

succeed because the PLA was no longer an ally as it was in the early Maoist struggle for the Cultural Revolution.

In the final analysis, it was the PLA's role in the Cultural Revolution which made its triumph possible. Without the PLA, the victory of the right was inevitable.

The PLA has never been just a military force. It has always been a political force, an instrument for the preservation of the proletarian revolution, and a pillar of the dictatorship of the proletariat, but not necessarily allied with the Maoists.

LAST CAMPAIGN AGAINST THE RIGHT

The campaign launched by Mao's supporters to beat back the "right deviationist wind" in early 1976 enabled the Maoist grouping to hold on to the trappings of office, and provided a cover for their seemingly remaining in power—but in reality power was no longer in their hands.

The death of Chou En-lai seemed to have completely shifted power to the rightists. But in the light of the fact that Mao was still alive, the Teng-rightist forces either overreacted, that is, acted too rapidly, or were overconfident and had completely discounted the ability of Mao to launch one more campaign directed at them.

But the success of the campaign against Teng, and especially against the rightists as a whole, was illusory, even with Teng's ouster.

The death of Mao really returned the situation to the status of January 1975. What abruptly put an end to the apparent dominance of the Mao forces was the reactionary Tien An Men demonstration, which more than anything else showed how isolated the left had become. Nevertheless, they thought they were able to rally the people's militia behind them. But that, too, proved to be an illusion.

WHAT LIES AHEAD

What now?

The Cultural Revolution was an unsettling element for all the possessing classes in contemporary capitalist society, and appeared as a danger to the peaceful accommodationist ruling groups in the socialist countries. At bottom they all hated the Cultural Revolution, although some, of course, had to pay homage to it. Its passing is regarded by them as a favorable omen. With it China has now entered fully into "respectable society." Now it is seemingly "acceptable," assuming, of course, that imperialism ever really accepts the existence of a socialist country.

The reactionary foreign policy features of Maoist ideology, especially in the last couple of years with the utterly unwarranted attacks on Angola and Cuba, not to mention the USSR, have obscured the monumental revolutionary domestic achievements of the Cultural Revolution.

Now that the rewriting of history by the new Hua regime has begun, as can be seen with the vilification of Mao's closest supporters, it is more than ever necessary to bear in mind that while the reaction has triumphed, it is strictly Thermidorian in character—that is, within the framework and on the social foundations of the new class power, in this case, of a workers' state. Both revolutionary revival as well as further regression are possible.

But a social counter-revolution, that is, a full-scale counter-revolution which would entail the restoration of a possessing class, is totally excluded for the coming period.