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# Against the War by the Khomeini-IRP Regime Against Iraq — For the Anti-Imperialist Unity of Arab and Iranian Workers and Peasants

Political Bureau of the Central Committee, Japan Revolutionary Communist League  
(Japanese Section of the Fourth International) — July 22, 1982

The Iraqi armed forces, which had invaded Iran since September 1980, withdrew totally from Iran in last June, after the successful military counter-offences of the Iranian armed forces in March and April this year. However, on July 13, the joint armed forces of the Iranian Army and the Revolutionary Guards invaded Iraq and started a war against Iraq. While we defended Iran from the reactionary Iraqi war, we are opposed to the war by the Khomeini-IRP regime against Iraq.

We were opposed to the war by the Iraqi Ba'ath party regime under Saddam Hussein against Iran and took a position to defend Iran from the Iraqi reactionary military invasion, from the class point of view to defend the revolution of the Iranian workers and peasants who had overthrown the neo-colonial Shah regime straightly supported by U.S. imperialism. From the same class point of view to defend and advance the Iranian workers and peasants revolution and to defend the anti-Zionist and anti-imperialist struggle of the Arab workers and peasants and their class struggles, we are opposed to the Iranian Khomeini-IRP regime's war against Iraq.

The current Iranian war against Iraq is dictated by the bourgeois nationalist interests of the Khomeini-IRP regime, and it is absolutely irrelevant to the class and international interests of the Iranian workers and peasants. The Khomeini-IRP regime's war against Iraq is opposed to the task to develop the joint international struggle of Arab and Iranian workers and peasants against international imperialism and Zionist Israel; it divides the Arab masses and the Iranian masses.

## Class nature of the Khomeini-IRP regime

The Khomeini-IRP regime is a regime of the Shi'ite Islamic Mullahs' political rule, as an intermediate colonial bourgeois regime established through the workers-peasants overthrow of the neo-colonial Shah regime directly supported by U.S. imperialism. The Shi'ite religious organization and the Mullahs are the political axis of the Islamic Republican Party; the IRP is the governing party of the Iranian state; and the Revolutionary Guards are formed as the political-police military organization under the IRP, separately from the Iranian Army. The IRP's most direct class bases are the urban Bazar merchants and various layers of urban petty-bourgeoisie, and those class bases are extremely heterogeneous and very much weak socially.

With the Shi'ite Islamic religious organization as its axis, holding its own military organization of the Revolutionary Guards, with the Islam as the regime's official ideology, the Khomeini-IRP regime exhibits clear features of a colonial bourgeois nationalist bonapartism.

As a regime established through the mass-uprising overthrow of the neo-colonial Shah regime straightly allied with U.S. imperialism, the Khomeini-IRP regime is opposed to international imperialism and its client neo-colonial regimes, such as the Saudi monarchy and the Gulf states, the Jordanian monarchy, the Egyptian regime of Sadat and Mubarak, and the Moroccan monarchy, and, in this context, the Khomeini-IRP regime has to

rely on the anti-imperialist spontaneity of the Iranian workers and peasants to a certain degree. At the same time, as an essentially colonial-bourgeois regime, the Khomeini-IRP regime is definitely opposed to the autonomous development of workers struggles and their efforts to gain the class independence, and the workers movement to organize the urban poor and to ally with the poor peasants and the national minorities; the regime has been violently repressive against all those movements and struggles.

Under the Khomeini-IRP regime, the Mudjahedeen represented an empirical process for the class independence among Shi'ite workers. Hence the Mudjahedeen forces were violently repressed by the Khomeini-IRP regime and its Revolutionary guards.

So far as it is opposed to international imperialism and the reactionary neo-colonial Arab regimes, the Khomeini-IRP regime has to seek its footing among the anti-imperialist spontaneity of Iranian workers and peasants. However, as an intermediate colonial-bourgeois nationalist regime, it is opposed to the autonomous class development of workers-peasants struggles violently. Precisely in this context, the Shi'ite Islam under name of the "Islamic Revolution" is playing a role as the ideology of the Iranian colonial-bourgeois nationalism, and the IRP's Revolutionary Guards are playing a role to repress the elements for the class independence among the Iranian workers violently and ruthlessly. Also due to its position of colonial-bourgeois nationalism, the Khomeini-IRP regime is opposed to the demand of autonomy by the Kurds and other national minorities and their right of national self-determination.

The Khomeini-IRP regime controls the bourgeois Iranian state and the governmental income from the crude oil. The economic orientation of the Khomeini-IRP regime is a state-capitalist one based on the colonial-bourgeois nationalism.

## Iraqi's reactionary war against Iran

We were opposed to the Iraqi Ba'ath Party regime's war against Iran and defended Iran.

In September 1980, the Iraqi Ba'athist regime started its war against Iran, when the latter was in the midst of the revolution which had overthrown the Shah regime straightly dependent on U.S. imperialism. Saddam Hussein's regime conducted with the various political, military and financial supports from the Saudi monarchy, the Gulf states, the Jordanian monarchy and Sadat-Mubarak's Egypt. The war by the Iraqi Ba'athist regime against Iran was a reactionary war.

First, the Iraqi war had its territorial aim; the Ba'athist regime attempted to force a revision of the border agreement, concluded between Iran and Iraq during the Shah period, in favor of the latter by the war. In this context, the Iraqi war against Iran was dictated by the narrow bourgeois nationalist interests of the Ba'athist regime, and it was a reactionary war, alien to the class interests of both the Arab workers and peasants and the Iranian workers and peasants.



From the class point of view of the Arab and Iranian workers and peasants, the border question between Iran and Iraq is to be solved on the basis of truly democratic and mutual cooperation, only through the victory of workers and peasants permanent revolution in Iran and Iraq. Needless to say, we do not defend the border agreement forced by the Shah regime of Iran on the Iraqi Ba'athist regime. Therefore, we were opposed to the Khomeini-IRP regime's position to defend the border agreement concluded by the Shah. From the view-point of international class interests, we are opposed to any bourgeois nationalist division between the Arab masses and the Iranian masses on the question of the current border.

Second, the Iraqi Ba'athist regime's war against Iran was a war to aim a political blow against the Iranian revolution of workers and peasants at its transition, being opposed to the workers and peasants revolution, which had overthrown the neo-colonial Shah regime straightly allied with U.S. imperialism, and to the Khomeini-IRP regime which represented the revolutionary gain intermediately as a nationalist colonial-bourgeois regime. Precisely in this context, the Iraqi Ba'athist regime's war against Iran was supported by the Saudi monarchy and Gulf states, which were afraid of the Iranian revolution of workers and peasants, and the Jordanian monarchy and Sadat-Mubarak's Egypt. The Iraqi Ba'athist war against Iran was a reactionary war to serve the interests of the Saudi monarchy and Gulf states and the interests of international imperialism in this region.

Hence we took a position to defend Iran from the reactionary war by Iraq, from the view-point of defending the Iranian revolution of workers and peasants and its class advance. Our position to defend Iran was not for defending the Iran-Iraq border agreement concluded by the Shah. We are opposed to the bourgeois nationalist Iran-Iraq conflict itself on their border question.

Relying on the Saudi Monarchy's and the Gulf states' political fear of the Iranian Revolution, the Iraqi Ba'athist regime of Saddam Hussein tried to play a role of reactionary guard against the revolution of Iranian workers and peasants and its class advance and to appear as a reactionary defence-dike for the pro-imperialist Arab regimes in the area. In the 1970s, after the death of Nasser, there was a general process of progressively deepening crises of the Arab bourgeois nationalist regimes and their reactionary evolutions, as was exemplified by the case of Egypt under Sadat, and the Iraqi Ba'athist regime as an Arab bourgeois nationalist regime was not the exception. With the reactionary war against Iran, the Iraqi Ba'athist regime under Saddam Hussein developed its political accommodation with the pro-imperialist Saudi monarchy and Gulf states, and began to seek a new political conciliation with U.S. imperialism, let its international relation with the Soviet Union be thrown into a critical situation.

The Iraqi Ba'athist regime had been one of the so-called "hardliner" Arab states against Zionist Israel. However, Saddam Hussein's war against Iran made the Middle East situation favorable for Israel, and the war played a role to increase the political weight of the Saudi monarchy on the Arab side in regard to the Palestine question. Thus, the Iraqi Ba'athist regime's war against Iran constituted a treacherous betrayal against the Palestine liberation struggle, and, also in this context, the Iraqi war served the interests of international imperialism, Zionist Israel and the pro-imperialist Arab reactionary regimes.

#### **Class nature of the current Iranian war against Iraq**

The Iranian armed forces under the Khomeini-IRP regime were successful in their military counter-offensives against the invading Iraqi armed forces in March and April this year. In June, the Iraqi armed forces retreated to the Iraqi side of the old

border. Confronted with the Iranian counter-attacks, the reactionary war by the Iraqi Ba'athist regime under Saddam Hussein was defeated and came to an end as a total failure.

However, on July 13, the joint military forces of the Iranian Army and the Revolutionary Guards under the Khomeini-IRP regime started its war against Iraq. The joint military forces are currently concentrating their attacks toward the Iraqi second largest city of Basra.

Khomeini, the IRP government, the Revolutionary Guards and the Iranian Army issued various statements on the Iranian war-aim.

- The Iraqi armed forces retreated behind the border, but they were bombing the Iranian territory across the border, and the Iraqi bombing had to be stopped forcefully.

- The war-compensation money has to be taken from Iraq forcefully; it is reported that the amount should be more than \$100 billion.

- The war is to give the Iranian retaliatory punishment to the Iraqi Ba'athist regime under Saddam Hussein.

- It is a "holy war" to overthrow the Ba'ath-party regime under Saddam Hussein and to establish a new Islamic regime in Iraq.

- It is a war to clear the way for joining the Palestine and Lebanese war against Zionist Israel.

Although the press reports are very much limited in this regard, it seems that the Khomeini-IRP regime is not definitely unified on the concrete war-aim against Iraq. It seems that the Iranian war-aim is extremely opportunistic and fluid.

However, judging from the current concentration of the Iranian military attacks toward Basra and the latest statements made by some IRP-government ministers, the aim of the Khomeini-IRP regime's war against Iraq may be summarized as the following two points. First, the Iranian war-aim is to deepen the political crisis of Saddam Hussein's Ba'ath-party regime, as a political retaliation to the Iraqi regime. Second, the Khomeini-IRP regime has waged its war to force the Iraqi regime to pay the compensation.

Hence, the current Iranian war against Iraq and the war aim are dictated by the Iranian bourgeois nationalist interests of the Khomeini-IRP regime, and the war is alien to the class interests of the Iranian workers and peasants. The Iranian workers and peasants do not have their class interests in the war to give a political retaliation to Saddam Hussein's Ba'ath-party regime and to force the latter to pay the war compensation. Contrary to the Iranian bourgeois nationalist interests of the Khomeini-IRP regime, the class interests of the Iranian workers and peasants lie in making a consistent call to the Iraqi workers and peasants and the government for establishment of a peace between Iran and Iraq and an active international mutual cooperation to recover from the heavy war-damages.

Independent of the Khomeini-IRP regime as an intermediate colonial-bourgeois nationalist regime, and from the position to defend the revolution of Iranian workers and peasants, we defended Iran from the war by the Iraqi Ba'athist regime under Saddam Hussein. However, through the war with Iraq, the Khomeini-IRP regime deepened its compromise with the Iranian bourgeois army which had been built up under the Shah regime, and it strengthened the bourgeois and Shi'ite Islamic ideological control over the masses and carried out ruthless and violent repressions especially against the urban masses and the Kurdish autonomy movement. Now, with the war against Iraq, the Khomeini-IRP regime, whose class basis is extremely weak socially, is attempting to repress any elements of autonomous class development of the workers and peasants struggles further more and to tighten its bourgeois nationalist control over the masses increasingly by the Shi'ite Islamic ideology. The Iranian workers



struggle for their own class independence from the intermediate colonial-bourgeois nationalist regime is impossible without opposing the bourgeois nationalist war by the Khomeini-IRP regime against Iraq.

### **For anti-imperialist unity of the Iranian and Arab workers and peasants**

In the defense war against Iraq, the Khomeini-IRP regime relied on the Iranian workers and peasants in a very much limited way, repressing those masses, it did not rely on the Soviet Union and other workers states actively, and it utilized even Zionist Israel for getting some military materials. Despite we kept our position to defend Iran from the Iraqi war. The Khomeini-IRP regime has sent a certain military force to Syria-Lebanon against the Israeli invasion of Lebanon. However, the most decisive fact is that the Khomeini-IRP regime started its war against Iraq at the very moment when the PLO and the Palestine liberation struggle were in the crucial situation under the Israeli invasion of Lebanon.

The Iranian war against Iraq is playing an extremely reactionary role to disperse the Arab regimes in front of Zionist Israel, at the very moment when Iraqi Ba'ath-party regime and various Arab regimes should be mobilized as fully as possible in defence of Lebanon and the Palestine liberation struggle. The Iranian war

against Iraq is to drive Saddam Hussein's Ba'ath-party regime more and more toward the Saudi monarchy and Gulf states, and toward international imperialism. The current Iranian war is definitely opposed to the anti-imperialist interests of the Palestine liberation struggle, the Arab workers and peasants, and the revolution of Iranian workers and peasants.

- Let the Iranian government withdraw the Iranian Army and the Revolutionary Guards and call the Iraqi workers and peasants and the government for formation of a common front against Zionist Israel and imperialism.

- Against the Iranian demand of the war compensation from Iraq. For Iran-Iraq mutual cooperation to recover from the war damages. The fund should be drawn from international imperialism and from the Saudi monarchy and Gulf states.

- Against the Iraqi Ba'ath-party regime's conciliation with the reactionary Arab regimes and international imperialism. Against U.S. and other imperialist intervention in the Arab world. Against U.S.-French dispatch of troops to Beirut.

- Freedom for the Iranian workers and peasants movement. Stop the Revolutionary Guards' repression against the workers and peasants movement. Autonomy and the right of national self-determination for the Kurds and other national minorities.

- Let the Iranian government to develop its political and economic cooperation with the Soviet Union and other workers states.

## **On the Causes of the Triumph of the CCP and the Failure of Chinese Trotskyists in the 3rd Chinese Revolution**

### **A Reply to the Pengs**

**By F. H. Wang**

Over the twenty-four years since the triumph of the 3rd Chinese revolution, there have been un-interrupted discussions in our world movement on the questions of that great historical event which put numerous theoretical puzzles to all revolutionary Marxists. Upon these problems, we, Chinese Trotskyists, too have pondered and have written a lot about them, especially about the reasons why the CCP triumphed and we failed. Yet most of the opinions we expressed are not known to our foreign comrades because of the language barrier. As a result, the international discussion on China has been going on without the participation of Chinese Trotskyists. The only exception is with Peng Shu-tze, thanks to his luck of having lived in more favorable circumstances and to the help he got from some foreign friends, his opinions were made available to the whole International.

This exception, however, has brought negative results rather than positive ones. As Peng's positions has been consistently of the right, and what is still worse is that the account he gave of himself, of Chinese comrades and of the Chinese organization in his articles, especially in his wife's articles ("Looking Back My Years With Peng Shu-tze," see *Intercontinental Press*, vol. 8, nos. 36, 37, 38, 39 and "The Real Lessons of China and Guerilla Warfare," see *International Internal Discussion Bulletin*, vol. 10, no. 2) is invariably self-centered and prejudiced. There are so many falsifications of facts and misrepresentations of the views of Peng's opponents that the readers are apt to be led to believe that the history of the Chinese Trotskyist movement is no more than a history of Peng alone and a history of his "infallibility" at that.

Thus we are compelled to break through the barrier and to have direct discussion with Trotskyists of the world on some important questions relating to the revolution in general and to the truth of our movement in China in particular, so that to draw correct revolutionary lessons and to acquaint our comrades of other countries with the true history of our activities before and during the revolution.

For the time being, however, I will not deal with the distortion of facts and misrepresentation of controversial views made in Peng's articles and I will confine my present article to a criticism of Peng's opinions about the Chinese revolution expressed in his own writings.

### **To begin with a fact**

Wishing to draw lessons from the 3rd Chinese revolution, first of all we have to know the following fact: During the whole period between 1946 and 1949, when the revolution began to develop itself mainly under the leadership or control of the CCP and in the form of a military struggle (civil war), then it gained momentum by bringing the war from defensive to offensive, and finally it triumphed by completely annihilating the Kuomintang armies, we, Chinese Trotskyists, without a single exception, did not recognize the meaning of what was happening. Not only before and during that time, but long after that, we could not and would not admit that what had been accomplished then in China was a revolution, to say nothing of a revolution of great historical importance.

This is an incredible fact indeed. A political organization,



which had been all along struggling to prepare the 3rd Chinese revolution, expecting its approaching every day, and doing everything to accelerate its coming, even did not recognize it when it really came.

How could such a strange thing happen anyway?

In a word, it was due to the lagging of the thoughts of revolutionaries far behind the developments of the revolution.

Either in the combination of the various social forces, or in the form in which the revolution developed itself, or in the process in which the revolution had gone through, the real third Chinese revolution was obviously in contradiction with many views and forecasts long held by the international Trotskyists, especially by the Chinese Trotskyists.

According to our traditional views, the main force of the third Chinese revolution must be the urban working class; the form in which the revolutionary struggles would develop must be like that: the working class and the urban poor, under the leadership of a revolutionary workers Party, carry on day-to-day economic and political struggles in coordination with the agrarian struggle of the poor peasants in order to converge them later into a tremendous revolutionary nation-wide movement for democratic demands; and the course of the revolutionary struggle would probably be as the following: first it would triumph in big cities (especially in these economic and political centres such as Shanghai and Nanking) by overthrowing the Kuomintang government and establishing a central revolutionary power, and then it would mobilize the poor peasants and to have them armed or to unite with and take the lead of those armed peasant forces which had already existed, with the aim to wage a longer or shorter civil war with the old governing classes which although had been defeated but not yet destroyed.

Such a perspective of the development of the 3rd Chinese revolution had been deeply crystalized in the minds of Chinese Trotskyists for a long time.

But in fact the 3rd Chinese revolution had began, developed and triumphed in quite different ways: first, the main force which had fatally defeated the Kuomintang political and military forces was not workers but peasantry; the working class remained politically inactive and organizationally dispersed during the whole period of the civil war; secondly, the party which had led the peasant army to victory, in our opinion of that time, was not a revolutionary party of the proletariat but a party of reformist petty-bourgeoisie. Thirdly, there had been a prolonged civil war between two regions — a civil war between a local revolutionary government and the national reactionary government. Therefore, it was not a central revolutionary government that started the civil war, but on the contrary, it was the military victory of the rebellious side in the civil war that set up the new national government. Thus, the actual developments of the revolution were blatantly in disaccord with our forecasts.

Since the developments of the revolution and the form in which it had achieved success were so different from that the Chinese Trotskyists had ever conceived, it was quite natural that they fell into a very deep contradiction. Being thus caught in contradiction and wishing to get out of it, Chinese Trotskyists were confronted with the following alternatives: either continuing to insist that the traditional position was the only correct one and thus refusing to admit that what had happened objectively was a revolution; or admitting that the triumph of the CCP represented the triumph of a revolution and therefore to make an overhaul of our own long-held views.

During the time when the CCP triumphed and in a comparatively long period after that, all Chinese Trotskyists chose the first alternative. Insisting firmly on the traditional views, all without an exception refused to admit that what had happened in China was a revolution. In sameness, however, there was differ-

ence. We were identical in the negative side of the question, i.e., in refusing to recognize it as a revolution; but on the positive side, that is, on the question of how to understand the real character of the "non-revolution," our opinions were different. Roughly speaking, we might say, there had been two positions and three views. The first position was: not admitting CCP's triumph to be a triumph of revolution, it admitted the fact that the triumph had brought forth a *qualitative* change to the politico-economical structure of China (this position was taken by Cde. Cheng Chao-lin and me). The second was: the military victory of the CCP over the Kuomintang had not produced any *qualitative* change in any sense (this was taken by Peng). As for the three views, they were: 1. The regime of the CCP represented a regime of state capitalism (Cheng); 2. The new regime was giving birth to a new class — a class a collectivist bureaucracy (me); 3. The transfer of power from Kuomintang to the CCP simply meant the substitute of an old tyrant for a new one, both represented bourgeoisie (Peng).

Cde. Cheng Chao-lin elaborated his views later in a pamphlet and he did not change them before he was arrested by Mao's secret police in December 1952. But as early as October 1950 he had agreed with a platform drafted by me at that time and also agreed with "An Open Letter to the CC of the CCP" drafted by me too in November 1952, the position of the two documents was neither in accord with the state capitalism nor with the collectivist bureaucratism, as both documents accepted the struggle of overthrowing KMT as a revolution and declared our fundamental support to the revolution.

I myself did not stop at the position of collectivist bureaucratism long. When I drafted the above-mentioned two documents, I began to be dissatisfied with the new position I took. Through practice first and theoretical considerations later, I found the mistake of the new conception, and once I found it erroneous, I openly admitted it and openly abandoned the erroneous position. I openly described how and why I had adopted it first and then gave it up. At the same time, I openly made a reassessment of our traditional position, pointing out which part of it was still correct while which part had been proved incorrect, and therefore I openly proposed what we Chinese Trotskyists should firmly hold out and what should be rectified. All of these had been put down finally in my booklet "Some Ideological Questions Concerning the Chinese Revolution" (1952), of which I will not repeat here.

Under the heavy pressure of the facts, Peng too could not but change his views about the new regime. The process of his change is like the following:

1. In January 1950, when the Communist army, in spite of Peng's forecast to the contrary, had not only scored victory after victory, but dealt final and fatal blow to the KMT army on the mainland of China, Peng declared that the civil war between the KMT and the CCP had already reached a "decisive stage." On the character of the new regime installed by the CCP he wrote a resolution, saying: "The so called 'people's democratic dictatorship' or the 'coalition Government' of workers, peasants, petty-bourgeoisie and bourgeoisie is actually a bare bonapartist military dictatorship of petty-bourgeoisie and bourgeoisie based on armed peasants. Such a military dictatorship *will never change its bourgeois character*, no matter what 'people's representative congress' might give it a disguise in the future." ("The Political Resolution about the Situation of China after the CCP Seized the Power," written by Peng. My emphasis.)

2. In November 1951, Peng saw in the CCP's victory for the first time "not only a fact of great importance and epoch-making, but a fact which will produce deep-going changes in the relations between the countries of the Far East as well as of the whole world." Besides, he admitted that the victory represented "a de-



formed revolution" and he confessed that the "successful seizure of power by the CCP was not at all foreseen by us;" but at the same time, he stressed "the fundamental line adopted by our party during the civil war and our fundamental policy towards the CCP were correct." Particularly he stressed the "consistent correctness" of his position concerning the character of the CCP and the new communist regime: the former was of "petty-bourgeois peasant," while the latter as "bourgeois." (All quotations are taken from Peng's report to the Secretariat of the 4th International, made in November 1951.)

3. In May 1952, Peng was of the opinion that there were "new facts" enabling him to believe that the CCP had been transformed from a petty-bourgeois peasant party to a party of "dual character;" meanwhile the Communist regime too had been transformed from a power of "unchangeable bourgeois character" to that of "dual character." (See Peng's "Some Supplements and Revisions to my Report to the Secretariat of the 4th International.")

4. Since then Peng has never taken any further trouble to tell us how the party and the state of "dual character" were transformed into that of "single character." In his articles written after that time, Peng just called the CCP a bureaucratically degenerated workers' party and People's Republic of China a bureaucratically degenerated workers' state, without any explanation.

From the above we see that Peng's attitude toward the changes he has ever made concerning the 3rd Chinese revolution is entirely different from ours. What he cares about above all is his own "face." What he most anxiously sought for is how to distort facts in order to confirm his "infallibility." Thus, whether he changed his views or not one can never learn anything from him.

#### **The first mistake in our traditional position — our assessment of the character of the CCP**

To make a real change of our views concerning what has been happening in China, and to rectify rather than to justify our mistakes ever made on this question, we should first of all say frankly and admit honestly what mistake or mistakes we did have made. In my opinion, so far as our ideological understanding is concerned, we have to admit first that our assessment of the character of the CCP was wrong. We failed to see that the CCP was still a workers' party and we took it for a petty-bourgeois peasant party. This was the source of a series of other mistakes we had ever made. Taking this assessment as the point of departure, naturally we were unable to explain: why the CCP, a party of peasantry and other layers of the petty-bourgeoisie, could resolutely lead a peasant army; why it could have overthrown the bourgeois government through resolute armed struggles in a revolutionary situation; why it could have carried out an agrarian revolution after it had overthrown the bourgeois rule; why it could have carried out those revolutionary measures of socialist character such as the nationalization of the means of production, and others.

How was it that we could have such an assessment of the CCP long before and even long after its victory? And in what after all is this assessment wrong?

According to Peng, it was L. Trotsky who made this assessment first, and we just followed his suit. As for the assessment itself, Peng says, it was been correct and is still correct unless somebody can give him "sufficient facts and correct arguments" to the contrary.

Let us see some facts and arguments.

Ascribing the invention of the peasant party assessment of the CCP to Trotsky, Peng referred us to Trotsky's letter to Chinese Left Opposition — "Peasant War in China and the Proletariat" (September 22, 1932).

True, among others, Trotsky in his letter said the following:

"In the years of the counter-revolution they (Stalinists) passed over from the proletariat to the peasantry, i.e., they undertook that role which was fulfilled in our country by the SRs when they were still a revolutionary party." And he also said: "The party actually tore itself away from its class." But the question is: to say that Party A undertook the same role of Party B is not necessarily equal to say that A and B represent the same class interests. To say that a party tore itself away from its class is also not necessarily to say that it no longer represents its class, still less to say that it will never again represent it. What is more important is the fact the content of the whole letter is to deal with the prospect of the peasant struggle and to study beforehand the relationship which may be formed between the peasant struggle and the working class. The main point which the author of the letter kept in mind was the possible development not the accomplished facts. So it was his assessment of the Chinese Stalinists. That was why Trotsky said the following in the letter:

Bureaucratic centrism, as centrism, cannot have an independent class support. But in its struggle against the Bolshevik-Leninists it is compelled to seek support from the right, i.e., from the peasantry and the petty-bourgeoisie, counterposing them to the proletariat. The struggle between the two Communist factions, the Stalinists and the Bolshevik-Leninists, thus bears in itself an inner *tendency* toward transformation into a class struggle. The revolutionary development of events in China may draw this tendency to its conclusion, i.e., to a civil war between the peasant army led by the Stalinists and the proletarian vanguard led by the Leninists.

Were such a tragic conflict to arise, due entirely to the Chinese Stalinists, it would signify that the Left Opposition and the Stalinists ceased to be Communist factions and had become hostile parties, each having a different class base. (Passages quoted above see pp. 197 and 200, "Writings of Trotsky in 1932.")

It is quite clear that Trotsky did not at all assert that the CCP at that time had already been "a party of peasantry and petty-bourgeoisie." "Were such a tragic conflict arise . . . it would signify that the Left Opposition and the Stalinists ceased to be Communist factions and had become hostile parties, each having a different class base." So saying, the author of the letter had obviously in his mind a hypothetical situation, a possible prospect. Thus he continued in the letter: "However, is such a perspective inevitable? No, I don't think so at all." (p. 200, *ibid.*)

Yet Peng Shu-tze misinterpreted Trotsky's words, taking what possibly happens under certain conditions for what has actually happened.

Another point should be noted: This letter of Trotsky's was written in September 1932. But anybody who has been familiar with the history of the 4th International knows it was in July 1933 did Trotsky for the first time call for the preparation for the building of a new party and a new International. Up to that time, Trotskyists throughout the world (whether they had been expelled from the Communist Party or not) had considered themselves as a faction of the CP, and no matter how degenerated it was still considered by them as a proletarian organization capable of being reformed. Then how could Trotsky assess the CCP in September 1932 as a party already transformed into a "party of peasantry and petty-bourgeois"?

Peng's attempt to shift the responsibility of making wrong assessment of the CCP on Trotsky's shoulders is obviously to no purpose. It does not in accordance with the fact.

Next question: Was it true that during the long period of its existence (at least from 1933 till 1952) the CCP had actually become a party representing peasantry as all Chinese Trotskyists then believed? On second thoughts, I don't think so. With this question I have dealt in great detail in my article "Some Ideological Questions." Here I'll just quote a few passages from it:



There were two circumstances that made us to deny the CCP as a working class party. 1. Since 1934 the CCP had completely passed over from the proletariat to the peasantry, from the cities to the countryside. 2. Commencing 1937, the CCP, in the name of the joint resistance war against the Japanese invasion, capitulated to the Kuomintang by declaring their conversion to the Sun Yat-senism, accepting the reorganization of the Red Army and promising to give up the class struggle. These two circumstances were of course decisive enough for serious Marxist revolutionaries to pass a judgement on a party. A party, having torn itself from the working class, left its proper scene of battle and given up its revolutionary platform of class struggle, should apparently no longer be called a working class party.

So we were not wrong in principle, I think, when we first declared that the CCP had become a peasant party in the mid-30's. We were mistaken in this that since we made that assessment we had never checked it up with the real doings of the CCP. Still worse, we had refused to see those facts which might refute our assessment.

In retrospect, in my opinion, we should point out the following facts which were ignored by us: 1. The withdrawal of the CCP from the cities was not taken place out of their own will, neither was it in accordance with a plan, it was in fact simply the result of the Kuomintang persecution and repression. Therefore, it could not be taken as an implementation of a new orientation of peasant war instead of proletarian revolution. 2. Having withdrawn to the countryside, the CCP did not foresake, either in words or in deeds, the platform of "a revolutionary united front under the leadership of the working class," and in reality though not on a grand scale they continued the class struggle in villages even during the honeymoon of its 'remarriage' with the Kuomintang. 3. Since the second collaboration between the CCP and the KMT in 1937, it was true that the CCP had dropped the policy of class struggle not only in words but also in deeds: discontinuing the struggle against the landlords, putting themselves under the leadership of Chiang Kai-shek and declaring their acceptance of Sun Yat-senism. It was indeed a turn of decisive importance which we rightfully then denounced as a final capitulation. In retrospect, however, we still should admit that the shameful betrayal of the CCP at that time, thanks to multiple objective and subjective reasons which I won't discuss for the time being, had not gone as far as its logical end. By and large it had been a matter of tactical manoeuvre rather than that of strategical turn of orientation. 4. Either during the 'Soviet and Red Army' period or during the period of 'The United Front and the 8th Route Army,' the CCP had been all along kept as an organization of highly disciplined revolutionary professionals and the recruitment of its members and the soldiers had been carried out on class basis.

The above mentioned facts, if we had paid close attention to, I think, would have much earlier helped us to rectify our assessment of the CCP as a peasant party and to reach the conclusion that in spite of its complete separation from the working class and even its conversion to Sun Yat-senism, the CCP remained in degrees now larger now smaller as a party of working class inclination.

Such an reassessment of mine about the character of the CCP is entirely different with that of Peng Shu-tze. I said: we were *wrong* when we called the CCP a party representing the interests of peasants and other petty-bourgeois layers. We were wrong because our assessment was merely based on abstract principles, without taking the concrete facts into consideration. Therefore, we should admit now that the CCP was a party retaining its workers' inclination in now larger now smaller degrees and it still can be considered as a party representing, although in very bureaucratic way, the historical interests of the working class, and that was why it had been able to make use of the favourable situation during the 3rd Chinese revolution to achieve a series of victories.

According to Peng, we were *correct* when we took the CCP as a peasant party. And therefore we were also *correct* when we refused to recognize the victory of the CCP as the victory of

Chinese revolution and labelled the new government as a "bourgeois state." But under the pressure of development of events, Peng could not but admit that the CCP was in substance a workers party and the People's Republic of China a kind of workers state. Then how could he explain this change of his view? How could he "mend" his blatant mistakes on the one hand and maintain his "infallibility" on the other hand? By resorting to the magic of "facts." For this purpose, Peng pointed out the following facts: "During the past over two years, the composition of (the CCP) had actually increased its workers elements and an orientation towards the working class had been strengthened due to its agrarian campaign and its struggle against corruption. . . ." (See Peng's report to the IS of the 4th International.) According to Peng, this fact, and this fact alone, testified to the effect that the CCP, "a party of peasants and other petty-bourgeois layers," had "progressed toward a workers party" through an intermediate stage of "dual character" and that the "bourgeois" regime set up by the CCP had also thereby become a "dual power" first and a "degenerated workers' state" a little later.

Giving these facts, unfortunately, Peng had never asked himself the questions as follows: Why was the fact that the same CCP overthrew the bourgeois regime *two years ago* not sufficient for him to reconsider the class assessment of the CCP? Was not the problem of power the most important problem of any revolution? Was not the seizure of power from the hands of the ruling class a fact of much more decisive importance than any other facts happened during the developments of the revolution?

Just to pose these questions seriously is quite enough to see how untenable Peng's "facts" and "arguments" are.

Like all Chinese Trotskyists, Peng had mis-assessed the class character of the CCP; but unlike the other Chinese comrades, Peng lacked the courage to admit his mistakes. Instead of mending them, he tried to play tricks on and to cover them, consequently he created a bigger confusion of thoughts which had brought good neither to himself nor to other comrades.

### The triumph of the CCP and its causes

Our mis-judgement of the social character of the CCP had not only made the Chinese Trotskyists unable to comprehend the meaning of the triumph of the Chinese revolution, but even had made most of us unable to foresee the possibility of the military triumph of the Communist army. During the civil war, we had been categorically declaring that "the defeat of the Communist army is inevitable" on the ground that the peasant guerilla units led by a "peasant party" could never defeat the regular army led by the bourgeoisie. Forecasts like this were prevalent then among comrades, but in this respect too it was Peng who had gone the farthest. For a random example, we would quote the following passage from an editorial of *The Truth* of which Peng was the editor:

On the part of the CCP, it has undoubtedly suffered a severe and irrecoverable blow militarily; it lost many cities and communication lines to the KMT in the Northeast, its military strength has been greatly weakened. Although it still occupies vast areas of countryside, still carries on guerilla warfare with the aim to cut the communication line of the KMT army, still threatens the cities and towns occupied by the KMT army and this to eat up the latter's strength, yet all these cannot solve the problems seriously posed at the present time. Because the successive defeats suffered by the CCP army have not only greatly lowered the political status of the CCP, but also deeply shaken its internal basis of the party. . . . If such a situation continues, it is inevitable that every kind of differentiation and any act of betrayal will happen in the CCP and its army and that in its turn will bring catastrophe to it. Few people have pointed out this perspective, but it is very well understood by



those who have the sufficient courage to face the fact and who understand the logical consequences that will happen after the defeat of the mass movement of the peasants. (*The Truth* vol. 1, nos. 2 and 3, published in Jan. 1947.)

Since Peng — as we have seen — did not see and stubbornly refused to recognize even the most undisputable fact of the military victory of the CCP, he is of course not to be expected to make a study of the causes of the triumph of the CCP.

It was in November 1951, two whole years after the complete triumph achieved by the CCP, Peng for the first time (also his last time) made an inquiry into the causes of Chinese Stalinists' victory. The following are the results of his study:

Relying on a peasant army, which was kept apart from the urban working class, the CCP achieved victory over the Chiang Kai-shek regime of the landlord-bourgeoisie. This victory was brought about entirely under the specific conditions of a certain historical phase, that is, under a combination of various complicated specific conditions which were created by the 2nd World War. (Peng's "Report on Chinese Situation," November 1951, pp. 11-12, Chinese edition.)

What are the "specific conditions" after all? As Peng told us, they are the following: 1. "The absolute corruption and self-disintegration of the Chiang Kai-shek regime;" 2. "The abandonment of Chiang Kai-shek by the US imperialists;" 3. "The subjective strength of the CCP;" 4. "The aid given by the USSR to the CCP."

Such an enumeration of the causes of the triumph of the CCP would be perhaps very good for a middle school teacher in modern Chinese history. For a participant of the revolution, however, especially for one of the leaders of a party which had been determined, in competition with the CCP, to win out during the revolution, it is too insufficient, and even too improper to give an explanation of that historical event like that.

For a genuine and responsible revolutionary who had actually participated and failed to win in a revolution, it is quite improper to merely point out fatalistically the objective reasons of his rival's victory and then lying back on his comfortable couch and continuing to give "directions to the revolution."

Having found out these causes, Peng should first of all ask himself the question: Under the same "specific conditions," why was it that the one who succeeded in making use of them and thereby gathered the rotten fruit of the KMT power was not we who had been always correct in revolutionary strategy, but the CCP which had been pursuing a wrong political line? Secondly, he should ask himself: which was the real reason that made the US imperialists abandoned (in fact they have not done so even now) Chiang Kai-shek? Was it the objective situation of the Chinese revolution, especially the powerful advancing of the communist army, that proved to the US imperialists that it would be useless to continue to aid Chiang, or on the contrary, the US imperialists abandoned Chiang for an unknown reason and consequently helped the CCP gain the upper hand in the civil war? Thirdly, he should put such a question to himself: If the CCP actually as we believed had of its own accord capitulated completely before the KMT, and consequently had become both organizationally and politically a petty-bourgeois party, how could it become a most powerful force out of a sudden by making use of the war? Supposing the CCP had not been tempered and organized itself in the armed struggles for many years, could it make use of the favorable military situation to vanquish Chiang Kai-shek's army? Finally the following question also should have been raised: Was the KMT propaganda true, that the USSR had handed all the weapons disarmed of the Japanese Kwantung army over to the CCP and that a great number of Soviet experts and Japanese prisoners of war had helped the Communist army

to direct the modern war? If it was true (in fact, we knew it was not so), one still has to ask another question: If the CCP itself was not in a position to make use of these helps (weapons and experts), how could it achieve victory in the war as well as in the revolution by means of these aids?

None of the above mentioned questions was raised by Peng, still less was pondered and answered by him. He just pointed out the four exceptional conditions in order to prove that the triumph achieved by the CCP was "exceptional," therefore it was beyond the "forecast" of the "orthodox Marxists." In other words, since it was an exceptional case in the history, it was not in accordance with the "forecast of the traditional Marxism." And as every exception does not invalidate the rule, so the whole traditional position of Chinese Trotskyism (and that represented by Peng in particular) need not make any check-up because of the exceptional case.

Such an attitude is, in my opinion, not only ridiculous, but very absurd.

True, in another place of his "Report," he also said the following:

Just as we and Trotsky did not foresee the extra-ordinary expansion of Stalinism during the period after the World War II, so we did not foresee the triumph of the CCP today. Our mistake is neither of principle, nor one of methodology. It is rather a result of our clinging too stubbornly to the principle, so that we had to a certain extent ignored the specific conditions created by the development of events and thus prevented us from changing our tactics in time. We should accept the lesson in this respect. (p. 13, *ibidem*.)

Here the "infallible" recognized a mistake at last, although he did it as usual under the cover of Trotsky and in a very limited way. "We had to a certain extent ignored the specific conditions created by the development of events and thus prevented us from changing our tactics in time." Very well said and surely some valuable lessons might be drawn from it if only one could go more deeply into the questions such as which one precisely of the "specific conditions" was ignored and which tactics exactly that we "failed to change in time." Unfortunately, Peng did not try to answer the former question, nor did he try to answer the latter. Thus the only point in Peng's article that meant something also lost its meaning. It has not given us any real lesson.

#### **On the 'specific condition' really ignored by us and the 'tactic that we failed to change in good time'**

Among the four "specific conditions" pointed by Peng, only that of the "subjective strength of the CCP" really deserves special attention, yet it has been completely (not "to a certain extent") ignored by us. All tactical mistakes we made during the 3rd Chinese revolution, we might say, could be traced to this "neglect." Therefore the lesson we have to "accept" must be drawn from a close study of this "subjective strength." In Peng's article, however, we saw that this "specific condition" was least elaborated, as if it was not worthwhile to deal with. According to Peng, the specific character of this condition simply consisted in the fact that the "peasant party" CCP and the peasant army under its command, which should have been liquidated and in fact they had been liquidated in 1937, had the good luck of seeing the outbreak of the anti-Japanese war and this "gained a tremendous growth and built up for themselves a formidable military strength." (p. 8, *ibidem*.)

From such an explanation, of course, one can never draw any lesson. Chinese Trotskyists cannot get a little more knowledge from Peng's research, neither can revolutionaries of other underdeveloped countries gain any instructions therefrom. Since these "specific conditions" can only be encountered by luck, by no means can they be sought for, they are "accidents" quite inde-



pendent of one's subjective efforts. One of course cannot draw lessons from sheer accidents.

A serious study of the subjective strength of the CCP necessitates first of all an enquiry into the class character of the party, which had already been discussed above, we will not repeat here. What I'll discuss now is the most "specific" among the "specifics," the relationship between the triumph of the CCP and the armed struggle, and one of the most important tactics that we had failed to change in time.

Let us look back briefly upon the two lines on Chinese revolution represented respectively by Stalinists and Trotskyists.

In the fall of 1927, when the second Chinese revolution suffered its definite defeat, Stalin and his followers declared that the revolution had not been defeated, but on the contrary, it had entered its "highest stage," the stage of establishing Chinese Soviet power through armed struggle. The result was well known: the putchist policy executed first by Chu Chu-pei and then by Li Lisan only succeeded in squandering the revolutionary forces survived the defeat and thus extremely deepened the counter-revolutionary situation throughout the country (especially in cities).

Trotsky gave a warning just in time, and in October 1928 he provided Chinese revolutionaries with an entirely different platform for their future struggle, in which he said that the Chinese revolution had been defeated because of the Stalin-Bukharin opportunist leadership and that China now was not at all in "an epoch of ever growing revolutionary upsurge," but in "an intermediate epoch between two revolutions." The counter-revolution had triumphed, he pointed out, but the democratic and national tasks of the revolution were not solved; these tasks would be raised again during the counter-revolutionary period in the form of democratic struggle.

Hence it was very urgent for the revolutionary party to propose a comprehensive revolutionary democratic platform, to call for the convocation of an all-powerful constituent assembly elected by secret ballot and based on universal suffrage. We should struggle for this platform with all our strength in order to reassemble our cadres, re-establish connections with all toiling masses and to transform gradually the counter-revolutionary situation into a revolutionary one.

Of the two different assessments of that period of Chinese revolution and the two different lines adopted therefrom, which was right had been proved by history so clearly that any more comment would be unnecessary.

Later, owing to the profound potentialities of the Chinese revolution, i.e., to the complicated internal contradictions of China and to certain politico-economical and geographical specific conditions of the country, the masses of peasantry, especially those of the provinces in Southern China who had been baptized by the revolution rose up under the leadership of communists, opening a new scene of battle of tremendous scale and great influence. Meanwhile, in the cities, in the big industrial cities in particular, the reactionary rule of the bourgeoisie had achieved a relative stability both in economic and political fields, which in its turn helped not without success the "scientifically organized" KMT secret police to repress the working class and its party with more and more effectiveness.

Under such a new situation, the CCP was forced to gradually leave the big cities and the working class and to go to the peasantry deeper and deeper. In tactics and strategy of the revolution, it was also gradually and pragmatically adapted to its revolutionary action until at last it spelt out a line of long term armed struggle, of opposing the reactionary central government by establishing a revolutionary power in a certain occupied district and of encircling the cities with the countryside.

Trotsky had been very closely watching the new situation, analysing the developments incessantly and giving us timely ad-

vice. He was very pleased to notice the "revolutionary revival in the countryside," expressed his joy over every victory achieved by the Chinese poor peasants and sincerely hoped that "the dusk of the second Chinese revolution" could be immediately followed by "the dawn of the third revolution." At the same time he severely criticised "the criminal policy of the bureaucratic putchism" of the Stalinists decidedly exposed their illusion of making revolution through peasant guerilla warfare alone. Toward the "Red Army" which had already grown into a considerable force, Trotsky formulated a correct attitude which we should take in the following words:

While we refuse to identify the armed peasant detachment with the Red Army as the armed power of the proletariat and have no inclination to shut our eyes to the fact that the Communist banner hides the petty-bourgeois content of the peasant movement, we on the other hand, take an absolutely clear view of the tremendous revolutionary-democratic significance of the peasant war. We teach the workers to appreciate its significance and we are ready to do all in our power in order to achieve the necessary military alliance with the peasant organizations. ("Peasant War in China and the Proletariat," see p. 200, Writings of L. Trotsky in 1932.)

Looking back upon the two lines of that period and considering from the point of view of Marxism, we should also say that the position taken by Trotsky was right. But now, in retrospect, I think there is one point that should be reconsidered so far as the activities of the Chinese Trotskyists are concerned. During the years between 1931 and 1937, when our organization was successively crushed by the KMT secret police and consequently our strength was progressively reduced almost to nil, would it be better for us while continued to manage to maintain our strictly clandestine organization in cities, had we *at the same time* gone to open a new scene of battle in the countryside, where the masses were in a higher spirit to struggle and the repression of the reaction was less harsh, with the aim to preserve our cadres and recruit new militants? Should we do as Trotsky once advised us to: "To have our people, Oppositionists, at least in the larger divisions of the 'Red Army,' to share the fate of these detachments, to observe attentively the relations between these detachments and the peasantry and to keep the Left Opposition informed."? ("Letter to Chinese Left Oppositionists," published in the Nov. 6, 1972 issue of the *Intercontinental Press*.) If we had actually done that way, would the strength of the Chinese Trotskyists have been much stronger and greater than it was at the eve of the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese war in 1937?

To all these questions I have to answer in the affirmative.

But if we had sent our comrades into the "Red Army," according to a plan and place this work under the leadership of our organization, or, if circumstances permitting, we had even taken the lead of an independent peasant detachment, would it have meant that we had capitulated to Stalinist line of strategy? At that time we thought that it would. But now, I think, we must admit that we were wrong in thinking that way. If we had done as I said above, in my opinion, it would and could differ entirely from the Stalinist political line. First, we would insist on the priority of the work among the urban working class and would spare no efforts to restore and strengthen the underground work in the cities even if the KMT white terror had partially or completely destroyed our organizations there. We would all along look at the peasant struggle as a roundabout way through which the struggle of the urban toiling masses could be stimulated and developed. Secondly, if we too had participated in the armed struggle of the peasantry, we would do it as a component part of our overall revolutionary-democratic struggle, a component part of our struggle for the constituent congress, that is to say, we would not do it as Stalinists to establish a soviet power through the peasant armed



forces, but to take this kind of struggle as *one* of the powerful means to realize our revolutionary democratic program, to convoke the all-powerful, universally elected constituent congress. So I am quite sure that if we had adopted a more positive and more correct (it also means more faithful to the spirit expressed in Trotsky's two letters: Jan. 8, 1931 and Sept. 26, 1932) attitude towards the peasant armed struggle during the period of 1932-1937, we would certainly have a more powerful organization to meet the new situation created by China's resistance war against the Japanese invasion.

The Resistance War broke out in the autumn of 1937 not only created an entirely new political situation, but also altered the relationship between various classes of the Chinese society and changed many forms of struggle. One of the most remarkable changes was: the life of the whole nation and especially its antagonisms were directly got involved into war. All questions were settled more directly by means of armed force. The Stalinist party of China, notwithstanding its absurdity, shamelessness and hypocrisy, grasped one point very firmly, i.e., it made full use of the war situation to increase in number its own "gun barrels." Of this point, even Peng Shu-tze took cognizance and said the following in his "Report":

Owing to the outbreak of the anti-Japanese war, the armed forces of the CCP again gained an opportunity to expand themselves to an unprecedented size in North China. Particularly at the end of the war, and during the period following it, the armed forces of the CCP even more greatly grew, becoming much bigger and stronger than that it once had in Kiangsi province both quantitatively and qualitatively. They became a tremendous military strength.

Now let us suppose that our support to the Resistance War had not been confined to one "on the paper," but a real one, namely, an actual and planned participation in the anti-Japanese armed forces; or at least, if we had given ideological encouragement and political leadership to those comrades who had participated in armed struggles or even led some independent detachments (such as the cases in Shantung and Kwangtung provinces), what a different condition we would have found ourselves at the end of war and during the period after it? Of course we could not say that we would certainly have built up a force which was strong enough to compete with that of the CCP, but at least we would not have been as we actually were: during the war, our organization was practically dissolved, some cadres were even starved to death and no contribution in action was made to the anti-Japanese efforts, while in the post-war period, despite the very favorable pre-revolutionary situation, our revived organization (exactly two organizations) was too weak to utilize it and as bystanders, we adopted an entirely passive attitude toward the civil war between the CCP and the KMT.

Peng said: "We more or less overlooked the specific conditions of the development of the events, and consequently it prevented us from making tactical change in good time." If there is really something in this statement, he has to point out that precisely the "specific condition" of the armed struggle of the CCP was "overlooked" by us. At the same time, he has to openly admit that at least and as late as in 1937, after the outbreak of the Resistance War, we should have made a timely change in respect to the tactics of armed struggle. Unfortunately Peng did not and would not draw such a lesson. On the contrary, basing on the "Chinese experience," he gave a lesson to the revolutionaries of the backward countries who were in the same situation as we Chinese Trotskyists had been as follows: "The tactic of guerilla warfare can and should be used in the countryside to aid the armed insurrection of the working class in the cities when the conditions are ripe for an insurrection in the main cities. The tactic of guerilla warfare or "armed struggle" should *not* be used

when the conditions for an insurrection by the working class in the cities do not exist." (Chen Pi-lan's article: "The Real Lesson of China on Guerilla Warfare," *Internal Bulletin* vol. 10, no. 2, p. 9.)

If these lines were written before the World War II, when people had not seen the experiences of the revolutions of Yugoslavia, Vietnam, China, North Korea and Cuba, I believe, it would not meet with objection. But it has become very clear now that if we have recognized what had happened in these countries were genuine revolutions, and revolutions of socialist character at that, then we cannot fail to notice, if only we have eyes to see and brains to think, that a kind of peasant insurrection under the leadership of a workers party did occur *prior* to the insurrection of the working class in the cities. Not only did they occur, but they even triumphed; not only triumphed, but also triumphed as a genuine revolution. True, these insurrections did not start and proceed completely in accordance with "the three conditions" of insurrection put forth by Lenin, nor did they in accordance with Trotsky's teachings in connection with the peasant uprisings. But what makes the theory of revolution valuable after all, I would like to ask? Because it has been incessantly induced from the experience of revolutionary struggles and thereby to give direction to further struggle, or because it is a fixed formula which is above any check-up with new experiences and thereby to limit the future struggle? I believe: "Revolutionary theory is no dogma, but a direction for revolutionary action." The reason why it can direct the action is that it has been incessantly proved and is to be continuously checked up in action. This also applies to the theory of the armed struggle.

Trotsky's views on the relation between the peasant guerilla warfare and the workers' insurrection were correct and remain so at present. Having seen the new revolutionary experiences after the World War II, however, we should say: correct as it still is, it is not the *only* correct way now. Owing to some objective historical reasons, under certain "specific conditions," the peasant guerilla warfare (under the leadership of a party with the class consciousness of urban workers) might break out and carry on *before* the workers' insurrection in the cities in colonial and semi-colonial countries. In this respect, a statement made by the Socialist Workers' Party of the United States of America, I think, is very important and correct. It is as follows:

13. Along the road of a revolution beginning with simple democratic demands and ending in the rupture of capitalist property relations, guerilla warfare conducted by landless and semi-proletarian forces, under a leadership that becomes committed to carrying the revolution through to a conclusion, can play a decisive role in undermining and precipitating the downfall of a colonial or semi-colonial power. This is one of the main lessons to be drawn from experiences since the second world war. It must be consciously incorporated into the strategy of building revolutionary parties in colonial countries. (See "For Early Reunification of the World Trotskyist Movement," March 1, 1963.)

This is an important supplement made by Trotskyists to one of Trotsky's important concepts. Such a supplement, I believe, if Trotsky still lives today, he would be the first man to make. But Peng is not only unable to do it, but condemned any supplement of this kind as a departure from Trotskyism, and therefore raised the clarion slogan: "Return to the road of Trotskyism!" The experiences of the revolutions occurred during and after the World War II have not (absolutely not) left any impression in his mind — indeed, Peng can by no means be suspected of being an "impressionist!"

#### On the 'specific' and 'normal' conditions of a revolution

The main reason why Peng would not and could not draw any lesson from the triumph of the CCP is his conviction that the



triumph was just a result of some exceptional historical conditions, even a result of a piece of sheer good luck, it does not bear any relation to the policy and tactics, of the CCP, nor does it owe to its orientation of armed struggle. Therefore it is out of question to try to learn something from such a triumph. According to Peng, the armed struggle of the CCP had suffered the decidedly crushing defeat as early as in 1937, it was accidentally first due to the "specific condition" of the Japanese invasion, then to the "specific condition" of the World War II, and after the War, it was due to the "specific condition" of the complete corruption of the KMT, finally due to the "specific conditions" of the abandonment of the KMT by the US imperialism on the one hand and the readiness of the USSR to give assistance to the CCP on the other, that the long-annihilated and "irrecoverable" armed forces of the CCP succeeded in "resurrecting themselves from death" and became a "mammoth strength" strong enough to overthrow the KMT regime. All these, according to Peng, were accidental occurrences and therefore should not be in any way attributed to the policy of the CCP, still less to its policy of the armed struggle, which in Peng's opinion should never be considered as "one of the main lessons to be drawn from experiences since the second world war" and in no case it should be "consciously incorporated into the strategy of building revolutionary parties in colonial countries." No, Peng would not do it. Instead he had openly repudiated the course of armed struggle which had helped the CCP achieve success in the same way as he would repudiate the evil of gambling which by accident and luck had helped somebody win a lot of money.

Peng could and would recognize only one kind of revolution, namely, a revolution which was made neither "on a certain specific historical phase," nor "under specific conditions." But permit me to ask: Was there really any revolution like that in the history? I think there has not been such a revolution. Of all revolutions in the history none was not the result of some "specific conditions on a certain specific historical phase." Why then could Peng deny the revolutionary meaning of the triumph of the CCP on such a ground? And why then did he on the same ground refuse to draw any lesson from the triumph of Chinese Stalinists? To answer these questions we have to ferret out the organic opportunism in Peng's thinking.

There is a category of Marxists who claim to be faithful to Marxism inasmuch as they firmly believe that the proletarian revolution can only break out at that time when the growth of the productive force of a nation can no longer co-exist with the productive relations. Thus it breaks out quite naturally. The process of a proletarian socialist revolution, according to these Marxists, is as natural as the birth of a child: only if the conditions are ready, the result will be brought about automatically. No need of artificial intervention, which would make the conditions "exceptional" and therefore make the revolution "impure."

These "Marxists" refused to recognize the Russian October Revolution. Among the reasons they gave to explain their refusal, the most important was that the revolution was not natural and normal, but an "abnormal" result produced by "exceptional conditions on a certain specific historical phase." Accidentally it broke out during the world war; accidentally it occurred at the time when the Tsarist government of Russia had been completely "self-disintegrated;" it was accidentally facilitated by the abandonment of the Kerensky regime by the Anglo-French imperialists and it was accidentally made much easier by the fact that the German imperialists helped Lenin and other revolutionaries to go home: in a word, only to these sheer lucky chances did the Bolsheviks achieve their success. Thus they declared it was not a revolution, still less a proletarian socialist revolution, it was just a "revolution of soldiers," "an armed uprising of peasants."

According to these "Orthodox Marxists," a real proletarian

revolution could not but break out first in the most advanced capitalist countries. Besides it must be carried out by means of normal and legal methods. If a revolution was not won through the parliamentary struggle, it would mean that it had resorted to "exceptional conditions," and to carry on a revolution this way, even if it achieved success, cannot be considered as a genuine revolution.

Of course Peng is a Trotskyist, believing in the theory of permanent revolution. He will not share the theory of "normal revolution" à la Kautsky. But considering his dogmatic and perverse way in which he interpreted the revolutionary teachings of the Masters, his parrot-like "faithfulness" to their certain arguments, his determination to close eyes to the real developments of the history and his pedantic way of ordering the events to adapt to his own "norms," Peng is not very different from Kautsky.

But the real thing in common between Peng and Karl Kautsky is their similar view on the role might be played by the democratic parliament. Both make a fetish of the democratic institution.

Before going into this question, however, let us look back a little upon the old discussions in connection with the slogan of the constituent assembly among Chinese Trotskyists at the beginning of 30's.

After the defeat of the second Chinese revolution in 1927, Stalin, as we have described above, declared that the Chinese revolution had in fact entered "the new highest stage" and called for the masses to revolt under the new banner of Chinese Soviet power. As a result, the defeat was made more tragic, the counter-revolutionary situation much more deepened and the strength of the Communist Party greatly weakened. In the light of such a situation, Trotsky raised the slogan of "an all-powerful and universally elected constituent assembly" for Chinese communists in his criticism of the erroneous line adopted at the Sixth Congress of the Communist International. The official leadership of the CCP, following the wake of Stalin, repudiated this slogan and condemned it as a position of "liquidationists." A part of the CCP members, however, accepted this slogan as well as Trotsky's views on other issues about the Chinese revolution, which made these communists, most of them were veterans, take a position opposing the CC of the CCP at that time. They were consequently expelled from the party and at the same time they joined with the young Trotskyists who had been already active outside the CCP to form the organization of the "Bolshevik-Leninists of China."

Thus we see, the acceptance of the constituent assembly slogan as the central political slogan of the Chinese revolutionary party for a period to come was one of the important standards around which rallied the first generation of Chinese Trotskyists. But exactly on this question the first and most heated theoretical dispute broke out among the Chinese Trotskyists.

All accepted the slogan, but the reason on which one accepted it was different, even opposite. Some accepted it from the left, while others did the same from the right. As a result, the aim for which one accepted the slogan was also of different character: some people considered that the aim of our fight for the constituent assembly was the realisation of the parliamentary perspective in China, because, they argued, a parliamentary system was in any respect better than the KMT military dictatorship; if realized, it would be much more advantageous to the revolution. On the other hand, there were people of the opinion that the reason why we fought for the slogan of the constituent assembly was not so much the realization of a parliament in itself as its role in helping us to reassemble the masses, to rebuild our party, to inspire the masses from the defeat and to step onto the road of the third Chinese revolution on the basis of the struggle for democratic (including the national) demands. Briefly speaking, there were comrades who had accepted this central revolutionary-dem-



ocratic slogan for the parliamentary perspective in China and there were other comrades who had accepted the same slogan because it was a revolutionary tactic during the counter-revolutionary period to mobilize and rally the masses so that they could once again step onto the road of revolution.

The representative of the former view was Liu Jen-jing, supported by some older comrades; while the advocates of the latter position were mainly the young Trotskyists (including me). Peng, so far as I knew, did not take part in this discussion, so I cannot say to which side did he belong. However, judging from the way in which he had since then applied this slogan, I can safely say that he had embraced the slogan in question from the right. It was clearly revealed by his articles on the constituent assembly, especially those written after the World War II and during the civil war between the CCP and the KMT. In the magazine *Truth*, of which Peng was the Chief editor, all editorials were centered on the two parallel demands: convocation of the constituent assembly and immediate cessation of the civil war. In the name of the "people," Peng condemned both the KMT and the CCP equally for their "continuing the extremely cruel civil war regardless of whatever damage it might cause." So he demanded an immediate cessation of "the meaningless war between the KMT and the CCP which will provide no outlet for our country and will only bring the people to an abyss of suffering," and called for the convocation of the constituent assembly in order to settle all questions with which China was encountered. ("On the Constituent Assembly," by Peng Shu-tze, published in the *Truth* vol. 1, no. 7.) Such was Peng's attitude toward the civil war on the one hand and to the slogan of constituent assembly on the other. He did not recognize the different class interests represented by the warring parties in the former case and recognizes the constituent assembly as a panacea in the latter. Both his position on the civil war and that on the constituent assembly rendered help, objectively of course, to the most reactionary KMT and its fraud of constitutional plan.

To be fair, however, I have to point out right now that such a mistake was committed not by Peng alone. On the contrary, we might say that nearly all leading Chinese Trotskyists of that time (either of the majority or of the minority, and including the author of these lines) made the same mistake to a varying extent. But it was Peng who had the credit of having displayed the mistake most glaringly and thoroughly.

Peng's ultra-rightist position on the question of the constituent assembly demonstrated itself most clearly in the fact: In January 1950, that is, half a year after the triumph of the CCP throughout the country, Peng in the political resolution which we have quoted above many times still specify the demand of the convocation of the constituent assembly as one of the "ten demands of the political program." What does this "little fact" mean? It means first, Peng believed even then that the revolution had not yet begun (according to him the third Chinese revolution "began" since November 1951); secondly it means that in Peng's conviction a genuine revolution could only be carried out through the struggle for the constituent assembly, not through armed struggle — not through the "meaningless" civil war.

As a matter of fact, Peng directly contradicted Trotsky on this point. Trotsky raised the slogan of the constituent assembly for Chinese revolutionaries did not intend to counterpose the illegal armed struggle with a legal peaceful struggle. What he really intended was to give them a central political slogan under which and with which all kinds of struggles, including the armed struggle of the poor peasants, could be unified on political level. Yet in Peng's and other rightist Trotskyists' opinion, the struggle for the constituent assembly was just a legal and peaceful substitute for the illegal armed struggle. When an internal discussion about the slogan of the constituent assembly occurred among Chinese

Trotskyists in later 20's, Trotsky tackled this question among others in one of his letters to Chinese comrades. One passage of it is as follows:

... and the struggle for the democracy is exactly an indispensable condition for the building of the party. The slogan of the constituent assembly can unify politically the *scattered movements and insurrections in various provinces*, and provide a basis for the solidarity of the CP enabling it to become the national leader of the proletariat and all the toiling masses. (L.D.'s "Letter to Chinese Oppositionists" dated April 2, 1930. Re-translated into English from Chinese, emphasis is mine.)

In this passage, the relationship between the slogan of the constituent assembly and the "scattered movements and insurrections in various provinces" was most clearly clarified. It was really a misfortune that such an important directive of Trotsky had been completely ignored by Chinese Trotskyists. And even more unfortunate was the fact that the struggle for the constituent assembly, by virtue of the opportunistic interpretation of Peng and his co-thinkers, had become a policy diametrically opposed to the policy of armed struggle. According to their interpretation, only the revolutionary movement grow out of the struggle for the constituent assembly was "normal" and could be considered as a revolution; the anti-KMT civil war grown out of the armed struggle of the poor peasants was an "exceptional condition," which not only could not be regarded as a revolution, but still worse should be treated as something against the interests of the revolution. It was precisely this view, which we see now was originated from the wrong interpretation of the struggle for the constituent assembly, that led Chinese Trotskyists, especially Peng Shu-tze, up to the blunder of failing to recognize the third Chinese revolution when it actually happened and to adopt an absurd attitude toward it even long after it had triumphed.

The gravest mistake which the Stalinists and Maoists did make during the period of the preparation for the third Chinese revolution did not at all consist in their carrying on a long-term armed struggle (which on the contrary, should rather be regarded as their merit, and as Mao's in particular), but in their refusal to launch the struggle for democratic demands with the slogan of constituent assembly as its axis. In consequence, the CCP had been deprived of a central political slogan for a period of many years and found themselves in a predicament which gave Mao and his comrades "an acute sense of isolation,"\* brought a series of heavy defeats to the "Red Army" and in a time threatened both the party and its armed forces with extinction.

Seven years later, when they, in compliance with Stalin's new turn to the "popular front" policy, tried to break away from this predicament by adopting the slogan of constituent assembly, the CCP fell into another mire, a mire of complete capitulation before the counter-revolutionary KMT. This time too the party and its armed forces were threatened to be totally annihilated, from which they had been saved primarily thanks to their firm grip on the "gun barrels" in coordination with their resumption of the agrarian revolution a little later. And then under other "specific

\*In his report to the CC of the CCP (Nov. 25, 1928, entitled "The Struggle in the Chingkang Mountains," Mao wrote among others the following words: "We have an acute sense of isolation which we keep hoping will end. Only launching a political and economic struggle for democracy, which will also involve the urban petty-bourgeoisie, can we turn the revolution into a seething tide that will surge through the country." ("Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung" vol. 1, pp. 97-98, English Edition.) Being obviously unaware of the controversy on this question between Stalin and Trotsky, Mao wrote these words testifying in fact in a most convincing way the correctness of Trotsky's democratic program which Stalin condemned as "liquidationist."



conditions," they had succeeded in bringing a good turn to their lot, improving their contending position, strengthening their forces, and finally defeated the KMT forces in the three-year civil war and achieved the preliminary triumph of the third Chinese revolution.

But in Peng's opinion, the gravest mistake the CCP had ever made was its embarkation on and perseverance in the long-term armed struggle. Not only before 1949 when the Chinese Stalinists triumphed, but long since then, and even now, Peng is still of the opinion that the CCP *should not have resorted to arms*. If the Chinese Communist had not taken up arms, if they instead had launched a struggle for the constituent assembly in the way advised by Peng, then, he argued, (this time in the name of his wife, Chen Pi-lan), "the third Chinese revolution could have occurred in the thirties, enabling the CCP to take power and establish the dictatorship of the proletariat and poor peasants before the World War II," and at a much cheaper price at that ("could have avoided the unnecessary sacrifice of the lives of more than 10,000 of the most militant members of the party and the young communists." To fortify their hypothetical position, they further contended:

Unfortunately, the path followed by the CCP after the defeat of the second Chinese revolution was not pointed to by Trotsky but the one ordered by Stalin — the adventurist policy of guerrilla war that Wang called 'armed struggle.' This erroneous policy of 'armed struggle' not only destroyed a great majority of the party's cadres, its entire organizational bases in the cities, the huge workers and peasants' mass organizations, and its clandestine forces in the KMT army (such as the forces of Hu Lung and Yeh Ting and a number of sympathizers of the KMT army), but drove the various KMT warlords into a united front in pursuit of the common aim of defeating the guerrilla of the CCP. (see p. 8, vol. 1, no. 2, *IIDB*.)

"Unfortunately" indeed! In the passage quoted as well as in the rest of her article, the arguments presented to defend their position of "should not have resorted to arms" simply exposed more clearly that it is untenable. To any reader who knows a little of the history of the Chinese revolution, these arguments would just sound ridiculous and rather funny. If the CCP had not gone on the path of armed struggle, "the clandestine forces of Hu Lung and Yeh Ting . . ." would not have been destroyed and the "various warlords" would not have been "driven into a united front" to fight against their common enemy — the CCP guerrillas! "Arguments" like these are quite unlikely to be advanced by old revolutionaries. They should have been put forth either by a naive high school girl who knows nothing about politics or by an incorrigible opportunist who believes that "no resistance, no suppression."

When a revolutionist criticises or defends a revolutionary line, he should in no way take a bystander's position but as a responsible revolutionary. He should think in such a way: what should I do if I was in my opponent's position? And in Peng's case, the question should rather be posed in indicative mood, not in subjunctive one. As one of the leaders of the Chinese Trotskyists, Peng, as well as other comrades, had had the opportunity to carry out exactly the same line which he (or she) would have the CCP adopted in the past. What was the result of our endeavors? Our organization and its cadres had been brought to the brink of extinction (if not being utterly extinguished)! Having not been engaged in guerrilla warfare, we had been all the same suppressed and destroyed as severely as the CCP by the KMT secret police. And the worse of it, unlike the CCP, either during the rampant counter-revolutionary period, or during the Resistance War against the Japanese invasion or in the period of the civil war after the World War II, we did not achieve any success: not only having not triumphed, we did not even play any political role of

any importance. How should we explain it after all? Certainly we had done our work in accordance with "the line pointed to by Trotsky," we had struggled for the revolutionary-democratic program, but why could not we overthrow the KMT regime in the thirties as Peng thought it possible if the CCP had followed Trotsky's instead of Stalin's line? With one and the same line, which in Peng's words means the launching of a revolutionary democratic struggle and rejecting the armed struggle, the CCP as Peng believed could have been triumphed as early as in the thirties, yet the Chinese Trotskyists not only did not achieve victory even as late as late in the forties, but much worse in fact, they had finally been miserably defeated. How could we explain this paradox then? The only possible answer is that the executors of the same line in the two parties were of different calibre: Mao and other leaders of the CCP were highly talented and wise while those of the Chinese Trotskyists were incompetent and ignorant. Will you accept this explanation, Cde. Peng?

I, for my part, do not think such an answer is correct, it is superficial, to say the least. The correct explanation must be this: the fact that the leaders of the Chinese Trotskyists incorrectly *counterposed* the democratic struggle for the constituent assembly to the armed struggle of the poor peasants and we did not take the latter as a *component part* of the former is the main reason why we failed to achieve success in spite of our determination to follow the correct strategic line of Trotsky. In other words, we failed because we failed to integrate the two equally important struggles, because we rejected, in deeds although not in words, the armed struggle of the poor peasants. For this mistake, Trotsky should not be responsible, because he had pointed out for us in time that we should "unify politically the dispersed movements and insurrections in various provinces" with the struggle for the constituent assembly.

From the above-mentioned, we see that at least one lesson to the effect of tactics and strategy must be drawn from the triumph of the CCP and the failure of Chinese Trotskyists: In colonial and semi-colonial countries, a revolutionary party representing the working class must first of all launch an unflagging struggle for a revolutionary-democratic program (embodying all democratic and national demands with the demand for an all-powerful constituent assembly as its centre) in order to mobilize, unify and give a lead to the toiling masses of the cities and the countryside to overthrow the ruling class of these countries. Yet during the struggle, it should especially avoid the illusion of the "peaceful parliamentary road" and always keep a sharp vigilance against the "fascist" armed repression from the side of the reaction. It should make use of every opportunity to get access to the arms with the aim to arm themselves and the masses and *when the objective conditions necessitate and the circumstances permit* it should lead with determination the proletarians, semi-proletarians and the peasants to be engaged in the armed struggle, making this struggle a powerful part of the nation-wide struggle for the revolutionary democratic program, seizing the power through this struggle and thereby to initiate the socialist revolution.

Such a lesson is exactly the opposite of that of Peng's. But I am in the conviction that to a certain extent it will be greatly helpful to the revolutionaries of certain countries of Latin America, Asia and Africa.

### 'Revolutionary defeatism' and others

Chen Pi-lan in her article enumerated a long series of mistakes which I had allegedly committed in the history of Chinese Trotskyist movement. She characterized me as an incorrigible "impressionist" with a constant inclination to make mistakes in striking contrast with Peng, the "infallible," and the "great



theoretician who has always stood firmly on principles." Such a Stalinist way of minimizing the one while exaggerating the other is so crude that, I believe, no careful reader will be taken in by story. Therefore I will not waste readers' time by answering every charge she made against me in her article. Here now I have to say a few words only on the so-called "defeatism." The article accused me of having taken a position of "uncritical support to the leadership of Chiang Kai-shek" at the beginning of China's resistance war against the Japanese invasion and taken a position of "defeatism" at its final stage. The first charge is a lie absolutely without ground and the second one is an unfaithful distortion of my real stand. I won't deal with the slanders and lies (which I'll take up in another article entirely devoted to the falsification of Peng's school). Right now I will briefly describe the different views of "defeatism" held by Peng and me.

It has been known to everybody that there were two pre-requisites for Lenin to raise the slogan of revolutionary defeatism: 1. Both sides of the war were of imperialist character; 2. The proletariat of all warring countries had been confronted with the historical task of socialist revolution. Basing on these pre-conditions, Lenin formulated two main contents of the "defeatism": 1. The main enemy is in one's own country and the defeat of one's "own" ruling class is a lesser evil; 2. To transform the external war into a civil war even at the risk of suffering temporary defeats at the fronts with the foreign imperialists.

The revolutionary defeatism of Lenin was formulated on the basis of the concrete conditions of the 1st World War, therefore it was absolutely correct and fully applicable at that time.

Once the concrete conditions of a new imperialist war become different, the concrete contents of Lenin's revolutionary defeatism will obviously be more or less different accordingly. Take the 2nd World War for instance, during which, we, unlike the Stalinists, remained in principle faithful to the Leninist revolutionary defeatism in fascist imperialist countries, as well as in democratic ones. However, in concrete application of the position, especially after the defeat of France, some significant changes had been made. In fascist countries it was sure that the revolutionary defeatism was applied just in the same way as it had been done during the 1st World War, but it was not so in the democratic powers. Because some of these countries, France in particular, had already been defeated at the very beginning of the war and a defeat like that certainly did not mean a "lesser evil." Besides, the anti-fascist feelings of the toiling masses throughout the world were progressive, even revolutionary, which one must take into consideration. On that ground, the revolutionary defeatism in the democratic imperialist countries, although retained its validity, should be understood and applied in somewhat different way; in those not yet been defeated countries mainly as the continuation of the class struggle regardless of the war with the fascist imperialists, while in the defeated countries mainly as the endeavors to carry on a revolutionary liberation war under the leadership of the working class to fight against the fascist occupiers.

If we could not make appropriate and correct changes according to the new concrete circumstances, we were not Leninists on the question of the revolutionary defeatism, no matter whether we rejected or "insisted" on the slogan.

Now let us see whether the same slogan can be applied to a war of progressive character such as China's resistance war against the Japanese invasion. If can, under what conditions and in what sense?

China (in the 30's) was a semi-colonial country, ruled by a very reactionary bourgeois-landlord government and just experienced a stormy revolution. The revolution was defeated with none of its tasks solved. Thus the class antagonisms were extremely intense in China when the Japanese imperialism wanted

to subjugate her into a complete colony by carrying out an ambitious plan of invasion which was at last led to a whole-scale war. The war, on China's part, was of course a progressive and just one, because it would deal a blow to the imperialism and it was defending the national independence of China. Therefore Chinese workers and peasants must support the war in spite of the fact that it was under the leadership of the counter-revolutionary KMT and Chiang Kai-shek. But the question is: Was the support we gave to the Resistance War equivalent to that to the leadership of Chiang Kai-shek? No, not at all. As we were deeply convinced that the Chiang Kai-shek government, being linked to the imperialists through thousand channels on the one hand and in uncompromising antagonism with the interests of the masses of workers and poor peasants on the other, was in no way able to lead the war to its final victory, for which it lacked both determination and strength. To bring the war to a victorious end, therefore, it was absolutely necessary to have a revolutionary government.

Thus our attitude towards the Resistance War against the Japanese imperialism was twofold: support the war, but not the KMT leadership; to participate in the war against the external enemy, but not to abandon our revolutionary task against the internal enemy.

Was this attitude and attitude of defensism or defeatism? Of course it was not equal to the defeatist position which Lenin took towards the imperialist governments during World War I. At the same time, however, it was not an attitude of defensism in the proper sense of the term. To a certain degree, it resembled the "defeatism" which took by the European revolutionists of the democratic imperialist powers when Hitler had defeated their governments and occupied their countries.

In support of an participating in a progressive war (whether it is against the external enemies or against the internal enemies such as in the Spanish civil war during the 30's), if the revolutionists do not give up their revolutionary tasks, their attitude cannot but be "revolutionary defeatist" in essence, although it would be more exactly and correctly called "revolutionary victoryism" (in the sense that the only way to win the war is through the revolution). Otherwise they would inevitably adopt a position of "victory first, revolution next," which as has been very clearly proven to us by the history of revolutions in modern times is an attitude not only betraying the revolution, but making sure of the defeat of the progressive war.

The so-called "revolutionary defeatism" (namely "revolutionary victoryism") mentioned in this or that form by Cde. Cheng Chao-lin or by me during the Resistance War exactly meant this kind of revolutionary victoryism, and this kind only.

Peng has never thought of these questions at all. For him, the question is very, very simple: to the imperialist war, we apply defeatism; to the war of progressive character, defensism. As for the questions such as how to continue the class struggle in the progressive war; how to apply the "arms of criticism" to the reactionary leadership of the progressive war; was it permissible to transform the "arms of criticism" into "criticism of arms;" if it was so, how to transform it, . . . I dare say, they have never entered his head. He has always been meaninglessly and simply repeating the empty cliché: "Give support to the war, but criticise the leadership."

It was "fortunate" for Peng that during the whole period of the Resistance War, the Chinese Trotskyists had never played any serious role, and it was also "fortunate" for Peng that there had not been any strong revolutionary movement arising in the cities of the unoccupied areas against the KMT government, so that Peng could safely keep his hackneyed phrase of support and criticism "consistently correct." Otherwise the emptiness and falsehood of Peng's position would certainly have been exposed like



most of the communist and socialist leaders in the Spanish civil war, insisting on the position of "victory first and revolution second" and condemning all those who would put revolution at the first place as "national traitors" or "defeatists."

Now the difference about our attitude towards China's Resistance War against the Japanese invasion has been over, but the question itself has not been out of date. In the future there will be no lack of the same kind of progressive wars in which we will

also give critical support without giving up our revolutionary tasks. In these cases how to act correctly, I believe, will be one of the standards according to which the real Trotskyists will be distinguished from those fake ones.

Thus I propose that the question of how to apply the tactics of "revolutionary victoryism" to a war of progressive character should be discussed among the ranks of the 4th International.