

raised against the cultural revolution—a revolution which aims to raze to the ground the last vestiges of bourgeois authority as well as ideology?

“TO REBEL IS JUSTIFIED”

That the present stage of the Chinese Revolution is characterized by the emergence of dual power, that dual power exists, is clearly shown by the widespread use by the leadership of the revolution of the exhortative maxim: “In the last analysis all the truths of Marxism can be summed up in one sentence: ‘To rebel is justified.’” For what other reason would a government leader employ a maxim which preaches rebellion against his own government if it were not for the existence of dual power, a condition which denotes the existence in the state structure of two basically incompatible political groups—one espousing “the revolutionary proletarian line” and the other “taking the capitalist road”?

THE NEW PHENOMENON

The current revolution in China has revealed a totally new phenomenon, a phenomenon that has not appeared in any of the socialist countries in the contemporary epoch, except for the early stages of the October Socialist Revolution. What is the new phenomenon? It is a conscious effort by the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party—Chairman Mao and Defense Minister Lin Biao—to project the popular masses onto the political arena and to induce them *by their own efforts* and creative initiative to radically reconstruct the fabric of Chinese society along the “lines of the principles of the Paris Commune.”

This is one of the key, if not the key element of contention in the struggle. The Paris Commune has always been regarded as the model for a genuine proletarian dictatorship, ever since Lenin wrote his celebrated book, *State and Revolution*. Excluded in this concept, of course, is the mechanical transfer of the peculiarly local or national features of the Commune. What is regarded as the quintessence of the Paris Commune type of state is the thoroughly democratic and genuinely revolutionary control by the popular masses over the machinery of the state—by the workers and peasants as against the privileged officialdom. A thought long ago forgotten by the leaders of other socialist countries!

WORD AND DEED

But it has always been recognized in official pronouncements in all the socialist countries. And in one form or another the overthrow of the old social order was based on the recognition of the historical validity and relevancy of the Paris Commune as a model for the new socialist regimes. However, the gap between word and deed has over the years become all too apparent and the degeneration which has set in is in no small part due to an abandonment of any effort to follow the prototype of proletarian dictatorship—the Paris Commune.

The Paris Commune type of state, it can now be seen more clearly than ever before, and must be categorically restated, is the real answer to the rule of the neo-bourgeois restorationist stratum which has grown up in the socialist countries.

“PRINCIPLES OF THE PARIS COMMUNE”

It is thus refreshing and highly gratifying to read in an editorial in *Renmin Ribao*, December 26th (reprinted in *Peking Review* No. 1) that: “A system of general elections must be instituted in accordance with the principles of the Paris Commune. Full deliberations must be carried out by the masses and the election conducted in a serious way. The members can be replaced through election or recalled by the masses at any time.”

Furthermore: “The masses of workers have the right to set up every kind of revolutionary organization,” and these organizations are “urged not to set up a bureaucratic apparatus or acquire a mass of equipment which divorce them from the masses.”

Finally: “Members of these organizations must not be appointed from above nor should there be behind the scenes manipulations.”

A HEALTHY ANTIDOTE

There are those who assert that all this should be regarded as just another programmatic document—that it is a mere declaration of intention.

There is no reason whatsoever why full faith and credence should not be given to the pronouncements of the revolutionary leadership of the Chinese people in the context of present historical circumstances. The possibility for making them a living reality seems highly favorable and in any case such efforts are a healthy antidote to the regressive social tendencies in other socialist countries.

One of the striking features of the crisis in China is the character of the inner party struggle. Why has the struggle been conducted in the Party against unnamed persons or groups? And why has it turned from what originally appeared to be a Party discussion of fundamental questions of policy into what is now called “an all-around test of strength between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie and its agents in our Party”? (*Renmin Ribao* and *Hongqi*, January 1, 1967, reprinted in *Peking Review* No. 1)

POLITICAL DISCUSSIONS AND CLASS CONFLICT

Certainly, it would be preferable to have an open, leisurely discussion of fundamental policy in the party and in the public organs of the party on the basis of minority and majority, and to embody the essential differences in resolutions subject to further discussions and vote by a party congress. However, serious party discussions are not just mere