

January 10, 1977

Part IV: The suppression
of the Left in China

The Shanghai Commune and the Rightist reaction

This month marks the tenth anniversary of what has been popularly called the Shanghai Revolution. It was a monumental event in itself and constituted a turning point in the Chinese Cultural Revolution.

This January, however, there is little if any mention of the Shanghai Commune in the Chinese press. Rather, there is a campaign going on which amounts to a veritable rehabilitation of former Prime Minister Chou En-lai, and possibly of Teng Hsiao-ping.

Chou, of course, was never formally denounced by the party leadership during his lifetime. But it is well established, and events will further confirm it, that he was not merely a moderator between the factions in the course of the Cultural Revolution but a strong opponent of the left. There is no question that it was he who advanced Teng, who had been ousted in the Cultural Revolution, back into a position of preeminent importance in the government and in the party. Chou was able to obtain the acquiescence, if not the approval, of Chairman Mao Tse-tung.

It was only after the fall of Teng and after Chou's death last year that it became clear that Chou En-lai himself was a principal issue in the struggle. The current articles in the Chinese press seem calculated to elevate Chou to a position in the history of the Chinese



A group of Shanghai shipbuilders. The first massive intervention of the working class in the Cultural Revolution was in Shanghai in January 1967. Shanghai can truly be called the proletarian capital of Asia. Photo: Hsinhua