fight for Communism.

Finally, we are against the genocide program being pushed on poor women, black, white and brown. By genocide we mean birth control and abortion being shoved down our throats by everyone around us. Middle-class women and women's liberation groups can afford to make a big joke out of these issues but women on welfare and workingwomen with small incomes can't. Welfare women are forced to use birth control because of the welfare system.

If we are caught living with a man we are thrown off for having sexual relations and providing fathers for our children. How could a woman separated from her husband with other children explain her pregnancy to her worker without going through millions of changes and even possibly being thrown off welfare? The prenatal and post-natal care for all poor women is disgusting despite the "wonderful" Medicaid Bill. There have been cases where welfare women in labor have been told that they could avoid all this using birth control or by being sterilized! Working women going to clinics pregnant or even going to any type of gynecological help are encouraged by quack doctors to use birth control. More money is spent for population control than gynecology. Birth control must be completely up to women to decide to use when they want is no one else to force it on us.

The Red Women's Detachment wants nurseries for our children, but we want them for political reasons, not for the sole purpose to force us to go to work. We would want to teach our children political education, physical education and self-defense to make our children revolutionary fighters. The best and only kind of future we want for our children is to bring them up in a socialist system where they are truly liberated. It is our responsibility to make that happen.

For too long working women and welfare women have been used against each other. Now we must unite with our proletarian sisters in Study Groups and Women's Armed Defense Groups.

In our study groups we study Marxism-Leninism-Mao TseTung Thought and apply it to every thing we do.

We are following the example of our brave sister-comrades in China and Albania who fought long and hard for socialism which brought about their liberation. The revolutionary marriage laws were won by the women also fighting for a socialist government, which is the only way they were and can be brought in.

We are very interested in meeting with other welfare mothers and groups. Continuing articles will be in the RED STAR. We urge welfare mothers to submit their own articles and criticism. Any questions or letters may be sent to:

RED WOMEN'S DETACHMENT : 700 East 9th Street, N.Y.C. 10009

# CORRESPONDENCE

(During February a nation-wide mailing of leaflets and letters went out to thirty Women's Liberation groups/publications. Early March, the first issue of RED STAR was sent to these same and a good number more groups and Women's Liberation Movement publications. The Red Women's Detachment thanks the following for responding with an exchange of materials: FEMALE LIBERATION, 371 Somerville Avenue, Somerville, Mass.; BREAD AND ROSES, Box 116, Cambridge, Mass. 02138; RADICAL WOMEN, 2940 - 36th So., Seattle, Washington; and Joreen in Chicago.)

This letter was received from the WOMEN'S CAUCUS : NEW UNIVERSITY CONFERENCE, 622 West Diversey Parkway, Room 403A, Chicago, Illinois 60614. With it, our reply:

NUC/Chicago, Ill.  
March 2, 1970

Dear Sisters,

Thanks for your leaflet. We share with you a concern that the women's movement not take a bourgeois, revisionist turn as is always a danger. We agree that women must see their interests both as women and as human beings in defeating imperialism. However, or rather as a result, we see the necessity of working with women, organizing them both around women's liberation and other anti-imperialist issues and at all times making the necessary links through education and program, between their own oppression, their own struggles and the need to build a revolutionary movement for socialism.

We also do not think that women can abandon the struggle for equality and an end to male chauvinism until after the revolution since we see that socialism is a necessary but not sufficient prerequisite for women's liberation.

Women are in motion, aware of oppression, it is our task to make them see that the root of it is the capitalist system. This cannot be done unless their demands are seen as legitimate and we are willing to devote our energies to working with them to build a movement of revolutionary women. And if we do it now we will make real equality between the sexes all the more possible after the revolution.

For Bread and Roses,  
L.G.

R.W.D./N.Y.C.  
March 10, 1970

To: NUC/Women's Caucus  
(L.G.)

We are sending you issue number one of RED STAR, our collective organizer. We will publish your letter to us March 2 in the pages of RED STAR #2 along with this reply. We welcome further correspondence and discussion, political criticism and debate to be conducted openly in the pages of RED STAR. The views of all feminist and women's liberation groups contributed in mutual

struggle-criticism will be fully printed. It should be of especial importance to hear the voice of the rank-and-file membership of the women's liberation movement, unions, and welfare rights organizations.

The revolutionary workingwomen's struggle against bourgeois property relations and ideology is inseparably linked with the proletarian revolution. Unless the women's movement in the so-called "U.S.A." takes the road of communist revolution led by the proletariat, it will be blocked by narrow feminism. Women's Liberation must answer this question: Liberation for which Class of Women?? Liberation for WorkingWomen and those of oppressed nations and national minorities or Liberation for bourgeois Pig-Ladies?? The Red Women's Detachment, under the leadership of the Marxist-Leninist Party, calls workingwomen to arms right now against U.S. Imperialism, to arm right now with Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought, and to struggle for political power. The workingwomen's movement has nothing in common with "oppression" of bourgeois-coquettes. We realize that the emancipation of women is achieved by violent proletarian revolution.

Please send us further information concerning the Women's Caucus and an exchange of your literature.

**LONG LIVE THE INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY OF REVOLUTIONARY WOMEN!!**

for the RED WOMEN'S DETACHMENT

(The following letter was sent to Judith Biggin and Leslie Gross c/o Philadelphia Free Press, P.O. Box 1986, Phila. Pa 19105)

R.W.D./N.Y.C.  
March 30, 1970

To: J. Biggin/L. Gross:

The Red Women's Detachment will be re-printing in the second issue of its organ RED STAR two articles which appeared in the Philadelphia Free Press (Vol. 3 No. 8 March 2, 1970) on the occasion of International (Working)Women's Day. Your newspaper is a good publication with open enthusiasm for the revolution combining armed struggle with political struggle under the leadership of the proletariat. Your paper shows strong support of the People's Republic of China and the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, the great revolutionary anti-revisionist struggle of world-wide significance which proved Mao Tsetung Thought the highest development of Marxism-Leninism. China's Chairman is our Chairman!

We have been circulating the articles "Power to Proletarian Women" and "The Rise and Fall of Feminism in America" within our study groups and will now reprint it for wider distribution through RED STAR. These articles contribute to the revolutionary workingwomen's movement, and should prompt discussion and study amongst all sincere Women's Liberation groups and circles of the primary point both raise: the indispensable leadership of proletarian women without which Women's Liberation is doomed to bourgeois-feminist reformism. This clear class analysis must be carried further. Without the Party of the Proletariat and its Red Army, the workingclass cannot establish proletarian dictatorship and consolidate socialism. The Red Women's Detachment is the mass

organization of workingwomen under the leadership of the MARXIST-LENINIST PARTY.

International (Working) Women's Day, as you correctly say, originated in violent armed class struggle. Mounted police attacked striking needle-trades workingwomen in Tompkins Square Park, N.Y. C. who fought back with foot-long needles. This was March 8, 1908. This is an example revolutionary women must follow today. The trotskyites and revisionists point the women's liberation movement backwards by drawing upon Suffragette-civil righting and pacifism as their heritage. Because the last thing U.S. Imperialism and it's accomplices want to see is workingwomen armed and organized for political power, bringing the war back home in the American nation. The last thing U.S. Imperialism wants to see is class-sisters firmly and wholly united in armed proletarian solidarity with their class-sisters in Asia, Africa, Latin America and those of the nations oppressed within the boundaries of the so-called "U.S.A."--Puerto Rico, the Black Belt, the Chicano nation in the southwest. Long Live the International Solidarity of Proletarian Women! While self-defense is basic and helps develop physical strength and self-reliance, we know that it is necessary to raise struggle to the level of ARMED DEFENSE and carry armed struggle right through to the end. POLITICAL POWER GROWS OUT OF THE BARREL OF A GUN we have learned from Chairman Mao. The Red Women's Detachment has printed WOMEN'S ARMED DEFENSE GROUPS posters.

We have sent you the first issue of RED STAR. It is our policy to print all correspondence and we welcome criticism.

Please continue to send us the Philadelphia Free Press.

LONG LIVE THE INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY OF PROLETARIAN WOMEN!!

for the RED WOMEN'S DETACHMENT

URUGUAYAN REVOLUTIONARIES FREED

POLITICAL WOMEN PRISONERS

Montevideo, (PL) Uruguay's repressive force has been mobilized in search of the Tupamaros who yesterday -- to mark International Women's Day rescued 14 women political prisoners in Montevideo, the capital. The Uruguayan revolutionaries armed with pistols, freed the women prisoners, who were in the Montevideo women's prison. Both the women and their rescuers escaped in 5 vehicles, including a false police patrol car. News agencies underscored that the spectacular rescue staged yesterday by the National Liberation Movement of Uruguay -- Tupamaros -- has no parallel in the history of that South American country.

reported in PRENSA LATINA No. 426 Thurs., March 12,  
1970

P O W E R T O P R O L E T A R I A N W O M E N

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Women need not search hard to find that proletarian women have lead many important fights. Women have gone into the streets. Women have been beaten by the cops. Women have been put into jail. Women's oppression and exploitation has been exposed before.

On March 8, 1908, thousands of women took to the streets. They left their jobs in the garment and textile sweat shops to demand better working conditions. They were protesting their 15 to 16 hour workday and the lack of safety equipment. The fire hazards, exacerbated by the badly ventilated sweat shops, created serious health hazards for these women and children, who were forced because of economic conditions, to leave their homes. The women demanded a 10 hour work day and Equal Rights for American women. While they remained in the poorer districts of New York City there was no violence. As soon as these sisters marched into the wealthier sections, they were attacked and dispersed by the cops. Working class women, some of the most oppressed in our society, then and now, were beaten and jailed. These sisters fought back and continued protesting in jail through a hunger strike.

International Women's Day was called by Clara Zetkin at a conference of Socialist Women in 1910. This day is in memory of our sisters in N.Y.C. who took militant action and went into the streets in 1908.

These sisters of proletarian origin, were interested in more than feminism. They were interested in more than the suffragette issue. What these sisters of N.Y.C. in 1908 wanted was social justice. They concerned themselves with all the social issues of the day. This included civil rights, children's rights, as well as women's rights. Yet, these very same sisters were sold out by the middle class women of the day. The middle class women, who were so concerned with only the right to vote, compromised away the rights of Blacks, as well as the rights of our working class sisters. History shows that the early suffragettes were worried that if they fought for abolition, then women's "rights to vote" issue would be lost or forgotten. Thus, when things got tight, they accepted and fought for the right of white women to vote. The women who preferred to gain the "right to vote" only for white women instead of total suffrage rights for all women and men, followed their ruling class and bourgeois interests. This action divided white working class women from black women, thus dividing the working class.

Once again, women's liberation has emerged as a powerful force. There are many groups across the country whose ideology runs from becoming equal within the capitalistic system to tearing the capitalistic system down. History has shown us that the bourgeois woman was the woman who was coopted earliest in the struggle, showing clearly her own class interest. It has shown us that our working class sister was the leader then and must be the same again. We should not only celebrate International Women's Day, but begin to see these women as our American heroes. These sis-

ters who in 1908 took militant action, who wanted more than the vote, should be an inspiration to further the goals of the revolution.

On International Women's Day, let us expand the day also as a memorial to our Cuban, Vietnamese and Chinese sisters who fought, understanding the power behind proletarian women leadership. Let us begin our liberation with a dedication not to sell out our sisters to bourgeois interests. We should work to liberate ourselves, our sisters and brothers from the capitalistic system. Only after this has been destroyed can women and our third world sisters and brothers begin the final struggle towards our liberation. "Class against class must be the guiding line in the struggle for human liberation in general and women's liberation in particular. Only the revolutionary victory over capitalism, led by the working men and women and supported by all sections of the oppressed, can release women from their subject status and give them a better life in a new society."

All Power to the People!

Power to Proletarian Women!

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PHILADELPHIA FREE PRESS  
(Vol. 3 No. 8 March 2, 1970)

by  
Judy Biggin

#### THE RISE AND FALL OF FEMINISM IN AMERICA : "EVERYONE WAS BRAVE"

As the women's liberation movement gains in momentum today, it becomes increasingly necessary to understand the roots of this rebellions' past history, so we may not misread events and end up repeating the same errors of past generations of women. "Everyone Was Brave" is an admirable attempt to fill this gap. It arises out of the authors realization that despite a full century of feminist agitation, the battle against the oppression of women is far from won. Women of all classes are still part of the most economically exploited sector of society, and despite gains in access to education today for advantaged middle class women, for example, there are less women engaged in professional activities than around the turn of the century. What happened is a complex tale which can merely be highlighted in this review.

This first concrete point the author advances exposes an important myth that we have almost all accepted uncritically--that after thousands of years of oppression and slavery, women in the early 19th century finally rose up to throw off their oppressors. But why at this particular time had the yoke of oppression become so great as to create such an upsurge? The answers traditionally ranged from economic to ideological ones, from the industrial revolution which forced women to create new life styles, to a sudden awareness of the Libertarian ideals fostered by the French and American revolutions. The answer advanced by the author is that this sudden rise in consciousness was a response to a tightening up of the structure of the family from an extended loosely knit conglomerate to the one known today as the nuclear family. This clean cut definition of family then led to increased domestic and child-rearing responsibility for the women. The oppressive domesticity burden was, of course, more unbearable for the working woman who was forced into a labor market at the lowest level.

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These increased responsibilities were compensated for in the Victorian ideology by enveloping them in a mystique that gave women a higher status while guaranteeing their actual inferiority. This status involved unsullied and untouchable womanhood far removed from the dirty political world of men. It taught women to think of themselves as a separate class no longer to be defined by the alien world of men, and led to the separatist and sororital impulses that affected vast numbers of women. Consequently, by the end of the 19th century, there were great national organizations which took millions of women outside the confines of their home. The origins of feminism, then were "not born of ancient slavery but part of a collective response" to sexual awareness deliberately inspired by Victorian society to foster oppressive domesticity."

The second major concern comes out of the nature of this oppressive domesticity. Though the analysis of some perceptive women pinpointed the nuclear type of family structure as the villain and some women valiantly kicked off the traces of such a confining definition of womanhood, the majority of women did not see that the domestic situation was the material basis of their oppression. Out of their perception of themselves as a dis-enfranchised class (created from a Victorian myth) grew a single-minded struggle for the vote. To understand how this came about is to tie together some elements of 19th century American history, particularly the Civil War and the struggle for the abolition of slavery in which many women participated, thinking that when the black man was granted the franchise surely the white woman would be included. When this did not happen, there was a crisis within the movement for women's rights. The splits within different organizations occurred over whether universal suffrage was the most important concern or not.

The radical feminist upholding the latter opinion held a wider variety of interest since they had a daring analysis of their subjugation. However, they soon worked themselves into a corner from which there was no escape. Reflecting their white middle class origins, they quickly offended the old anti-slavery camp in their rage that enfranchised negroes were also male chauvinist, and then moved on to offend the nascent labor movement by urging women to better themselves through strike-breaking and concluding, when Susan B. Anthony was refused admittance as a delegate to the National Labor Congress that the "laboring classes of men" were also enemies. When on top of all this, one of them openly advocated "free love" as the ultimate conclusion of parity between the sexes, the furor created was enough to stifle all further discussion of the marriage issue.

Thus, by 1870, the conservative spirit dominated the suffragist movement. Certain Victorian stereotypes had been accepted--women were more moral (pure) than men and if granted the vote, social reforms would automatically follow and the vote had taken top priority.

From there, it was all downhill as the contradictions within the women's movement began to catch up with them. The arguments advanced by the suffragists became more and more opportunistic, reflecting clearly their class interest--if women obtained the vote, the immigrant vote would be balanced by a pure American one since

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voting patterns demonstrated that the educated ("enlightened") woman, and so on. It really was as Mother Jones of the mine workers understood it--women's suffrage was a plutocratic trick to divert women from the real issues and keep them busy with "suffrage, prohibition, and charity."

When most organized women were quickly assimilated into the war effort of World War I, despite a strong internationalism and a cogent pacifist tradition, the women's movement was further demoralized. At that time the only women to be admired for their stand was the radical pacifists. But the violent hostility directed against their opposition to all wars, their supposed "pro-German" ideology and the subsequent brutality hurled against their members quickly took its toll.

The ultimate conclusion of this anti-working class bias was reflected in the movement around 1920 to so blythely destroy all the protective legislation for women that working women had fought so hard for. It was based on an attempt by well-educated women to attain absolute equal rights for themselves by ignoring the crying needs of other women not so fortunate. Since this was a class-based interest and the country as a whole had just begrudgingly yielded the vote to women, their desires were to be frustrated and their energies turned inward toward a feminine mystique.

In the end, the sexual revolution undermined the social revolution as the bourgeois women turned inward and the war defused the spirit of reform. It became possible to take a radical stand on sex while holding a conservative one on women's social role. Thus the cult of domesticity reasserted itself at a higher level, leaving women with more sexual freedom but a greater cultural burden. It was the era of Home Economics as anaesthetic science, with Freud and Havelock Ellis to explain away the neurosis of the housewife.

The book Everyone Was Brave should be read by every person concerned with the women's question. Besides a wealth of historical information, it provides that necessary link with the past struggle that should focus contradictions that exist in a growing movement for women's liberation and lead it to a higher level of intensity.

My only criticism of this book is that there should have been a deeper analysis of the working women's organizations of the past century and how they grappled with their particular problems. The book also lacks a certain integrity since it is difficult to tie together a whole book on the thesis that the feminist's struggle for liberation did not examine sufficiently the roots of their oppression in the domestic scene. Somehow to tie the themes together, it is necessary to develop some understanding of why such domestic arrangements exist, and whether they are really economic realities under-pinning the capitalistic system. Then perhaps the only solution is to proletarianize the women's movement to work for the economic liberation of women instead of again becoming involved in an orgy of sexual expression.

The danger exists today that instead of the vote, women's organizations will become tied up exclusively with abortion reforms, for example, which will end up servicing only middle-class women while working class women--black or white--can ill afford the

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medical expense. (I don't want such reforms, only the abolition of laws concerning abortion.) The point is that the whole system must be fundamentally changed just to guarantee the fundamental rights of the American constitution, and women, perhaps must lead the struggle. We do not want equal rights to share in such injustices that exist. We want an end to all injustice!

ANNA LOUISE STRONG, NOTED AMERICAN  
PROGRESSIVE WRITER, DIES IN PEKING

Anna Louise Strong, noted American progressive writer, died of arteriosclerotic heart disease in the evening of March 29 in Peking at the age of 84, after she failed to respond to long medical treatment. During her illness, Chou En-Lai, Premier of the State Council, Kuo Mo-jo, Vice-Chairman of the Standing Committee of the National Peoples Congress, as well as comrades and friends from the United States and other countries who had gone to see her at the hospital.

reported in PEKING REVIEW Number 14, April 3, 1970

*THEY LOVE THEIR UNIFORMS  
NOT SILKS AND SATINS!*

"Tat-tat-tat..." The sharp sound of rifle shots rent the air, rising above the howling wind which swept from the sea across Kulei Island. Reports of good marksmanship followed each time a red flag appeared over the shooting range. Lin Chen-yu, who had just returned from Peking after attending the celebrations of the 20th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China, and the other militiawomen were practicing shooting. They belonged to the Hsiaan militiawomen's platoon of the Kulei People's Commune in Changpu County of Fukien Province. Armed with Mao Tsetung Thought, this platoon is a heroic people's armed force which is at all times ready to answer the call and fight the invading enemy. It is a revolutionary force which "fears neither hardship nor death."

Hsiaan is a fishing village where the inhabitants engage in fishing and agriculture, the former being their main occupation. Responding to the great leader Chairman Mao's call to "organize contingents of the people's militia on a big scale," the Party branch of the production brigade decided to form a platoon of militiawomen. With Lin Chen-yu, Lin Jung-hua and Huang Ah-tsai taking the lead, the class sisters in the village soon got organized. Filled with loyalty and determination to "defend the socialist native village, defend the great motherland and defend Chairman Mao," they took up guns and joined in the defence of the motherland's eastern seaboard.

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Led by the brigade's Party branch and helped by the other departments concerned, this militiawomen's platoon, brimming with profound proletarian feelings, has in the past few years eagerly and conscientiously studied Chairman Mao's works, studied and applied Mao Tsetung Thought in a living way, and achieved remarkable results in helping defend the motherland. It has been cited on many occasions as an advanced collective in the special region and in the county for its living study and application of Mao Tsetung Thought. It is praised by the masses as a present day "red detachment of women."

No matter how busy they are with production, all the militiawomen, led by their platoon leader Lin Chen-yu, have never slackened their efforts in training hard in order to be able to deal telling blows at any invading enemy. "We'll not fear death in battle if we do not fear hardships in ordinary days," they said. "The farther we throw the hand-grenades, the greater our strength develops in destroying the enemy forces."

News of Chairman Mao's swim in the Yangtze River greatly inspired everyone in the platoon. "The women of Hsiaan have never swum in the sea," they remarked. "But today, to defend Chairman Mao and to meet the needs of the world revolution, we'll ride the waves of the East China Sea so as to be able to follow Chairman Mao's brilliant example and conquer the seas." Inspired by Chairman Mao's teaching "Be resolute, fear no sacrifice and surmount every difficulty to win victory," they dauntlessly learnt to swim in the turbulent sea. Before long, Lin Chen-yu became an excellent swimmer, while the other militiawomen in the platoon also acquired the ability to swim several li at a stretch. Thus the whole platoon has become a people's armed force which can fight on the land as well as on the sea.

"Never forget class sufferings and always remember the blood debts, firmly keep in mind our class origin from generation to generation and tightly grip the guns to safeguard our motherland." This dictum depicts another outstanding characteristic of the Hsiaan militiawomen who are all daughters of poor and lower-middle peasants. In the old society, their parents were oppressed and persecuted by the reactionary government, and each family has a bitter history. Statistics reveal that before liberation, when the Japanese aggressors rode roughshod over the Chinese people and when the Kuomintang reactionaries oppressed the broad masses of the people, of the 384 people in the 76 households in Hsiaan, 156 people in 41 households were forced to flee their native village and lead a life of misery. It is these class sufferings and blood debts and oppression by foreign aggressors that have roused the Hsiaan militiawomen to great indignation. It is this burning class hatred that has spurred them to organize themselves, take up guns, undergo intense and hard training in order to deal crushing blows at any invading enemy. And it is this same burning class hatred that has educated them to raise their vigilance, stand sentry on the seacoast and safeguard the motherland.

During the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, the militiawomen of Hsiaan have waged a resolute struggle against the handful of absolutely unrepentant capitalist roaders within the Party and against the handful of class enemies. By relentlessly crit-

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icizing the theory of the "dying out of class struggle," every one of them has further raised her consciousness of class struggle and the struggle between the two lines. In the words of fighter Hsueh Chen-hua: "In those years when the war raged, the Red Army crossed the snow mountains and the grassland, defied enemy gunfire and fought bravely to liberate the whole of China. When tortured by the enemy, the Red Army men did not show the slightest fear, and when confronted by bayonets, they did not flinch. Thanks to their struggle, we are leading a happy life today. Our enemies are now trying to change the political colour of our socialist motherland, but we will never, never tolerate it. We are determined to carry forward the heroic spirit of our revolutionary forerunners, hold tightly the guns in our hands, and acquit ourselves well in standing sentry for Chairman Mao and our great socialist motherland."

from PEKING REVIEW  
Number 12, March 20, 1970

"China's Women in Socialist  
Revolution and Socialist  
Construction"

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ALL ERRONEOUS IDEAS, ALL POISONOUS WEEDS, ALL GHOSTS AND MONSTERS,  
MUST BE SUBJECTED TO CRITICISM; IN NO CIRCUMSTANCES SHOULD THEY BE  
ALLOWED TO SPREAD UNCHECKED. Mao Tsetung

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# WE ARE CRITICS OF THE OLD WORLD

a big character poster of the GREAT PROLETARIAN  
CULTURAL  
REVOLUTION

The rapid and vigorous development of China's great proletarian cultural revolution is shaking the world. Some people say: "The 700 million Chinese are all critics."

Irrespective of who says this, and whether it makes them happy or unhappy, this saying reflects the fact that China's broad masses of workers, peasants and soldiers and revolutionary cadres and revolutionary intellectuals, using as their weapon the thought of Mao Tsetung, have started to criticize the old world, old things, and old thinking on an unprecedented scale.

We criticize the system of exploitation, the exploiting classes, imperialism, modern revisionism, all reactionaries, landlords, rich peasants, counter-revolutionaries, bad elements and Rightists.

We criticize the representatives of the bourgeoisie and bourgeois "scholars and authorities."

We criticize the bourgeois conception of history, bourgeois academic theories, pedagogy, journalism, and theories of art and literature, and all bad plays, films and works of literature and art.

In sum, we criticize the old world, the old ideology and culture, the old customs and habits which imperialism and all exploiting classes use to poison the minds of the working people, we criticize all non-proletarian ideology, all reactionary ideology which

is antagonistic to Marxism-Leninism, to Mao Tsetung's thought.

Why should we criticize all this?

We do this because it is absolutely necessary for the consolidation of the dictatorship of the proletariat and the building of socialism and communism, and it corresponds to the laws of historical development. Lenin held that after the overthrow of the bourgeoisie, for a long period its strength surpasses that of the proletariat, and that, particularly in the field of ideology, for a long time it still remains predominant and very stubborn. And it uses this in every way to make ideological preparations and get public opinion ready for the restoration of capitalism. This is fully illustrated by the sharp and protracted struggles on the ideological and cultural front between the two classes and the two roads in the 17 years since the liberation of China, and especially by the struggle between the bourgeoisie plotting a restoration and the proletariat opposing a restoration, a struggle which of late has come to the fore.

Chairman Mao told us long ago that everything reactionary is the same: if you don't hit it, it won't fall. This is also like sweeping the floor; as a rule, where the broom does not reach, the dust does not vanish of itself. This applies to everything in the world. We want to build the new world so we must destroy the old; we want to create the new ideology and culture of socialism and communism so we must subject the old bourgeois ideology and culture, and the influence they exert, to thoroughgoing criticism and clear them out.

The essence of Marxism-Leninism is critical and revolutionary. Its essentials are to criticize, to struggle and to wage revolution. What we practice is the militant philosophy of dialectical materialism. Struggle is life. As we go ahead along the correct path of struggle, our fighting power will grow and we will be more able to push our great cause forward.

Chairman Mao has often emphasized that "there is no construction without destruction, no flowing without damming and no moving forward without a holding back." Destruction here means criticism, means revolution. Destruction necessarily calls for reasoning, and reasoning is construction; destruction comes first, and in the course of it, there is construction. The formation and development of Marxism-Leninism, of Mao Tsetung's thought, took place in the incessant struggle to destroy the ideological system of the bourgeoisie. Chairman Mao says: "What is correct always develops in the course of struggle with what is wrong. The true, the good and the beautiful always exist in comparison with the false, the evil and the ugly, and grow in struggle with the latter."

Who is to be counted on in making criticism? We must count on the broadest masses of the people, on the workers, peasants and soldiers, the revolutionary cadres and the revolutionary intellectuals. During the revolutionary war, the masses of people used arms to criticize the old world and seize power; since victory, they have been using criticism as their weapon against all the evils left over by imperialism and the landlord and bourgeois classes. Only when all the 700 million people take up Mao Tsetung's thought, the sharpest of all weapons, to make criticism can there be a

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clean-up on the broadest scale of the dust left hidden by the bourgeoisie in every corner and a thorough uprooting to the greatest depth of the ideology of the exploiting classes which have monopolized and ruled for the past thousands of years. Only when the broadest masses master the proletarian world outlook and criticize the bourgeois world outlook, master Marxism-Leninism, Mao Tsetung's thought, and criticize revisionist ideas, will there be the guarantee of China's socialist revolution being carried through to the end and of its step-by-step transition from socialism to communism.

The fact that "700 million people are critics" is a thing stupendous, it is an epoch-making event. This in itself shows that the thinking of our 700 million people has been emancipated, that they have risen to full height and that they are no longer slaves of the old culture and old ideas of imperialism and the exploiting classes. It is not at all accidental that our 700 million people have become critics. It is something new, that has arisen in the conditions of the dictatorship of the proletariat. It is something new, born of the brilliance of Mao Tsetung's thought. It is a new phenomenon, an inevitable product of the integration of Mao Tsetung's thought with the broad masses of workers, peasants and soldiers. It represents the great awakening of the Chinese people.

The birth and deepening of any great revolutionary movement is inevitably preceded by a gigantic struggle in the ideological field and heralded by a great ideological revolution. In the history of the proletarian revolution, every major polemic has been the prelude to and signal for a revolutionary leap forward. In China, each of the many major polemics in the ideological field in the 17 years since liberation has blazed the trail for the locomotive of revolution. The great cultural revolution now under way, on a scale never known before, necessarily foreshadows a development of the socialist revolution by leaps and bounds and a new big leap forward in China's socialist construction.

Once the people have risen, the enemy falls. In China, the broad masses of workers, peasants and soldiers, the revolutionary cadres and the revolutionary intellectuals have risen, and the representatives of the bourgeoisie and the bourgeois "scholars and authorities" will fall. In the movement of criticism that is developing on an unprecedentedly wide scale in the tremendous cultural revolution, a great new era is now emerging on the horizon, an era in which the whole of the 700 million Chinese people are people of wisdom.

Let us welcome this great new era with open arms.

RENMIN RIBAO Editorial

(June 8, 1966)

CRITICISM WITH WEAPONS IS  
BETTER THAN THE  
WEAPON OF CRITICISM. STALIN

## Draft Constitution of the RED WOMEN'S DETACHMENT

1. The Red Women's Detachment is the mass organization of proletarian women under the leadership of the MARXIST-LENINIST PARTY guided by Mao Tse Tung Thought.
2. Its ranks are open to all workingclass women who accept its politics and organizational principles. Revolutionary women of petty-bourgeois class origin will be admitted provided they break their class ties and do not exploit the labor of others.
3. The Red Women's Detachment practices democratic-centralism and combines political struggle with armed struggle, with politics in command.

The highest body of the Red Women's Detachment is the general membership, which, when not assembled (in Congress), is led by the Central Committee elected by it.

The Central Committee directs the Women's Armed Defense Groups. The Central Committee establishes the Central Organ.

The Central Committee of the Red Women's Detachment is directly responsible to the Central Committee of the Marxist-Leninist Party.

4. There are basically three levels of organization:
  - (1) MAO TSETUNG THOUGHT STUDY GROUPS (legal)
  - (2) MARTIAL ARTS (Self-Defense) COLLECTIVES (legal-semi-legal)
  - (3) WOMEN'S ARMED DEFENSE GROUPS (clandestine)

The MAO TSETUNG THOUGHT STUDY GROUPS are organs of struggle-criticism-transformation, an ideological, political school for the living application of Mao Tsetung Thought. It is a testing-ground for perspective cadre.

The MARTIAL ARTS COLLECTIVES train in un-armed self-defense and study Marxism-Leninism applied to military science to prepare for the more advanced level of armed struggle.

WOMEN'S ARMED DEFENSE GROUPS comprise the advanced proletarian military cadre of the Red Women's Detachment. These are securely and clandestinely organized. They are directly responsible to the Marxist-Leninist Party.

The Red Women's Detachment wholly supports and participates in the formation of People's Armed Defense Groups and Workers Armed Defense Groups. Women's Armed Defense Groups lay the basis for equal military participation of women in the revolutionary RED WORKERS ARMY.

5. The Central Organ (editorial staff) issues RED STAR as the collective organizer of the Red Women's Detachment.

The Central Organ is directly responsible to the Central Committee of the Red Women's Detachment. Its functions are to ensure the political clarity of its contents, stabilize publication, and develop the widest possible circulation. Systematic distribution of RED STAR and other mass agitational-propaganda materials is conducted through the various organizations.