

What Is Happening in China?

A Debate Between Jack Smith, Les Evans, and William Hinton

The following are excerpts from a debate that took place before 400 people at the University of Chicago on April 3, 1977. It was sponsored by the university's Student Government Speakers' Committee and chaired by Quentin Young, a doctor who had visited China as part of a medical-exchange program.

Les Evans is a member of the National Committee of the Socialist Workers party and former editor of the *International Socialist Review*. Jack Smith is managing editor of the *Guardian* newspaper. William Hinton is a former chairperson of the U.S.-China People's Friendship Association and a well-known unofficial spokesperson for the Chinese government.

The following excerpts are taken from a transcript of a tape recording of the meeting, edited to eliminate repetition and grammatical awkwardness. The participants have been unable to edit their remarks. The questions have been condensed or paraphrased in some cases.

Jack Smith

What's happening in China?

I'd first like to establish a context—three points, perhaps.

First, the *Guardian* regards China as the most advanced socialist country, ideologically and socially. We also believe that the necessity for economic development is particularly important at this stage of its development.

Regarding China in this way does not mean that we are without criticism. We have strong criticism on the question of regarding the Soviet Union as the main danger, on Angola, and on other things. But in general, it's fair to say we regard China as the leading socialist country.

Second, we regard Chairman Mao as the greatest Marxist-Leninist of our era and in particular regarding the subjects under discussion today. Chairman Mao's contributions regarding the continuation of class struggle under socialism and the centrality of the question of class struggle are important points that we agree with.

Third, we regard the Cultural Revolution as a profoundly important achievement in the people's struggle. There are many lessons to be learned from the Cultural Revolution for our own revolution.

The world was stunned last October, first by the death of Chairman Mao, and then by the arrests of the so-called gang of four. These were not just four minor party members or a small faction; they were four of the leading six members of the party Politburo and heretofore, at least, had been identified as the left wing of that party. All of them, to one degree or another, owed their elevation to their proximity to Chairman Mao.

There are many opinions as to what this means. Those who oppose the Chinese revolution will oppose it further. Among those who support China, there is considerable confusion. Some immediately accepted the verdict that the "gang of four" constituted a counterrevolutionary, ultrarightist group bent on the restoration of capitalism. I tend to think that those who axiomatically accepted this, without any doubt whatsoever, would likewise have accepted a reversal of the verdict if those now called the "gang of four" had arrested Hua Kuo-feng and charged him with capitalist-roading. Probably the next day they would have agreed with that as well. Our newspaper does not have respect for that opinion.

Others among the supporters of China saw this as a move to the right. We tend to view this as a somewhat ultraleftist analysis.

Others have no position, or at least have held back from taking a position at this point.

The fourth group among those who support China are those who agree with the ouster of the "gang of four," but with a certain degree of criticism. These criticisms range from the profound to the minor.

Our own position on the question of the "gang of four" is as follows. It is a legitimate campaign against left dogmatism, which, if carried too far, could lead to rightist errors. So far, we don't see any evidence of rightist errors, but things are far from settled.

Cultural Revolution

The current situation in China is obviously connected to the Cultural Revolution. There is a direct continuity from this great upheaval to prevent capitalist restoration, which saw the leave taking of Liu Shao-ch'i, the leave taking of Teng Hsiao-p'ing (who was general secretary at the time), and the leave taking from positions of authority of thousands of officials, from top cadre to top party members.

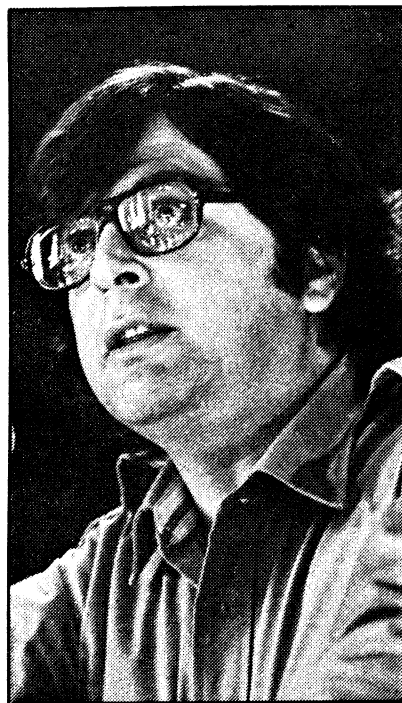
The events of October are in line with that. There has been no break in the struggle that began in 1966. Those now characterized as the "gang of four" were on what could be called the winning side of the Cultural Revolution at that time—at least I think so. They survived the Cultural Revolution and the purges of the ultraleft that took place afterwards. Now, however, it appears they are being excoriated for

that stage. It appears there was a certain unity around the restoration of many of these officials, although it is altogether quite likely that the Politburo left wing did not anticipate that so many of them would be brought back so quickly—so many who, in their opinion, did not thoroughly self-criticize and change their ways.

This developed within a year or two into the beginnings of a campaign to criticize the restoration of a number of leaders, and particularly Teng Hsiao-p'ing. The campaign to criticize Confucius [launched by the Chinese government in 1974], of course, had two aspects. One aspect was quite good: to eliminate the remnants of feudal thinking. But another aspect was directed at those who were being restored to office. And indeed, some even carried it so far, it is now said, that it was partially directed at the late Premier Chou En-lai himself, as the person who launched the restoration—with Mao's approval, of course—of certain people to office.

In any event, the differences erupted again in the 1974-75 period, led from the left—in my opinion by the so-called gang of four. Throughout the period of 1974-75, the campaign against bourgeois rights [material inequality] developed. This was another attack on the return to office of a great many people who had been eliminated from office during the Cultural Revolution.

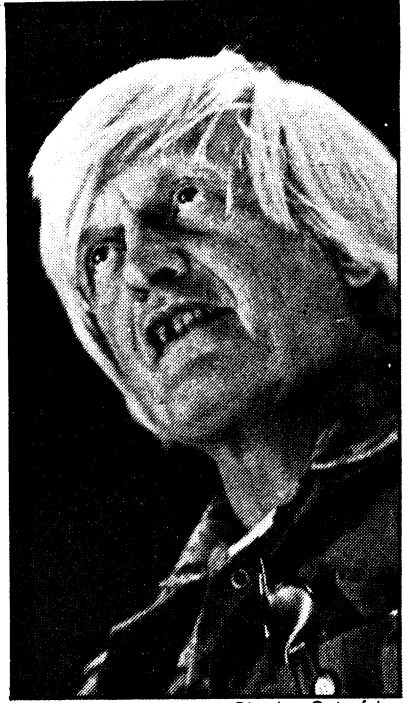
Nineteen seventy-five was a decisive year—not as decisive as 1976, but it set the stage. In January 1975 Premier Chou En-lai announced



JACK SMITH



LES EVANS



WILLIAM HINTON

ultraleft errors made in that period, under the guise of being capitalist-roaders.

Gradually over the years, these four people consolidated their power, especially in the realm of communications and culture, and to a certain degree within the party itself, although they always constituted a minority. It's our opinion that Mao Tsetung always backed them—with reservations perhaps, but it seems fairly obvious to whom they owed their support.

In the 1970s, for various reasons, the Chinese Communist party decided that Teng Hsiao-p'ing should be restored to office. To our knowledge, and according to Roxane Witke's new book, *Comrade Chiang Ch'ing*, the four, or at least Chiang Ch'ing, did not oppose the restoration of Teng Hsiao-p'ing.

When Teng came back in 1973, along with him came back hundreds and thousands of officials in various positions. I don't pretend to know what went on within the Communist party at

China's great economic plan. He articulated a vision of a five-year plan, but at the same time he went much further, projecting a modernized, industrialized socialist state for China by the year 2000—an extraordinary goal. Part of this new plan was a call for "Four Modernizations" [in industry, agriculture, science-technology, and national defense].

But Chou En-lai was a dying man. During 1975 he was unable to carry out his functions as premier—or more and more unable, as time went on. And during this critical year of 1975—that is, during the year of the formation of the five-year plan, which was to launch this extraordinary advance in economic development—Teng Hsiao-p'ing, as a close assistant to Chou En-lai, assumed greater and greater responsibilities for the State Council, over which Premier Chou presided.

Throughout this period, the so-called gang of four obviously intensified their attacks against

Continued on page ISR/7

...China

Continued from page ISR/3

Teng Hsiao-p'ing and his supporters within the Communist party. He and his supporters were now not only brought back to office, but indeed were charged with the responsibility of formulating the economic plan of China, which could go either left or right. The "gang of four" obviously did not trust the man in charge of this responsibility.

It was in the fall of 1975 that Hua Kuo-feng began to rise to national prominence. The battle lines were drawn, and they became clearer and clearer throughout the year. In the fall, a campaign was launched against Teng Hsiao-p'ing, who would automatically have succeeded Premier Chou, at least in my opinion. Most Chinese at the time said as much.

But, anticipating the death of Chou, and trying to stop Teng Hsiao-p'ing's assumption of the premiership, the Politburo left launched a campaign that evidently won Mao's backing. Chou died in January, a year after the important economic speech. Teng Hsiao-p'ing read the funeral speech and then was not seen again in public. After a period of wonderment as to what happened to him, the attacks against Teng became quite pointed. Then it was announced that Hua Kuo-feng was the acting premier.

Events followed rather swiftly. The Tien An Men episode [the demonstration of 100,000 at Tien An Men Square in Peking on April 5, 1976] was used as the occasion for the removal of Teng from office. He lost everything but his party card.

Complete Turmoil

From that period on, China was in complete turmoil. It is now referred to as the most difficult period the country has faced since liberation. And it obviously was.

The direction of Chou and Mao was no longer there. Everyone realized Mao was dying. Without these two leaders, with an untested new leader, with succession in a shambles, and with the economy in grave difficulties, there was a certain stirring and malaise across the nation.

At this stage it was evident to the party left wing—that is, to the "gang of four"—that with Mao dead, the question of whether China would go left or right was on the immediate agenda. Throughout that late spring and summer they obviously were involved in attempting to lay the groundwork for hegemony over the party with the death of the chairman.

They launched a campaign to take control of the country, if at all possible, to take it out of the hands of those they characterized as capitalist-roaders. The attacks went right up to the top. Although veiled, these were public attacks on Hua Kuo-feng as well.

Now, we think, to a certain extent, that the present campaign against the "gang of four" is a good thing. There has obviously been a repressive environment in China for the past several years. Obviously there was a stultification in the realm of culture, literature, and art. And obviously the economy was suffering considerably, and it would not be capable of achieving the goals set forth by Premier Chou if there were not some major changes.

But the campaign against the "gang of four" raises many questions. First of all, the characterization of the four as capitalist-roaders. We don't think this has at all been proven, at least scientifically, in Marxist terms. We think they were left dogmatists, we think they took Chairman Mao's theories and deviated to the left, and caused great harm to the country in the process. But to call them conscious rightists beclouds the issue.

Another question that is raised is on the lifestyle of the four. We find it impossible to believe that high-ranking Politburo members could have behaved in the reprehensible manner these four are accused of and not have been chastened by the masses, by Mao, or by the party.

It raises the question, how could the four do all of this for all these years—hamper the economy, be capitalist-roaders, be pornographers, be rightists, be Kuomintang agents—and no one could stop them? And yet the masses knew about this. We find this difficult.

This leads to two more questions, which are painful. How could all of this have happened without the knowledge of the beloved Chairman Mao? And to what extent, we wonder, is Mao Tsetung himself being criticized in the current campaign against the "gang of four"? Also, to what extent is the Cultural Revolution being criticized? It is possible that the correct verdicts of the Cultural Revolution are being overturned—or perhaps the correct policies of Chairman Mao—in the name of criticizing the "gang of four."

Mao may have made errors. The *Guardian* tends to regard him extremely highly. Of course, being human, he made errors. But we have yet to discern any important ones. If he did, if this is what it's all about, what were those errors?

To summarize: In general, we think good will come out of the campaign. We think China must develop economically, and probably the only way to do it is to get rid of these people in the Politburo whose left dogmatism did take on a reactionary content. And so far, the leadership says class struggle is still the key link. These are two good things.

But the question of whether the campaign is being carried too far, opening the door to the right, still remains. It is the most important question facing China today.

Les Evans

Momentous events have taken place in China over the past year. Jack Smith summarized some of them: the death of Chou En-lai, the denunciation and purge for the second time of Teng Hsiao-p'ing as an "unrepentant capitalist-roader," the massive Tien An Men demonstrations of April 1976, the death of Mao Tsetung, and then, only weeks afterward, the arrest of the four best-known members of the Chinese Communist party Political Bureau. These people have yet to be brought to trial and have yet to make any public statements in their own defense.

If these people are guilty merely of errors, of mistakes, then why this campaign of accusations? The new government of Hua Kuo-feng has listed a whole series of charges against the "gang of four," not just mistakes. It says they are rightists, that they are fascists, that for many years they have instituted fierce repression against the workers, peasants, and students of China. Further, it is claimed, the economic policies they carried out—not only during Mao's last illness, but over the whole past period of three to five years—were policies aimed at the restoration of capitalism in China.

Today there are sweeping changes under way in terms of the political slogans put forward by the government and in economic and political priorities. In my opinion, these constitute a new and different line of policy—although still in a bureaucratic framework—from what existed during the Cultural Revolution and under the government of Mao Tsetung.

Many Maoist organizations around the world have drawn the same conclusion and have rejected the current government's explanations of what has taken place. The Communist League of West Germany and the Revolution group of France, organizations that number in the thousands and are among the largest Maoist organizations in Western Europe, have denounced Hua Kuo-feng as the "capitalist-roader." They say that what is going on in China today is a betrayal of Maoism.

In this country we see a similar disarray on the part of the followers of the government of the People's Republic of China. The largest Maoist organization, the Revolutionary Communist party, has been completely silent on the question of China. They haven't published a single article or statement containing their view of the new government or the "gang of four" in the six months since the purge took place.

The October League has lined up uncritically behind the regime.

The *Guardian* has also supported the new government but, to its credit, it has asked for facts and not just assertions. Jack Smith, on the platform here today, tried to apply to the new situation in China the political line he learned from Mao. I want to examine some of the things Jack Smith has written, to see how that application has worked out.

First, on the question of whether the "gang of four" are "capitalist-roaders." In the last decade,

the Chinese Communist party has adopted the practice of accusing all its major factional opponents of being agents of the bourgeoisie and aiming at the restoration of capitalism. I want to explain where I stand on this question first, in the most general sense.

Great Progressive Event

The Socialist Workers party considers the Chinese revolution to have been a great progressive event in world history. We support the socialized property forms established by that revolution and the achievements made possible by that planned economy. We would defend the Chinese workers state against any attempt, domestic or foreign, to reintroduce private



MAO TSETUNG



CHOU EN-LAI



HUA KUO-FENG



About 100,000 persons protested removal of wreaths in honor of Chou in Peking's Tien An Men Square. Suppression of demonstration challenged Mao regime's claim to be democratic on April 5, 1976.

property or to genuinely restore capitalism.

But defending the Chinese workers state is not the same as defending any particular government of China or any particular set of policies put forward by this or that faction within the government.

Jack Smith says he agrees the charge is untrue that Mao's closest collaborators are "capitalist-roaders" or a "bourgeoisie." I would ask him then to look back and say, wasn't it also untrue when it was charged a year ago against Teng Hsiao-p'ing? Wasn't it also untrue that Lin Piao was a capitalist-roader? And Liu Shao-ch'i? Were any of them capitalist-roaders? Or was this simply a convenient epithet the government has used to cut off debate, to silence and defeat an opposition? What conclusions do we draw about the Marxist claims of a government that uses such a method?

I say that the issue of capitalist restoration in China is a false issue. I would like to discuss four real issues that I think are at the heart of Chinese politics today.

First is the abandonment after Mao's death of many of the central slogans of the Cultural Revolution period. These were policies that had become known around the world as essential to the very concept of Maoism.

Second, the degree of repression of the Chinese masses, which has been revealed by the new government.

Third, the extent of the privileges in "life-style" of the top leaders of the government, also as revealed by the new regime itself in its attacks on the "gang of four."

And finally, the stirring of mass discontent, as indicated by the Tien An Men demonstration, and the degree to which this has affected the policies of all the factions involved.

In the November 3 *Guardian*, Jack Smith granted the possibility, as he did here today, that the new government constitutes what he calls a move to the right, a break with the policies of Maoism. In the *Guardian* article he suggested four or five positions he considered central to Maoist policy. Here is what he wrote:

"Were all official criticism of Teng to suddenly cease it might be possible to lend some support to the anti-Maoist reversal speculation; or if the criticism of Confucius-Lin Piao metamorphosed into criticism of Lin Piao only, or if the thesis that the bourgeoisie is to be found within the party were refuted."

In a later article he added another yardstick. He said it would be a sign of an attack on Mao if "the party center now in command of China [were] to disregard Chairman Mao's most important instruction to 'take class struggle as the key link.'"

Well, in fact, every single one of those things has happened since Jack Smith wrote those articles. Let me go over some quotations from the Peking press to show this.

In November 1976 the Academy of Sciences in China officially issued a correction withdrawing

the designation of Teng Hsiao-p'ing as an "unrepentant capitalist-roader." At that time all official criticism of Teng ceased.

Concerning the anti-Confucius campaign, there was a radio broadcast—picked up, transcribed, and published in the West—by the People's Liberation Army General Staff Propaganda Group at the beginning of March 1977, that said the "gang of four" cooked up the anti-Confucius campaign. The broadcast states: "They drew up secret plans and launched a flagrant attack on the party by flaunting the banner of criticising Lin Piao and Confucius." It declared that the whole campaign was a bunch of "rubbish."

Concerning Mao's claim that there was a bourgeoisie inside the party: This is now denounced by the regime as an excuse for purging veteran cadres. It obviously was. If you can say that your factional opponent represents the "bourgeoisie," then they are a class enemy.

The March 14, 1977, issue of the Peking *People's Daily* ran a front-page article that said, "By spreading the notion that there is a bourgeois class within the party, the 'gang of four' and the mass media under their control completely ignored the ABCs of Marxism."

Finally, when Mao was alive the "key link" was "class struggle." Now the "key link" is defined differently. It is defined in the March 24 *People's Daily* as to "expose and criticise the gang of four." The "gang of four" are being accused up and down China of overstressing "class struggle," of underestimating economic development, of sabotaging the economy. So the "key link" now is to develop production, and "class struggle" has gone out the window.

Gang of Four and Mao

There has been an attempt to blame everything on the "gang of four." But is it really conceivable that these relative newcomers to party leadership, all of whom were promoted in the last ten years by Mao, could impose policies on the party majority or could twist Mao around their thumb and make him go along with policies with which he disagreed? I don't believe that. You cannot escape holding Mao responsible for them, especially since it was obvious that they could not be removed from their positions until Mao was safely dead. Mao emerges rather clearly as the protector and ideologist of the so-called gang of four.

The Chinese press has argued that Mao privately criticized these people, calling on them to reform. There is not much documentary evidence of this. But even if it were true, the "gang of four" are not accused simply of mistakes; they are accused of serious crimes against the working class. The press accuses them of throwing political prisoners into jail for disliking Chiang Ch'ing's movies. They are accused of firing workers from their jobs, of deporting people to the countryside, and even of torture and executions. They are accused of

stealing from the state treasury for their own benefit.

If you take the position that these charges are true, then Mao is not simply guilty of failing to reform these people; he is guilty of covering up crimes committed by members of his own personal circle and his own family against the Chinese masses.

In the time I have left, I want to cite some examples showing why I believe that the charges against the "gang of four" are not just exaggerations by the regime—although some of them are fabricated—but reflect the true state of affairs in China.

When the newspapers publish the names and dates of the arrests of dozens of political prisoners, mostly in the fields of art and literature—as they do—that is not a vague charge of repression. Specific people are named, and that can be verified. I think this is just the tip of the iceberg of political repression in China.

Other charges relate to the question of privilege. We know from people who have visited China that the top government officials make salaries of around 400 yuan a month, compared with 60 yuan for a skilled worker and 30 for a peasant. That is a salary spread of thirteen-to-one. That's almost the difference between the incomes of someone on the board of General Motors and an assembly-line worker.

But the Chinese press has gone further. It has claimed that the "gang of four" had villas, that they had foreign films flown in for their evening's entertainment, that they had staffs of servants, that they would rope off whole parks for their private enjoyment—things that go far beyond what those salaries could buy.

When I first read these kinds of charges in the Chinese press, I said to myself that it must be a frame-up. I believed that the Peking regime constituted a privileged, bureaucratic caste, but the charges against the "gang of four" went beyond anything I had heard before. But then came the publication of Chiang Ch'ing's memoirs in *Time* magazine, which confirmed every single accusation. She met with the author Roxane Witke in a private mansion in Canton; she had Greta Garbo films flown in; she had a staff of ladies-in-waiting, all dressed in matching silk gowns and Western skirts purchased in stores that ordinary Chinese citizens have no access to.

Bureaucratic Privilege

Jack Smith raises the question, how is this possible? I say that it is possible only on one condition: on the condition that it is *generalized*, that these are the common practices of the leadership of the Chinese Communist party. The repression that the regime describes is the means by which the masses are prevented from changing the situation.

So the charges by the new government have been largely verified. But the new regime does not permit any open discussion or debate over its own conduct, over its own financial disclosures, over the right of the Chinese people to debate its current policy. I think this flows from the privileged, bureaucratic character of the current regime. I think that the crimes it attributes to top leaders of the government for the whole past period also apply to the present leaders of the Chinese government.

This situation can be changed in only one way. It can be changed when the masses of Chinese people take the reins of government into their own hands, not relying on any wing of the Chinese Communist party to do their thinking for them or to decide for them. The future of China lies in a mass, antibureaucratic revolution to replace the present privileged leadership caste of China—including all its wings—with a democratic, proletarian government based on Leninist internationalism.

William Hinton

My own position, in a nutshell, is that the "gang of four" developed into a reactionary group, that their exposure and arrest was necessary, and that it does not represent a rightist trend in China, but a solution of a very serious counterrevolutionary trend.

There is a big problem with the words "left" and "right," in the way they are used in China, in the way they are used here, and the way Jack Smith uses them. A lot of it seems to revolve

around the question of motive. It seems to me that what is crucial is not the motive, but the objective reality of a policy. An ultraleft policy is no more revolutionary than an ultraright policy. In fact, that is why in China today they are calling the "gang of four" rightists, and even ultrarightists. Because objectively, the results of their policies and positions are counterrevolutionary and reactionary.

I think of the experience I described in my book, *Fanshen*, when in north China during the civil war there was temporarily, an extreme equalitarian policy in land reform. Mao opposed it. He said all Marxists have opposed it, all great Marxists—Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin. It is a form of agrarian socialism; it is a form of utopianism; it is reactionary.

Now, Jack Smith called the "gang of four" the left wing of the party. I think that is wrong, because the core of revolutionary policy is the left policy. Over and over again in China, it was Mao who represented that policy. Distortions of that policy from the right or the left become not left policy at all, but some form of bourgeois policy.

Now, Jack Smith had asked in the *Guardian* article, and Les said today, that the same questions are raised about Mao's policies. Jack Smith said it's not proven that the "gang of four" had done more than perhaps carry Mao's policies to the left. But I think that the core of their position was not simply a distortion of Mao's policies, but a turning of Mao's policies upside down. For instance, the key question of any revolution, of any transformation, is the question of friends and enemies—who are our friends, and who are our enemies.

Mao said over and over again that 95 percent of the cadres are good and 95 percent of the people are good—even those who have made mistakes. Cure the disease and save the patient, and so on.

The "gang of four" earlier identified themselves with Lin Piao's idea of overthrowing all, suspecting all. Recently they even came up with the theory that 75 percent of those who joined the revolution before 1949 are capitalist-roaders or democratic revolutionaries turned into capitalist-roaders. The whole idea of the vast majority being good, or relatively good, and being allies that can be depended upon and united with was consistently opposed by them over and over again.

Now, on such things as the relation between politics and production, again the "gang of four" took Mao's theory and turned it more or less upside down. Teng Hsiao-p'ing's remark that it doesn't matter whether a cat is black or white as long as it can catch mice can certainly serve as a summary of the revisionist line. In other words, technique in command, and what's important is production.

I guess you could sum up Mao's position as being that the cat should be red and learn to catch mice. In other words, it must have revolutionary politics, but it must learn to handle production, to handle technique, to master engineering, and so on.

The "gang of four's" position could be summed up—mind you, they haven't said this, I'm making these slogans as a summary—as saying it doesn't matter if the cat can catch mice or not, as long as the cat is red. Or: a red cat is good at catching mice, by definition. That is not politics in command; that is a theory of politics is all.

I met a young fellow the other day who had a fourth slogan on this, which is quite cynical: it doesn't matter what color the cat is, as long as it has nine lives.

Delusions of Grandeur

The last thing I wanted to go into is life-style. Life-style does reflect political stand, and it is true certainly of Chiang Ch'ing that she not only expanded her bourgeois right, but actually insisted on feudal right. In the last year or two—when she was in a position of power—for instance, when she visited Tachai [the model agricultural production brigade] she demanded quiet within fifteen *li*. Automobiles had to be pushed into the village. She would not allow blasting when she was asleep, and so on. In other words, she did have delusions of grandeur as an empress.

Les has said this is typical of the higher cadre in China. I don't think it's typical. It's a matter of great struggle, because there is no such thing as absolute equality under any society, short of

full communism. When you have a society moving from semicolonial, semifeudal class and caste through socialist transformation toward communism, you have a series of differences, privileges, different wage rates, and so on, which cannot simply be abolished. If you were to abolish them, it would mean the transfer of wealth from one sector of working people to another. It would mean leaping to absolute equality in a culture that's not ready for it, in a consciousness that's not ready for it. In other words, it has to be done step by step.

So there are levels of difference, levels of privilege in China. The crucial thing is, what is the direction of policy? Are the differences being narrowed? Is bourgeois right being restricted and abolished step by step.

Now, the big question, of course, is the one raised by Jack: How could these people rise so high, and how could they stay in power so long?

Here I have a problem with the characterization coming from China today that at least three of these people were old-time counterrevolutionaries (Wang Hung-wen [the youngest of the four] is called a new bourgeoisie) and that they somehow sneaked into the revolution many years ago and did basically bad things ever since.

What makes sense to me is that they did go through a process of development, and the other party members went through a process of getting to know them. They did at certain times perform a function and a service. Because of this, they won some position, some prestige, and positions of trust, and then abused the trust.

So I think they developed into a gang. I don't think they started out as a gang.

The question is, since they did degenerate in this way, did form a gang, which in the end did commit crimes—the basic crime of trying to seize power outside the regular channels of party and law—then what was Mao's relation to all this?

I think it's quite clear that certainly at the end Mao took concrete steps to block their coming to power. Teng Hsiao-p'ing was appointed acting premier when Chou En-lai fell ill. Later, when it came to a question of Teng being removed from office and someone else being appointed, Mao put forward Hua Kuo-feng. Again he blocked the four, blocked Chang Ch'un-ch'iao.

I feel that Mao, the Chinese party, and the people moved too little and too late in relation to this group. But it's very hard to prejudice.

Now there is going to be a strong tendency of a right resurgence. But the central task now is exposing this group. And I, for one, have confidence that the Chinese people, government, and party will move toward the cutting down and restricting of bourgeois right, the compression of privilege, and continuing revolution toward communism. Thank you.

Question. I'd like to ask the speakers their opinion about the foreign policy of China. Have there been changes in this area since the death of Mao?

Jack Smith. The *Guardian* thinks that China is making an error in its foreign policy. Other errors have been made in the past that have been



Poster portrays Chiang Ch'ing as an empress and Wang Hung-wen, Yao Wen-yuan, and Chang Ch'un-ch'iao as her evil courtiers.

corrected. We believe this one will ultimately be corrected.

The error stems, we think, from the notion that the Soviet Union represents the main danger to all peoples of the world today. We think this is incorrect.

Insofar as China is concerned, however, China's own territorial integrity and its national interests, we do believe that the Soviet Union constitutes the main danger to China. And in certain other areas it might constitute the main danger. But to posit the thesis that, overall, the principal contradiction today is basically the Soviet Union, and the main danger is the Soviet Union, is wrong, and we think this has led to some very concrete errors.

The principal error is to be found in southern Africa, first with Angola, which satisfied Soviet ambitions tremendously, because it discredited our Chinese friends considerably among various progressive African countries that had heretofore been greatly influenced by China. Now it appears it may be occurring again in Zaïre.

Our own position is that in southern Africa the principal contradiction is between the various peoples seeking liberation and U.S. imperialism and its South African lackeys.

At the same time, China is correct to point to the Soviet Union as a social-imperialist country. We think it is incorrect to apply social imperialism across the board and not to see that there is a dialectic operative, and also not to see that U.S. imperialism is the main danger to all the peoples in the world.

Les Evans. I believe there are no significant changes in Chinese foreign policy as a result of the purge of the "gang of four." It's one area where both factions of the bureaucracy seem to have general agreement.

They have a common conception that it is possible to build a modern, industrialized state, either by human power or by technological power, within the borders of a single, isolated, underdeveloped country. I believe that perspective—"socialism in one country"—is false. I think the prospect of a federation of socialist states and of a promotion of revolutions in the industrially advanced countries is the only hope of development for any of the workers states.

The Peking leadership, on the other hand, stakes everything not on the prospect of the extension of the revolution, but on the prospect of technical aid from Japan, West Germany, and the United States. To get that, they support NATO, they support the rearmament of Japan, and they elevate the Soviet Union to the main danger, even though the Soviet Union has the same basic economic relations as China—whatever we may think of its government.

William Hinton. I think that China's foreign policy has been quite clear and that the three-world analysis is the heart of it. The first is the world of the two superpowers. The second world includes the lesser capitalist powers. And the third world is the colonial, semicolonial, and liberated peoples. China has supported all struggles against superpower domination.

Since 1972 they have made a distinction between superpowers. I think it is quite clear that they think on a world scale the Soviet Union represents the main danger. But I don't think that means they think that in southern Africa the principal contradiction is with the Soviet Union.

Their policy toward the third world is called "Drive the wolf from the front door, but don't let the tiger in the back door." In this analogy the wolf is American imperialism and the tiger is Soviet social-imperialism. Their concern in regard to the African struggle is that African people stand up, liberate themselves from the American empire, but not fall into the clutches of another empire.

Question. [to *Les Evans*] Why do you think a new communist party is needed in China, and why do you believe that this is a realistic alternative to solving China's problems within the framework of the party that made the Chinese revolution of 1949?

William Hinton. I think your real question is how could these violations of rights, and these arrests and frame-ups happen? I think in the nature of the struggle there are people who are denied civil rights. There is a revolution and a class struggle, and certain classes are outside the ranks of the people. You have landlords and rich peasants, who are deposed. You have bourgeoisie, who were bought out. [Compensation was paid to Chinese capitalists in 1956 for their property.] Any one of these classes could be under suspension and not granted full civil rights, because they are considered to be class enemies.

Now, this leads to violations in the hands of unscrupulous people. Because, generally speaking, one must apply democracy to the people; but if one can make a case that someone is over that line and is a class enemy, then one could apply the dictatorship against them.

I think the extraordinary thing about China is how few people have been framed. If they have been framed, they generally haven't been killed. And if they are framed, they generally have been rehabilitated. What did Mao say? Kill none and arrest few.

Les Evans. I think the question of workers

democracy is at the very heart of the disputes between the different factions. The way these disputes are carried out reveals precisely the lack of any genuine workers democracy in China.

This point is very clear. A dispute breaks out among top leaders of the party over government policy. Some of the accusations against the "gang of four" involve crimes, but others do not; they involve alternative cultural policies and alternative economic strategies. These are questions that should be *publicly debated* in China.

But in place of that, you have the single, dominant line of whoever happens to control the party and press apparatus. And when that particular group is defeated, jailed, and ousted from the party, their line is replaced by a different line.

The Chinese Communist party claims to be Leninist. But if you look back at the history of the Bolshevik party under Lenin, you will see that debates took place over every policy, even crucial ones where the revolution could live or die. Political tendencies or factions were formed, position papers were presented and debated before the masses.

That does not happen in China. In my opinion, you do not have the participation of the Chinese working class, in any serious way, in the formulation of national policy. The Chinese Communist party does not permit the masses to be involved in making fundamental decisions. Until that party is replaced, it is impossible to even begin the construction of a genuine socialist society in China.

One final point. It is not, as William Hinton says, a question of having to be tough and hard because what's involved is a revolution and class struggle. I suggest reading Lenin's *State and Revolution* as a primer on this question. The fundamental tenet of Marxism is confidence in the masses, the belief that only when the masses are politicized, are involved in genuine debate—not just carrying out policies made on top—is the revolution secure. It is insecure when decisions are made in a group of six people, and two of them throw the other four into jail, and no one knows what the debate is all about.

Jack Smith. I think the previous speaker completely obfuscated and distorted reality. *Les Evans* says, "There is no freedom. There is no democracy. The masses have nothing to say." This is incredible slander in discussing 800 million people who, twenty-five or thirty years ago, had foot-binding, and were living under the worst of conditions, who, in a short period of a quarter-century, are eating.

There is considerable democracy in China. Perhaps not as much as those sitting here in the University of Chicago would like, but compared with the lot of the Chinese peasants, and the hundreds of millions who died over the years of starvation—it's hard to take.

There is considerable debate in China. What is this nonsense that decisions are made by but a handful? There is no country in this world where there is more debate about political issues than in China. The Chinese workers are studying. They study Marx, they study Engels, they study Mao. They don't study Trotsky, that's true. But is that necessarily the criterion for freedom or dictatorship?

China is united. The people are free. There are a handful of traitors who are in jail. This is, after all, the dictatorship of the proletariat. And this is no laughing matter.

Question. Is the policy of China toward the Chilean junta and the shah of Iran in the interest of the world revolution?

William Hinton. I don't think there was such a thing as giving support to the Chilean junta. What happened was that China did not break relations with the junta. They did recall the ambassador, they criticized what was happening, but they maintained a presence in Chile on the grounds that they could do more for the Chilean people that way than by breaking.

China generally maintains relations with all regimes in the world, regardless of their politics. There are certain regimes which they have never recognized, and they are the settler-regimes. They do not recognize the settler-regimes such as Israel, Rhodesia, or South Africa, or regimes that have been put into power by outside intervention—for instance, Bangladesh.



Mao and Nixon greet each other at 1972 Peking summit. New leaders are continuing Mao's proimperialist foreign policy.

Les Evans. The Chinese government, at the beginning of the Sino-Soviet split and in the early years of the Vietnam War, professed on paper a policy of international relations that sounded very close to that of orthodox Marxism, close to the policy of the Soviet Union under Lenin. That is, it openly pledged support to any anti-imperialist movement; it openly criticized all reactionary regimes; it publicly criticized interference with democratic rights.

In the early 1970s Peking made a sharp change in that policy. This was reflected in the Nixon visit to China, the opening to the West, the beginning of more diplomatic recognitions and trade relations with China.

Peking's policy today is to withhold public criticism of any regime with which the Chinese government is on good terms.

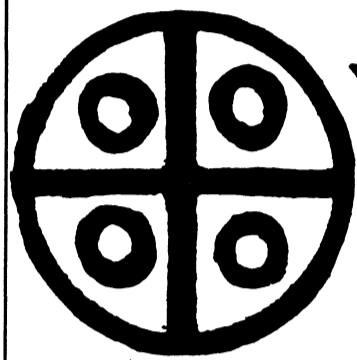
The early Soviet government under Lenin concluded trade agreements with all kinds of reactionary states. But at the same time it used its moral authority to politically educate the working class in those countries, and internationally. It would attack those governments publicly; it would publicly support opposition movements in its press; it would teach the world something about the character of those regimes, independent of its governmental relations.

China does not follow that policy. If you read the Chinese press you will find no criticism of the

Chilean junta. It does not report the existence of political prisoners in Iran; instead it reports that the Iranian government has pledged to defend Iranian "freedom" against Soviet "social-imperialism."

I think this is one of Peking's most disgraceful policies: the adaptation to reactionary regimes in the hope of trade and governmental benefits.

[Jack Smith's response on this question repeated points previously made by himself and by William Hinton.]



TECHQUA IKACHI

LAND AND LIFE—THE TRADITIONAL VIEWPOINT FROM THE HOPI NATION

Masthead of newsletter published by Hopi Traditionalists

'We Hopi Look at Ourselves'

Land and Life: The Traditional Viewpoint from the Hopi Nation. Represents the viewpoints of the village leaders of Hotevilla in the Hopi Independent Nation. No regular subscription rate; see end of review for address.

Techqua Ikachi: Land and Life—The Traditional Viewpoint from the Hopi Nation is a voice of the Native American self-determination struggle. It is a newsletter published bimonthly from Hotevilla, Arizona, since August 1975. News, history, customs, and legends of the Hopi people are the subjects of this publication, which insists on Hopi right to determine the ways of Hopi land and life.

For the last seventy years the Hopi people—whose name is generally translated as meaning "peaceful ones"—have been divided into two factions, the "Traditionals" and the "Progressives." In 1906 the dissident Traditionals left the oldest Hopi village of Oraibi in reaction to encroachments by the U.S. government. They started Hotevilla, the village that has come to represent resistance to forced acculturation. The Progressives, who stayed in Oraibi, have welcomed U.S. government intervention.

In his book *The Death of the Great Spirit*, Earl Shorris wrote that "the Indians were to become wards of the Federal Government, in much the same way that inmates of Federal prisons are wards." This is just what the Traditional Hopi are struggling to avoid. It was literally true, however, for Yukiama, original leader of Traditional Hopi dissidents, who was imprisoned without trial nine times because he refused to capitulate

to government demands. His story is told in *Techqua Ikachi*.

Yukiama's son, Dan Katchongva, also tells how other men and boys were imprisoned for the year after Hotevilla's founding, in what the Traditionals recall as a "fierce and overpowering period of forced assimilation . . . amounting to a police state." Hopi traditionally had no written laws, police, courts, or jails.

During the 1930s the Progressive faction was in essence recognized by the Bureau of Indian Affairs when it set up the so-called Hopi Tribal Council, a government-defined structure, with authority enforced by police. *Techqua Ikachi* tells how this council was foisted on the Hopi people.

Today Progressive Hopi welcome the conveniences of running water, electricity, and government-built housing along paved streets. They support leases of Hopi land to coal and oil companies.

Traditionals acknowledge that such comforts and easily gained cash may sound fine, but point out that their true costs are not made clear. Traditional Hopi choose to continue to follow ancient Hopi ways rather than to pay these costs. But their land is valuable and Hopi resistance to government and corporation incursion is a recognized symbol inspiring many native people.

One outside group that is strongly resented by Hopi Traditionals is the Mormon church, which is suspected of trying to take over Hopiland. Traditionals write: "It has been our experience throughout recent history that Bahanna (white man) missionaries are always at the root of our problems." The Hopi Tribal Council lawyer since 1951, John Boyden, is a bishop in the Mormon church, and his son just joined the staff of tribal council

lawyers. The brother of the Hopi Tribal Council chairperson is the head of the Oraibi branch of the Mormon church. In 1975 the Mormon church requested land between Oraibi and Hotevilla for a church, outraging Traditional Hopi who wasted no time denouncing this proposed "indoctrination facility."

The other main threat to Hopiland is the energy-greedy complex of American industry and government. Black Mesa is an area that is sacred to Hopi as well as to Navajo. It is now desecrated as the largest strip mine in the world. The two tribal councils signed thirty-five-year leases of Black Mesa to Peabody Coal Company, a subsidiary of Kennecott Copper. They were asked to do so only after the Department of the Interior had already approved the leases without even consulting the tribes. Land, air, and water all suffer in the wake of corporate developments, as do native people who are relatively well paid for the unhealthy work involved in stripping the earth, while it lasts.

The latest energy source being sought under Hopiland is uranium, known by Hopi for thousands of years to be a potential cause of death and destruction. Recently the Navajo Tribal Council accepted \$6 million from Exxon for rights to mine uranium, a deal approved by Secretary of the Interior Thomas Kleppe. Traditional Hopi will not consider such transactions.

Interspersed in *Techqua Ikachi* among announcements of current struggles are descriptions of the Hopi ceremonial life cycle as it has persisted over centuries, giving a hint of the richness of Hopi culture and the strong Hopi sense of humor.

An eloquent statement of the Traditional Hopi position was

made last September by Hotevilla elder David Monongye at the seventieth anniversary of Hotevilla's founding:

"We want the people of this country to know the truth of our situation. This land which you people call the Land of Freedom has just celebrated its 200th anniversary. Yet in 200 years the original Americans have not seen a free day. We are now suffering the final insult. Our people are now losing the one thing which gives life and meaning to life: our land, which is being taken away from us.

"I ask you this:

"Where is the freedom which you all fight for and sacrifice your children for? Is it only the Indian people who have lost or are all Americans losing the very thing which you originally came here to find?

"Listen to us:

"We have no freedom of religion because others come to our homes and tell us that our religion is no good; that we should take theirs instead.

"We don't share the freedom of the press because what gets into the papers is what the government wants people to believe, not what is really happening.

"We have no freedom of speech, because we are persecuted by our own people for speaking our beliefs.

"We have no powerful army, so it is only with the help of friends on this continent and throughout the world that we can be heard by those able to stop this attempt to replace our original leaders and to cut us away from the land."

Techqua Ikachi announces each issue that questions and comments are welcome, and that it continues to be distributed freely because of contributions it receives. Its address is Box 174, Hotevilla, Arizona, 86030.

—Ronilyn McDonald