

'Taming the Tiger' In People's China

By ALAN WINNINGTON

PEKING—In May, the Communist Party of China launched a movement to improve its way of working. ("Rectification" is a rather too pompous translation of the Chinese words, which mean "tidy up style.")

The Communist Party called for criticism from all sides, especially directed at three main faults: bureaucracy, lack of confidence in non-Communists (sectarianism), and settling questions by dogma or "principle" instead of by a careful examination of the real situation (subjectivism).

While calling for merciless criticism on all such counts and others, Mao Tse-tung made clear that "it certainly would not do to refrain from criticism and look on while wrong ideas spread unchecked and acquire their market."

When criticism began it soon became clear that some people had other ideas about its aims.

From the beginning of May, for a month newspapers published every criticism against the Communist Party. The Communist Party made no reply. A section of intellectuals—professors, officials and some Ministers—estimated from this that the Communist Party was in serious difficulties and that the time had come to advance their own positions.

With each passing day the criticism of such people became more and more obviously anti-Socialist.

Yet in China only the Communist Party showed itself able to lead the country out of back-

wardness to independence.

Since 1952 workers' wages rose by 37 percent, and peasants' spending power by 100 percent since 1950. These are the vast mass of China's six hundred millions.

But there are millions of landlords and their families who would like the chance to grab the land back. Most university students still come from the social classes where the criterion has always been individual bureaucratic advancement.

Some capitalists and some intellectuals who fought against feudalism and colonialism oppose Socialism. They hanker after a vague middle road—a sort of daydream China, led by themselves, in which they, at any rate, possess all those things found in American magazine advertisements.

It was an active minority of this grouping which seized on the Communist Party's call for criticism as a chance to attack Socialism and bring about unconstitutional changes in China.

Among those who quickly began to steer the movement in that direction were ex-Communist Chang Po-chun, Minister of Communications, and Lo Lung-chi, Minister of the Timber Industry—both leading lights in the Democratic League with well-nurtured connections among intellectuals and newspapers.

At first they kept their sights fairly low and put forward demands for a bigger share in political power, an "Upper House" and a non-Communist planning commission.

Day by day the press was filled with criticism of faults in this and that department, mostly justified and recognized on all sides as mistakes inevitably due to inexperience in managing State affairs.

But gradually the anti-Socialists became more vocal, no longer disguised their hatred of Socialism and introduced an entirely different tone.

In private talk they were jubilantly saying that, by starting the criticism campaign, the Communist Party had got on to the tigers back and couldn't get off. They declared that the Party could neither end the campaign nor control it.

They began raising their sights, said that nothing had gone right with China since Chiang Kai-shek was thrown out. They identified the Communist theory with dogma and Socialism with bureaucracy. To get rid of dogma and bureaucracy, therefore, the Communist Party and Socialism must go.

The logical next step was "kill the Communists," a slogan raised by Professor Ko Pei-chi of the People's University. In their slogan shouting about "absolute freedom," the anti-Socialists forgot about the freedom of workers and peasants.

They demanded that interest payments be extended for 20 years instead of seven (freedom for capitalists to live by exploiting their labor for 13 more years). Landlords in the south murdered local officials and grabbed back the land. Chiang Kai-shek agents came out of hiding and killed local Communists.

The full reactionary nature of the anti-Socialists was well shown in Hanyang, where the vice-principal of the first middle school got the pupils out on to the streets with a demand for the restoration of Chiang Kai-shek.

He succeeded in this by tell-

ing an entirely false tale about the number of pupils who would be able to enter higher schools.

Several hundred workers and peasants smashed up the pupils' demonstration and arrested the vice-principal. Other students who went to factories and villages with anti-Socialist slogans were arrested or driven out by workers and peasants.

Protests began to go to the press from workers and peasants' meetings that things were going too far. "If Communist Party members lose their heads today ours will roll tomorrow," said one letter.

By June 6, leading anti-Socialists believed that the situation had ripened.

It later emerged that Chang Po-chun called an emergency meeting, at which Tseng Chao-lun, Vice-Minister of Higher Education, reported that the "student question" had reached an explosive point, and they discussed how to use the students' lever to create major disturbances and then emerge themselves to "clear up the mess."

Two days later the first of a series of editorials in the People's Daily began to reply to the anti-Socialist Right Wing. It warned that some people were trying to utilize the criticism program to stir up the embers of class struggle and "pilfer while the house was burning."

Day by day other editorials countered the main political arguments of the Right Wing. Within days the pent-up uneasiness burst in a wave of revulsion that left the anti-Socialists entirely isolated at the moment they felt success was in their hands.

But the confusion which the anti-Socialists were able to create shows they should not be underestimated, however, farcical their attempt to shake the regime and seize leadership.

This is an educational movement, though naturally the anti-Communist press abroad is trying to pretend it is a "purge."

Murder is one thing and the law can deal with it. But where anti-Socialists have kept to the arena of debate and politics they have not lost their jobs, like the anti-Conservative American and British Civil servants.

The clash with the Right Wingers is actually the outcrop of two other movements—to encourage the flowering of art and science and improve working styles, beginning with the Communist Party.

These movements will go on. "We must oppose the Rightists while correcting our own mistakes," says the Communist Party.

Until society can produce enough for all there must be conflicts of interest. Current debates here are part of the fight to bring ideas into harmony with social ownership of the means of production and settle such clashes in a reasoned Socialist manner. This is why such importance is attached to them.

And though the method is particularly Chinese, there is much that others can learn from the theory behind it.

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63,000 Miners Get Pensions Of \$100 a Mo.

WASHINGTON, Sept. 4—Sixty-three thousand coal miners, 60 or over, are currently drawing pensions of \$100 a month from the United Mine Workers Welfare and Retirement Fund, the report of the fund, issued yesterday, showed.

Total payments last year to 215,702 miners or members of their families, and administrative expenses came to \$142,000,000 in the year that ended last June 30, the fund disclosed. The actual benefits came to 97.2 percent of the amount. The other 2.8 percent went for administrative expenses including the cost of operating the 10 UMW area hospitals.

The fund's balance stood at \$145,321,221 this year, almost \$15 million more than a year ago. The fund is made up of payments of royalties by operators for every ton of coal produced.

In addition to pensions, which miners over 65 are able to supplement by social security, the fund also pays survival benefits to widows and orphans of miners killed while at work and provides medical care and rehabilitation for injured and diseased miners.

The extent of the benefits from the fund can also be measured against the fact that the total number of miners working full or short time today is about 230,000 in the bituminous and hard coal fields.