SELECTED ARTICLES

CRITICIZING LIN PIAO AND CONFUCIUS

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CRITICIZING

Lin Piao and Confucius

II

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Publisher's Note

The bourgeois careerist, conspirator, double-dealer, renegade and traitor Lin Piao was an out-and-out devotee of Confucius. Like all the reactionaries in Chinese history, he revered Confucius and opposed the Legalist School, and attacked Chin Shih Huang, the first emperor of the Chin Dynasty (221-207 B.C.). He made use of the doctrines of Confucius and Mencius as a reactionary ideological weapon in his plotting to usurp Party leadership, seize state power and restore capitalism.

We have compiled this booklet to tell foreign readers more about China's current movement to criticize Lin Piao and Confucius. The articles it contains previously appeared in Chinese newspapers and periodicals in connection with the nationwide campaign.

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The Mass Criticism Group of Peking and Tsinghua Universities

Confucius — What Kind of Man Was He?

Confucius was an outwardly stubborn and ferocious but inwardly extremely weak and empty man; he was sinister, cunning and rotten to the core. This was the nature of the declining slave-owning class he represented — it is a feature common to representatives of all reactionary classes on the verge of extinction. Thorough exposure of Confucius' reactionary features is of great significance today for the thorough unmasking of such political swindlers as Wang Ming, Liu Shao-chi and Lin Piao and for hitting back at the adverse current of retrogression and restoration.

Mania of Restoration to Turn Back History's Wheel

Confucius (551-479 B.C.) lived towards the end of the Spring and Autumn Period.[1] Slave uprisings, revolts by the common people and the struggle of the then newly rising landlord class to seize power converged into an irresistible historical tide that pounded at the rotting slave system, with the result that the "rites were lost and music was ruined" and the slave-owning class as a whole was brought face to face with its doom. In the course of sharp class struggle the newly rising landlord class was moving to dominate the stage of history.

Confucius was born into the declining slave-owning aristocracy, in a family whose position was fast falling in the great social upheavals of the time. His ancestors had been big aristocrats in the State of Sung (today the Shangchiu area in eastern Honan Province) and his later forebears moved to the State of Lu (now the southwestern part of Shantung Province). After the death of his father Tsou Shu Ho, the family declined further. Having

[1] "Spring and Autumn" was the original title of the annals of the State of Lu, covering events between 722 and 481 B.C. Later, the entire period beginning from 770 B.C., when the Eastern Chou Dynasty began, and ending in 476 B.C., came to be known as the Spring and Autumn Period.

received the reactionary education of the slave-owning class from his infancy, Confucius took the reactionary road of defence and restoration of the slave system from his youth onward. The decadence of his class and the decline of his own family made him fight to restore their lost "paradise" all the more stubbornly and furiously. His life-long dream of restoration was "to revive states that were extinct, restore families that had lost their positions, and call to office those who had fallen into obscurity." Its concentrated expression was the reactionary political line of "self-restraint and return to the rites."

What were these "rites"? They were in fact the superstructure of the slave system in the Western Chou period.[2] Confucius lauded them to the skies, saying: "How complete and elegant are the institutions of Chou. I follow Chou."[3] The slave system of Chou, in reality, was an extremely reactionary, dark and rotten social order that already

[2] Chou was the name of a dynasty. It was established in 1066 B.C. by King Wu of Chou after the overthrow of the Shang Dynasty, and its capital was in present-day Sian, Shensi Province. Its earlier period is known in history as Western Chou. In 770 B.C. this dynasty moved its capital eastward to present-day Loyang in Honan Province, and was thereafter called Eastern Chou. Slave society became highly developed in China during the Western Chou period.

[3] *Analects*, "Pa Yi."

had become outdated in his time. Its so-called "richness and colour" came straight from the blood of countless slaves. Under this system the slave-owners did not treat slaves as human beings at all. A horse plus a skein of silk could buy five slaves. Deprived of all personal freedom, slaves were forced to do hard labour and were ruthlessly oppressed and exploited. If a slave tried to escape and was caught, one of his legs would be sawed off and he would then be thrown into the wilderness to "stay together with the beasts" and freeze and starve to death. On the other hand, the lives of the slave-owners who fattened on the sweat and blood of the exploited slaves were luxurious and decadent to the extreme. And after death they would be buried in large and grandiose tombs, with sometimes as many as a hundred slaves ruthlessly killed or buried alive to accompany the corpse in its tomb. The "rites" Confucius wanted to restore were a hell for the slaves and a paradise for the slave-owners. This system, which destroyed a great deal of labour power and wasted a huge amount of the fruits of labour, had already become a serious obstacle to the development of the productive forces.

Confucius was a rotten character who greatly cherished the old system, old order and old culture of the earlier slave-owning class and was inveterate

in his hatred for the then excellent revolutionary situation, with a headful of counter-revolutionary revanchist ideas. Faced with the flames of the slave uprisings, he cursed the participants as "bandits" and a "scourge" and wanted to kill them to the last man. In putting down one uprising, the slave-owners of the State of Cheng killed all the slaves involved. When Confucius heard of this, he cried out in frantic praise: "Well killed!" Confucius' precept "restrain oneself and return to the rites" boiled down to justifying the slaughter of slaves by the slave-owners while denying the justice of the slave revolts. He was the deadly enemy of the emancipation of the slaves.

In Confucius' eyes, everything about the slave system of the Chou Dynasty, from the nine-squares (*ching tien*) land system[4] to its law and from its music to its wine cups, was perfect, sacred and inviolate. Any change made by the new emerging landlord class either in the economic base or the superstructure, and everything new that came up

[4] This was a land system that existed in China's slave society. All the land in the country belonged to the King of Chou, chief of the slave-owners. Every piece of land was divided into nine squares in the pattern of the Chinese character 井 (*ching*) and was parcelled out to slave-owning aristocrats of different ranks who forced slaves to cultivate this bestowed land.

in the great social upheaval, threw him into a frenzy of opposition. When his disciple Jan Chiu helped the House of Chisun, which held the rank of *ta fu* (senior officials) in the State of Lu, to adopt the land tax system that promoted the development of feudal relations of production, Confucius truculently urged his other disciples to "beat the drum and set upon him." When the State of Tsin cast a tripod inscribed with the laws[5] which undermined the slave system's order of noble and low, he raved that Tsin would be "doomed." When he heard that the new emerging landlord class in the State of Chi had killed Duke Chien, the state's chief slave-owner, and seized power, Confucius, though already 71 and confined to bed by serious illness, got out of bed with desperate effort and tottered off to see the ruler of the State of Lu, whom he asked time and again to send a punitive force.

Confucius' hostility towards the new and his unreserved efforts to prevent the old from dying mounted to a mania. And this mania for "returning to the rites" was aimed precisely at restoration, at turning back the wheel of history.

[5] In 513 B.C. representatives of the new emerging landlord class in the State of Tsin cast an iron tripod inscribed with laws which set some restrictions on the slave-owners, and thus made the laws known to the public. Confucius stubbornly opposed this.

A Hypocritical and Sly Political Swindler

Sinister and cunning, Confucius posed as a man who "loved people." But all the while he was determined to defend and restore the man-eating politics of the slave system. He habitually spoke of benevolence and righteousness, preached the doctrine of the mean and would not shoot birds in their nests or fish with a long line bearing too many hooks. He put on the appearance of loving not only people but even birds and fish. Actually he was a hard-hearted and ferocious demon. Once, with a pretence of benevolence, a disciple of his handed out some porridge for the toiling slaves. Regarding this as an offence against the "rites of Chou," Confucius flew into a rage and immediately sent people to break the pot and bowls and spill the porridge on the ground. This was an example of Confucius' "the benevolent man loves others." He was a hypocrite!

Confucius peddled "sincerity" with all his might by saying that "an insincere man cannot get on at all," trying to make people believe that he was the most sincere of men under heaven. In reality, sincerity always has its class nature, and the kind of "sincerity" Confucius talked about was only a means of the slave-owning aristocrats for deceiving people. He admitted that "the superior man only

pays attention to upholding the right way and need not keep his words."[6] In other words, it was permissible to tell any lie or commit any perfidy in the practice of the counter-revolutionary doctrine of "restraining oneself and returning to the rites." On his way to the State of Wei, Confucius was surrounded at a certain place by the masses revolting against this state to prevent his going there. He reached an agreement with the masses, swearing solemnly before heaven that he would not go to Wei. But no sooner was he set free than he stealthily crept to the ruler of Wei, passing on information about the mass revolt, offered his own proposals and urged the State of Wei to put down the uprising by armed force. Taking an oath to your face and stabbing you in the back — this was the "sincerity" of Confucius!

All political swindlers pay close attention to spying out the land, trimming their sails to the wind and frequently changing their disguise to suit different situations. In Confucius' words, "When good government prevails in a state, language may be lofty and bold, and actions the same. When bad government prevails, the actions may be lofty and bold, but the language may be with some

[6] *Analects*, "Wei Ling Kung."

reserve."[7] This meant that when the situation was favourable to the restoration of the old order he would shout at the top of his voice and act openly. When it was unfavourable he would persist in restorationist activities, but conceal his intentions by outwardly saying only nice things and keeping a smiling face. A coup d'etat to overthrow the rule of the new emerging landlord class represented by Chi Huan-tzu took place in the State of Lu in 501 B.C. Learning of it, Confucius was so ecstatic, he danced with joy. He saw the coup as his opportunity for a triumphant "return to the rites" and therefore clamoured for "reviving the institutions of Chou in the east,"[8] that is, the State of Lu. But the coup was short-lived. Then Confucius made a quick turnabout, concealed his own part in it, won the confidence of the newly rising landlord class and quickly got hold of the important posts of police chief and acting prime minister of Lu.

A Truculent and Ruthless Tyrant

Once in power, Confucius immediately converted his hopes of restoration into attempts at restoration.

[7] *Ibid.*, "Hsieh Wen."

[8] *Historical Records.*

He feverishly carried out his reactionary political line, cruelly suppressed the working people and the newly rising landlord class and, in particular, relegated the masses of women to the lowest and most oppressed social position.

This hypocrite who had proclaimed that engaging in politics did not require any killing bared his ferocious features as a tyrant as soon as he got some power. Within the short period of three months he served as acting prime minister, he stretched his sinister hand to Shaocheng Mao, a reformer of the newly rising landlord class, had him killed and exposed his corpse in public for three days.

Shaocheng Mao was a *ta fu* (senior official) of the State of Lu and a forerunner of the Legalist School.[9] A propagandist for reform, he was supported and welcomed by the people. He had gathered around him "a group of disciples" repre-

[9] The Legalist School, whose principal representatives were Shang Yang, Hsun Kuang and Han Fei, was an important school of thought which opposed the Confucian School during the Warring States Period. It reflected the interests of the rising feudal landlord class and propagated the materialist view that "man's will can conquer Heaven," as against the idealist view of "abiding by the will of Heaven." It advocated political reform and opposed retrogression. It proposed "rule by law" to replace "rule by rites" and the exercise of the dictatorship of the landlord class in place of the dictatorship of the slave-owning class. These men were later known as Legalists.

senting the advanced social forces. Even the students of Confucius flocked to his lectures which caused the "number of Confucius' students to grow and fall three times."[10] On several occasions practically all the students went over, and only Yen Yuan, a slavish follower, remained with his lonely teacher. Since Shaocheng Mao's theory of reform seriously threatened his own attempt at restoration, Confucius regarded him as a thorn in his flesh and was anxious to finish him off. According to the rites of Chou, "punishment did not extend up to the rank of *ta fu*." Moreover, killing a man of Shaocheng Mao's high prestige was bound to be condemned by public opinion. So even Confucius' students opposed his execution. But Confucius, to serve the needs of his counter-revolutionary restorationism, completely ignored the opposition of public opinion. Using the power he had usurped, he charged Shaocheng Mao with five major "crimes" and ruthlessly killed him. It was an act of sanguinary class revenge by the declining slave-owning class against the new emerging landlord class.

Lenin said: **"What is restoration? It is the reversion of state power to the political representa-**

[10] Wang Chung, *Lun Heng* (*Discourses Weighed in the Balance*).

tives of the old order."[11] Confucius' "self-restraint and return to the rites" meant restoring the dictatorship of the slave-owning class. His murder of Shaocheng Mao tells us that the struggle between two classes and two political lines is a life-and-death struggle. There is no such thing as supra-class "benevolent government" in class society. Once the forces of restoration representing the reactionary classes seize power, they are bound to launch frantic counterattacks as Confucius did and slaughter many revolutionaries. Attention should be paid to this lesson of history.

A Parasite Without Real Learning

In accordance with the political needs of the maintenance and restoration of the slave system, Confucius styled himself a born "sage" personifying the culture of the Western Chou Dynasty, and put on the front of a man of integrity so as to fool the people. To meet the needs of defence and restoration of other old systems, later reactionaries extolled Confucius as a "man of great learning."

Was Confucius a "man of great learning"? To assert this is deceptive nonsense.

[11] "The Agrarian Programme of Social-Democracy in the First Russian Revolution, 1905-1907," *Selected Works*, Vol. 13, Foreign Languages Publishing House, Moscow, 1962, p. 327.

Chairman Mao has pointed out: **"Ever since class society came into being the world has had only two kinds of knowledge, knowledge of the struggle for production and knowledge of the class struggle."**[12] Confucius neither understood revolutionary theory nor knew how to take part in productive labour. He had no real learning whatsoever. The working people of his time cursed him as a man "whose four limbs do not toil and who does not know the difference between the five grains." His knowledge of production was nil. The so-called rites, music, benevolence and righteousness he pumped into his students were nothing but the fossilized old culture of the slave-owning aristocracy. The *Spring and Autumn Annals*, which he compiled, reversed history and confused black and white. It was a restorationist record that shamelessly prettified the chief slave-owners and viciously attacked the forces of reform.

Among scholars of the hundred schools of thought in the Spring and Autumn Period and the Warring States Period,[13] many wrote specialized books summing up certain aspects of the experience

[12] "Rectify the Party's Style of Work," *Selected Works*, Eng. ed., Foreign Languages Press, Peking, 1967, Vol. III, p. 39.

[13] The time of strife between 475 B.C. and 221 B.C. before China was unified under the Chin Dynasty came to be known as the Warring States Period.

of class struggle and the struggle for production in their time and thus contributed to the history of man's knowledge. Outstanding representatives of the Legalist School, such as Shang Yang (around 390-338 B.C.), Hsun Kuang (around 313-238 B.C.) and Han Fei (around 280-232 B.C.) in particular, stood in the van of their time. By expounding ideas of change they enriched the splendid culture of ancient China. In contrast, the lout Confucius "narrated but did not write" and actually was unable to write anything worthwhile. The *Analects,* held by Confucianists (*Ju* 儒)[14] to be a classic exalted by many people, was not written by Confucius himself. It was a mishmash of isolated statements and deeds of Confucius patched together from memory by his disciples, and by their disciples. Reactionary and decadent in content, these analects peddled the theory that "everything is decided by

[14] The Confucian (*Ju* 儒) school of thought was founded by Confucius. The term "*Ju*" originally referred to men serving at funeral ceremonies or performing similar services for the slave-owning aristocrats. Confucius did so in his earlier years. Afterwards, he set up a private school and solicited pupils. As an advocate of the restoration of the old order, he conducted political activities against social change, tried his best to save the moribund slave system and eventually founded a school of philosophy. Adherents of this school were later called Confucians. From the Chin and Han dynasties onward, this name was applied to all followers and proponents of the ideas of Confucius and Mencius.

Heaven," propagated restoration and threw in such things as how to engage in conspiracy and double-dealing and descriptions of the decadent way of life and code of conduct. For his taste, "no grain can be too fine and no meat can be cut too small." "He did not eat meat which was not cut properly, nor anything which was not finely cooked." "Over lamb's fur he wore a garment of black; over fawn's fur, one of white; and over fox's fur, one of yellow." There were instructions on how to show obsequious manner before a prince, and smile back to officials in power. And on how to pose as upright and honest, so as to be able to cheat the people while enjoying such a reputation. Such garbage and rot — and yet these are the classics of the Confucians. Moral baseness and shamelessness, pushing for personal gain, all this is the "learning" of Confucius! The progressive Ming Dynasty thinker Li Chih (1527-1602) pointed out sharply that Confucius was "without real learning." Even the German bourgeois idealist philosopher Hegel looked down on Confucius' preachments and said there was no genuine philosophy there. Hegel also said: For the sake of Confucius' reputation, it would have been better if his books had never been translated.[15] This sarcasm about

[15] George W. F. Hegel, *Lectures on the History of Philosophy.*

Confucius, a parasite devoid of real learning, is very much to the point.

Stray Dog Driven to the Wall Everywhere

Chairman Mao said: **"Retrogression eventually produces the reverse of what its promoters intend."**[16] Confucius spent his whole life going from place to place, worked for restoration everywhere, but eventually met failure. The masses cursed him as a "skinny, worn-out stray dog" — a phrase which vividly summed up Confucius' experiences in his lifetime. It was the inevitable result of his political line which went against the trend of history.

Waving the tattered banner of "restraining oneself and returning to the rites," Confucius travelled to the states of Chi, Wei, Sung, Chen, Tsai and Chu in a jolting horse-drawn carriage for more than a decade. Wherever he went, he either got the cold shoulder or was driven away because everyone detested such a diehard. Knowing that Confucius was adept at intrigue, the ruler of the State of Wei sent armed men to watch him; the newly rising forces in the states of Chi and Sung wanted to kill

[16] "New Democratic Constitutional Government," *Selected Works*, Eng. ed., FLP, Peking, 1967, Vol. II, p. 414.

him. Each time he fled in desperation. In Chen and Tsai the new forces sent people to encircle Confucius in a field, and for seven days he and his disciples could not get food and were famished. All grew lean and haggard; some became ill and could not stand up. Even his favourite disciples were dissatisfied and showed doubts and waverings about the things he had preached.

In the eyes of the working people, Confucius was like a rat running across the street chased by everybody. Farmers, basket-bearers and gate-keepers all made attacks on him. Some sang songs to mock him, and some denounced him as a reactionary who knew the trend could not be turned back but still wanted to do so. The common people of Kuangcheng in the State of Wei surrounded him for five days and wanted to kill him, an incident in which Confucius almost lost his life.

With a smile of feigned friendship on his face, but evil in his heart, Confucius went to see Liuhsia Chih, outstanding leader of a slave uprising, and tried to demoralize the fighters in the uprising by preaching "benevolence, righteousness and virtue" and offering such bait as fame, gain and position. With revolutionary indignation, Liuhsia Chih denounced Confucius as a bloodsucker who "gets his food without farming and his clothing without weaving," a double-dealer who praised people

to their faces and conspired behind their backs, a "crafty hypocrite" known for his smooth tongue and his cunning and hypocrisy, and as "Chiu the Robber" who had "committed heinous crimes." (Chiu was the given name of Confucius, his family name being Kung). Confucius was forced to flee, ashen-faced and crestfallen.

With Confucius striking snags everywhere, even his disciples deserted him one after the other. He lamented: "If my doctrine cannot be put into effect, I will put to sea in a raft. Probably only Tzu Lu will follow me."[17] But Tzu Lu, one of his favourite disciples, was chopped to mincemeat in a battle to defend the slave system and became a burial-offering entombed with this same system. If Confucius had really set out for other climes on a raft, no one would have gone with him. Running up against stone walls everywhere, opposed by the masses and deserted by his followers — this is the inevitable fate of all the reactionary ringleaders who try to bring about restoration.

Marx said: **"Let the dead bury and lament their dead. In contrast, it is enviable to be the first vigorously to enter a new life . . ."**[18] Whoever des-

[17] *Analects*, "Kungyeh Chang."

[18] Karl Marx, *Letters from the "Deutsch-Französische Jahrbücher."*

perately clings to the mummy of Confucius and tries to turn back the wheel of history will come to no good end. The world's future belongs to the proletariat.

Tien Li

Mencius — a Reactionary Thinker Who Sought to Restore the Slave System

Mencius (c. 390-305 B.C.) was a propagandist for the restoration of the slave system. He inherited and developed the reactionary theories of the Confucian School, and was therefore long revered by the reactionary ruling classes as the "secondary sage," junior only to Confucius himself. The so-called "policy of benevolence," incisively criticized by Chairman Mao in "On the People's Democratic Dictatorship," was the reactionary slogan Mencius had worked hard to promote for the purpose of restoring slavery. By criticizing his reactionary words and deeds and analysing the class content of his political line, we can improve our understanding of how overthrown reactionary classes work

overtime to revive old systems and how viciously they attack the new system. This will also help us to comprehend more deeply the class struggle under the dictatorship of the proletariat and see more clearly the counter-revolutionary character of Lin Piao and similar political swindlers.

"Learn from the Ancient Kings" — a Reactionary Political Line for Restoring Slavery

Mencius lived in the Warring States Period (475-221 B.C.) when the system of slavery was being supplanted by feudalism. In one after another of the ducal states of the time, political power based upon slavery was collapsing, giving place to new regimes of the landlord class. As a result, the political line of the Legalist School became dominant. Around the time of Mencius' birth, reforms were being carried out by the Legalists Li Kuei (c. 455-395 B.C.) in the State of Wei and Wu Chi (?-381 B.C.) in the State of Chu. The famous Legalist Shang Yang was his contemporary. While Mencius was shuttling between various ducal states in a frenzy of restorationist activity, Shang Yang was instituting bold reforms in the State of Chin.

The history of class struggle shows that, following every major social change, reactionaries repre-

senting the interests of the overthrown classes and bent on restoring the old order are likely to appear. The Spring and Autumn Period (770-476 B.C.) produced Confucius who spent his life preaching "self-restraint and return to the rites," his reactionary programme to restore the slave system. Later, during the Warring States Period, there appeared Mencius who preached "learning from the ancient kings." Diametrically opposed to the mainstream of progress and reform at the time was the adverse current stirred up by the slave-owning class, advocating restoration and retrogression. Its representative was Mencius. Conceited and ambitious, he devoted a lifetime dashing here and there, clamouring that he wished to "rectify men's hearts and put an end to perverse doctrines." Everywhere he peddled the Confucian political line, "Learn from the ancient kings." Painstakingly fabricating and publicizing alleged "sagacious deeds" by these "ancient kings," actually slave-owner chieftains, he lauded the long obsolete slave system to the skies. Mencius ranted that a prince had only to follow the "Way" of these "ancient kings," and "in five years, if the state be large, or in seven years, if it be small, he would be sure to win political power over the whole empire." The Legalist Hsun Kuang (known as Hsun Tzu) said incisively that Mencius' real purpose in flying the

tattered flag of "learning from the ancient kings" was to throw the dictatorship of the new emerging landlord class into disorder, in other words, to overthrow it.

Though feudal political power had been established in a number of ducal states, within the new regimes the old slave-owning aristocracy still exercised considerable influence. Some wielders of power were themselves formerly slave-owners linked by many ties to the old forces. Taking advantage of this, Mencius and his followers went to different states to preach the "*tao* (Way) of the ancient kings" to their rulers; thus they resorted to the counter-revolutionary strategy of "conquering the mind." Mencius considered it necessary to correct "the sovereign's mind" before "correcting the minds of men," claiming that "once the sovereign is rectified, peace and order will prevail throughout a country." In Chi (one of the major ducal states occupying the northern and eastern parts of present-day Shantung Province), Mencius thrice met its ruler Prince Hsuan but did not bring up any concrete problems. When his disciples asked why, he replied: "I tried to hit hard at his evil ideas before all else."[1] In other words, he wanted to start by changing the guiding thought

[1] *Hsun Tzu.*

of the feudal princes, and only then to proceed to change the political line of the ducal rulers and the nature of state power. The Legalist Han Fei saw right through this. He commented pointedly that Mencius and his like, who disguised themselves and talked abundantly about "benevolence and righteousness" and the "ancient kings," in fact harboured the sinister design to "create doubts about present laws and influence the sovereign to change his mind." Therefore they were like termites gnawing at the new society.[2]

The so-called policy of "benevolent rule" so feverishly trumpeted by Mencius lay at the core of his reactionary political line of "learning from the ancient kings." He said: "Without benevolent rule, the country cannot be well governed." What was this "benevolent rule" of his? Replying to a question by Duke Wen of Teng about the "proper way of governing a kingdom," Mencius poured out everything he had in mind. In economics, it was to restore the "nine-squares" (*ching tien*) land system of the slave society under the Yin and Chou dynasties; in politics, to restore the slave-owning aristocracy's institution of hereditary official posts and emoluments; in education, to imitate the educational system of the slave society of Yin and Chou

[2] *Han Fei Tzu.*

and instruct the rulers' children in the slave-owner ideology which had prevailed through the Hsia, Shang and Chou dynasties (c. 21st century-771 B.C.). In brief, Mencius sang the same old tune as his "ancient teacher" Confucius. That is, everything the slave-owning chieftains of the past had practised constituted the perfect and peerless "benevolent rule" that needed to be inherited and wholly restored.

As a matter of fact, this formula lauded by Mencius was but a fig leaf to cover up the tyranny of the declining slave-owning class. In class society in which the class interests of the slave-owners and the slaves, the landlords and the peasants, the capitalists and the workers are diametrically opposed, how can there be any sort of "benevolent rule" by an oppressor class over an oppressed one? The real aim of Mencius' reactionary preachings was to oppose and negate the Legalist line of "rule of law"[3] and create public opinion for his restorationist activity.

[3] "Rule of law" was the political idea of the Legalist School. It meant using public laws and decrees reflecting the interests of the new emerging landlord class to oppose the hereditary prerogatives and hierarchic system of the slave-owning class; using violence to strike at the political forces of the slave-owning class; and establishing and consolidating a centralized feudal state.

In his propaganda of "benevolent rule," Mencius never forgot to include restoration of the "nine-squares" land system. He said: "Benevolent government must begin with the restoration of land boundaries." This clearly indicated his obdurate desire to set up once more the "boundaries" of land which had been demolished by slave uprisings and by the new emerging landlord class, and so bind the slaves once again to the slave society's system of allocating land to the princes, dukes and their offspring. Mencius idealized the nine-squares land system as follows: "A square *li* covers nine squares of land; the nine squares contain nine hundred *mu*. The central square is the public field, and eight households, each of which has its private hundred *mu*, cultivate this public field together. Not till the public work is finished may they attend to their private affairs. This is the way by which the rustics' lots of land are distinguished from the public fields." No such idyllic nine-squares system ever existed in real history! Mencius' purpose in spinning this tale was certainly not to allow slaves to own private land. On the contrary, he advocated restoring and guaranteeing the indiscriminate exploitation of the slaves by the slave-owners, big and small. Mencius went all out to drum up praise for the so-called "labour duty" practices of slave society in the Yin and Chou

dynasties. He said: "For administering the land, there is no better system than labour duty," and that ". . . husbandmen throughout the land will be pleased if they are required to cultivate together the public field, and no other tax should be exacted from them." This really means that the slave-owners and their state compelled vast numbers of slaves to cultivate the land and directly appropriated the products of this slave labour. Mencius' talk of "labour duty" and "exacting no tax" was, of course, not meant to lighten the slaves' burdens but at negating the "tax" (on privately owned land) already enforced before Mencius was born and suited to the system of feudal ownership.

While trumpeting "benevolent rule," Mencius repeatedly dwelt on what he called the "people," and pretended to "plead for the people." Using the camouflage of the demagogic slogan — "The people are the most important element; the country is the next; the sovereign comes last." — he made up fairy tales about the so-called happy life of the "people" under the "ancient kings," and poured abuse on the rising landlord class for carrying out a "policy of maltreating the people." Basing themselves on this rubbish, scholars of the landlord and capitalist classes have long praised Mencius as a champion of the idea that "the people are the foundation of the state" and a "progressive thinker"

with a "democratic spirit." And today, the Soviet revisionist social-imperialists, on their part, crown Mencius with the laurels of "democracy" and "humanism," while they frantically attack the movement to criticize Lin Piao and Confucius in China. All to no avail!

In the book *Mencius*, "the people" (民) are strictly distinguished from "the mob" (氓) or "rustics" (野人) as fundamentally different concepts. All Mencius' clamours "for the people" had one premise — the slaves were excluded and their emancipation was not recognized. Holding the "rustics" in extreme contempt, he preached insistently: "If there were no superior men, there would be no one to govern the rustics. If there were no rustics, there would be no one to feed the superior men." Hence we see that in Mencius' concept, "the people" did not refer to the slaves but to slave-owners who had lost property and power in the course of social changes and other freemen who had come down from the slave society. His proposed "regulation of the people's property" required the rising landlord class to renounce feudal ownership of land and redistribute it among the slave-owners and freemen. In saying "the people are the most important element," his aim was to raise the political status of these two groups. And in saying "the sovereign comes last," his main thrust was to oppose the consolidation of the centralized power of the rising landlord class. Today, under the dictatorship of the proletariat, when the overthrown landlord and capitalist classes attack the proletarian dictatorship, they too invariably disguise themselves as spokesmen of the "people," while covering their real class aims. This exactly repeats the trick used by Mencius to attack the political power of the landlord class in his attempt to restore slavery. That the reactionaries at home and abroad should lavish praise upon Mencius only proves them to be a bunch of disciples of Confucius and Mencius hostile to the revolutionary people.

As his maxim for restoration, Mencius quoted from the Confucian classic *Book of Songs* the following verse:

> Neither err nor forget
> The old rules we must follow yet.

So all his puffing and blowing about "learning from the ancient kings," "benevolent rule," "restoring the nine-squares land system," and "the people are the most important element in a country" boiled down to one sentence: "The old rules we must follow yet." That is, to restore the slave system and push history a long way back. To put into practice this reactionary political line of "learning from the ancient kings," Mencius, "fol-

lowed by dozens of carriages and attended by hundreds of men," feverishly shuttled between the ducal states of Chi, Wei, Sung, Tsou, Teng and Hsueh (Wei and Sung were located in today's Honan Province, the rest in present-day Shantung Province). Wherever there was the slightest sign of a counter-revolutionary restoration, there Mencius was sure to rush and give all-out support to restorationist activities. Since Chi was a large and populous state and one of his followers, Kuang Chang, was in command of large numbers of troops there, Mencius went to that state three times to plot restoration, saying brazenly that it could very easily become the first to follow the "Kingly Way." When Prince Yen of Sung proclaimed that he would enforce "Kingly Rule," Mencius urged him to "display military might" and "kill all those who deserve to die," as King Tang of the Shang Dynasty and King Wu of the Chou Dynasty had done. So for a time the small State of Sung became a centre of the slave-owners' restorationist plotting. But the misdeeds of Prince Yen came to an ignominious end in the face of the people's opposition. He fled the state in panic and died in an alien land. At that time the era of slavery was already gone beyond recall, so Mencius' vain attempt to restore it through the reactionary political line of "learning

from the ancient kings" turned out to be a mere dream. Han Yu (A.D. 768-824) of the Tang Dynasty, who was a worshipper of Confucius, wrote: "Mencius was good at arguing and Confucius' doctrine was thus made intelligible. By carriage he travelled across the country till he grew old and died."[4] His utmost efforts to promote the restoration of the slave system were unavailing; he journeyed to many places but achieved nothing; and his whole life ended in frustration. Such was the lot of Mencius!

Opposition to Chin and the Legalist School — a Diehard Stand Against the Trend of History

It was in Chin that the reforms were most thorough, and the changes most striking. Prior to the reforms carried out by Shang Yang, this state had been under the sway of the old slave-owner aristocrats. They led extravagant and dissolute lives and fought one another in the blood feuds rife in those days, resulting in political chaos, economic backwardness and steady loss of territory. The ducal states of the central plain (the middle and lower reaches of the Yellow River) held Chin in

[4] *Chin Hsueh Chieh* (*The Scholar's Apology*), an article written by Han Yu.

contempt and excluded it from attending their "inter-state conferences." Such treatment caused its ruler, Duke Hsiao, to exclaim in chagrin: "No shame could be greater." But following Shang Yang's stern reforms, Chin became rich and powerful within little more than a decade during which it several times defeated the State of Wei. Then these same dukedoms not only let Chin join their conferences but sent envoys to pay homage at the Chin court. All this showed vividly that a backward state could advance by leaps and bounds and become a developed one provided it moved with the tide of history and adhered firmly to the Legalist line. On the contrary, if reforms were not thoroughgoing and the reactionary Confucian line was not completely renounced, a state could become weak, lag behind and even retrogress. That happened in other dukedoms such as Han and Wei. As the Legalist Han Fei justly said: "If the law enforcement officers are firm, the country will be powerful. If they are weak, the country will be weak too." And as he also noted: "The states of Han, Chao and Wei, which exalted benevolence and righteousness, finally became weak and chaotic. The State of Chin did not do so but it was well-governed and became strong."[5] This conclusion conformed to the facts in the Warring States Period.

[5] *Han Fei Tzu*, a book written by Han Fei.

The success of Shang Yang's reforms and the subsequent rise of Chin as a powerful state kindled the bitter hatred of the slave-owning class. In Chin itself, the slave-owners' forces of restoration counterattacked vengefully, and dismembered Shang Yang by tying his limbs to chariots driven in different directions. In other ducal states of the central plain, the slave-owners acted against Chin and the Legalist School, taking advantage of their rulers' fear of Chin's rising power. As spokesman of these restorationist slave-owners, Mencius seized this chance to rally the disordered ranks of the Confucian School and violently assailed the Legalist line represented by Shang Yang.

To begin with, Mencius launched attacks and slanders against the entire political situation under the domination of the Legalist line. Just as Confucius had seen the Spring and Autumn Period as a time of "absence of right principles throughout the country," so Mencius described the Warring States Period as a dark age in which "people are misled by heresy which blocks benevolence and righteousness" and "men are about to devour each other." Wherever he went, he gnashed his teeth and spouted abuse: "Never before were people so plagued by despotism as now." He declared

that the "five hegemonic rulers"[6] of the Spring and Autumn Period had been "sinners" against the "Three Kings"[7] of the Hsia, Shang and Chou dynasties, that the dukes of the various Warring States were "sinners" against the "five hegemonic rulers," and that the senior officials who pushed the Legalist line were "sinners" against the dukes. Thus, the book *Mencius* from cover to cover was indeed **"half lamentation, half lampoon."**[8] It was a compound of his nostalgic grief for the slave system and his virulent calumnies against the new society in the Warring States Period.

Mencius was extremely hostile to the two major policies pushed by the Legalists. One was "opening up the rushy wastelands and breaking up the paths and boundary lines between the fields"; the other was "awarding those with military exploits." The first encouraged the freemen and the up-and-coming landlords to reclaim wastelands, thus disavowing the hereditary monopoly of the land by the slave-owners; the second sought to reinforce

[6] This name was applied in history to Duke Huan of Chi, Duke Wen of Tsin, Duke Mu of Chin, Duke Hsiang of Sung and Prince Chuang of Chu who successively became hegemonic rulers in the Spring and Autumn Period.

[7] The "Three Kings" were Yu of the Hsia Dynasty, Tang of the Shang Dynasty and Wen of the Chou Dynasty.

[8] Karl Marx and Frederick Engels: *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, Eng. ed., FLP, Peking, 1972, p. 61.

the state apparatus of the landlord class, violating the system of hereditary official posts and emoluments by which the slave-owning aristocracy monopolized all military and governmental power. Implementation of these two cardinal policies, which underlay Shang Yang's reforms, could destroy both the economic base and the political superstructure of the slave system and promote the feudal system. Mencius, on his part, held that those who practised them were rank "public enemies" deserving severe punishment as criminals. To oppose these policies, he provoked two polemics: "between righteousness and gains" and "between force and benevolence."

Confucius had prated: "Least of all should be said about gain," and "the superior man thinks in terms of righteousness, the inferior man thinks in terms of gain." Mencius made special efforts to elaborate this reactionary fallacy. Along with his glib talk about "benevolence and righteousness," he wilfully disparaged the various policies of the Legalists — aimed at changing the relations of production and promoting the productive forces — by saying they boiled down to the one word "gain." Alleging that this "poisoned" men's minds and was the root of all evil, he slandered the Legalists as "tyrants and corrupt officials," and "robbers" "zealously seeking gain." True, the Legalists talked

openly about "gain." Shang Yang declared: "Disregard the rites if it brings a gain to the people."[9] Chairman Mao has pointed out: **"There is no 'ism' in the world that transcends utilitarian considerations."**[10] In class society, each class seeks to safeguard and uphold its own class interests, and all political, ethical and philosophical concepts are a reflection of the interests of a given class. A revolutionary, or a progressive, class is in a position to speak openly of "gain" because its interests are at one with the development of the productive forces and the direction of social development. So it was with the newly emerging landlord class when it talked of "gain" during the Warring States Period. The reactionary and declining slave-owning class, on the other hand, dared not openly talk about "gain" because its interests ran completely counter to the interests of the masses, the development of the productive forces and the direction of social development. Instead, it tried to cover up its selfish class interests with certain abstract, supposedly eternal ethical principles. The "benevolence and righteousness" propagated by Mencius belonged to this category. He said: "No man of

[9] *Shang Chun Shu* (a collection of the sayings of Shang Yang).

[10] "Talks at the Yenan Forum on Literature and Art," *Selected Works,* Eng. ed., FLP, Peking, 1967, Vol. III, p. 85.

benevolence ever neglects his parents, no man of righteousness ever puts consideration for the sovereign in the second place." Clearly, all such talk about "benevolence and righteousness" was meant to safeguard the interests of the slave-owning class and the patriarchal ruling order of the slave system as reflected in the saying that "the most valuable thing is to treat parents properly and well." "These cherishers of parents want selfishness to be the Way,"[11] said Shang Yang who called it "the way leading to violence" and "the root of all evil." Shang Yang hit the nail on the head and bared the real meaning of the "benevolence and righteousness" of the Confucians.

The debates between "force and benevolence" and between "righteousness and gain" were closely linked. The Warring States Period, as the name shows, was full of wars. Chairman Mao has said: **" 'War is the continuation of politics by other . . . means.' When politics develops to a certain stage beyond which it cannot proceed by the usual means, war breaks out to sweep the obstacles from the way."**[12] Was it possible for the new emerging landlord class to wipe out the armed forces of the regimes

[11] *Shang Chun Shu.*

[12] "On Protracted War," *Selected Works,* Eng. ed., FLP, Peking, 1967, Vol. II, p. 153.

based on slavery, seize political power and bring about the unification of the whole country under feudalism without "strengthening its military power" and going to war? Impossible! The Legalists unequivocally affirmed the need for strengthening military power and waging war. "Eliminate war with war,"[13] the clarion call by Shang Yang, embodied a most brilliant concept. But Mencius slandered the Legalist policy of strengthening military power and waging the feudal wars of annexation necessary for unification as "rule by force," "bellicosity" and "blood-thirstiness." This only showed his opposition to revolutionary violence and progressive war. The fact is that he, like Confucius, went from place to place encouraging reactionary armed "punitive expeditions," inciting the restorationist forces of the slave-owners to seize back power by armed force, and instigating counter-revolutionary armed intervention against the regimes of the newly rising landlord class. Mencius went all out to prettify these "punitive expeditions." He said: " 'Correction' is when the supreme authority punishes its subjects by force of arms," and "imperial correction is but another word for rectifying." These words showed him up as a dyed-in-the-wool slave-owner tyrant who talked about "rule by benevolence" but practised "rule by force."

[13] *Shang Chun Shu.*

Following his unbridled attacks on the Legalist line, this diehard Mencius, who went against the trend of history, said threateningly to the Legalists that if they kept on doing things the way they did and refused to change their political line, their government would not last for a single day even if they succeeded in conquering the country. History, however, could not be turned from its course by Mencius' subjective will. The political power of the rising landlord class did not rapidly collapse. Instead, it was further consolidated, and the State of Chin, the most resolute in carrying out the Legalist line, marched in the van of the times. Like the doomed slave-owning class itself, Mencius' counter-revolutionary bluster was mercilessly swept away by the surging tide of history.

"Man Is Good by Nature" — a Reactionary Theory of the Declining Slave-Owning Class

During the Spring and Autumn and the Warring States periods, uprisings by the slaves and reform movements by the newly emerging landlord class put an end to the slave system. They also rocked the ideological system of the slave-owning class

built around the theory of the "will of Heaven." This brought about a marked development of materialist thinking. But to safeguard the slave-owner ideology, Mencius combined the "theories" of the "will of Heaven" and of "human nature," supplementing the former with the latter, and proclaimed "the unity of Heaven and man." On this basis he concocted an ideological line that was idealist and even more reactionary and deceptive, called for "exerting one's mind to the utmost" and proceeded from there to "knowing human nature" and finally to "knowing the will of Heaven."

Mencius' theory that "man is good by nature" was an elaboration of the idealist theory of knowledge he inherited from Confucius and Tzu Szu.[14] He contended that "there is no man who is not good" and that "the feeling of commiseration belongs to all men; so do the feelings of shame, respect, right and wrong." At the same time, however, Mencius repeatedly stressed that this "good nature" had been "discarded by the common people but preserved by the superior men" and that precisely such "good nature" was the source of benevolence, righteousness, propriety, wisdom and other ethical concepts of the slave-

[14] Tzu Szu was Confucius' grandson, and Mencius was Tzu Szu's student.

owning class. Clearly, in Mencius' view, only the slave-owning class possessed this inborn "good nature." And it was outstandingly manifested, he preached, in the "ancient kings" and "wise ministers" of the slave-owning class who "had hearts that cannot bear to see the sufferings of others" and were capable of running "a government that cannot bear to see the sufferings of others," that is, "a government of the 'Kingly Way.' " Supposedly they possessed "intuitive ability" "without acquiring it by learning," and "intuitive knowledge" "without acquiring it by thinking," were therefore "always the first to know and become aware," and were "born rulers" appearing only once in several hundred years. Here it can be seen that Mencius' theory, "Man is good by nature," was simply a hodgepodge of the slave-owner class theories of the "will of Heaven" and "human nature," a reactionary concoction aimed at opposing the line of the "rule of law" advocated by the rising class of landlords.

Chairman Mao says: **"In class society there is only human nature of a class character; there is no human nature above classes."**[15] The concepts of good and evil fall under the category of moral prin-

[15] "Talks at the Yenan Forum on Literature and Art," *Selected Works,* Eng. ed., FLP, Peking, 1967, Vol. III, p. 90.

ciples and differ with different classes. What is thought good by the exploiting class is bound to be seen as evil by the exploited class. And what was considered good by the emergent landlord class during its rise was bound to be regarded as evil by the moribund and decadent slave-owning class. The reverse was also true. In order to consolidate feudal rule, the new emerging landlord class had of necessity to suppress resistance by the erstwhile slave-owning aristocrats; so from the standpoint of the Legalists, this was "good" and a meritorious deed. Shang Yang said: "To support the king, there is nothing better than a thoroughgoing enforcement of the law. In enforcement of the law, nothing is more urgent than the elimination of evil persons." And by "elimination of evil persons" he meant first of all the suppression of the slave-owners who opposed the feudal system. In Shang Yang's opinion, they could not be regarded as "good" and it was necessary to wield dictatorship over them.

Mencius, who devoted his whole life to counter-revolution, judged everything in society by the criterion of the "good nature" of the slave-owner class. Anything that conformed to the interests of this declining class he saw as "good" and supported wholeheartedly; all that did not, he saw as "evil" and feverishly opposed. When Tzu Chih, a minister of Yen (one of the major ducal states of the time, in what is now northern Hopei Province), held the reins of government and instituted feudal reforms, Mencius regarded this as a sacrilege against the slave system, calling for stern suppression. So he rushed from the State of Lu to the State of Chi where he rabidly instigated its prince to follow the example of King Wen and King Wu of the Chou Dynasty and send punitive forces against the State of Yen to support its diehard forces and suppress the rising landlord class. At the bidding of Mencius, his follower Kuang Chang personally led the Chi army in intervention against Yen. Tzu Chih was captured and barbarously chopped to pieces. Thus the promising political reforms in Yen were drowned in blood. This incident thoroughly revealed the atrocious essence of Mencius' theory that "man is good by nature."

According to Mencius' idealist theory of knowledge, since man was good by nature, it was necessary to preserve and develop this "goodness" by avoiding influences from the outside world and concentrating on introspection. "One should preserve one's purity of mind and nourish one's nature," and thus attain "sincerity in introspection." Such "sincerity" was described by Mencius as a spiritual principle laid down by heaven, and the correct way for men was to strive to the utmost

to attain it. One must unceasingly "look into oneself" and diligently seek and expand the "traces of goodness" inherent in one's own mind. "Utmost sincerity" would enable one to communicate with "Heaven." A ruler who reached this highest state of mind would become a "sage," a "divine soul" with "every principle in my (his) mind" and the ruled would willingly "subject" themselves to his sway. All this was nothing but an attempt to prove philosophically that the slave system was "eternal" and immutable and that its restoration was "natural and rational." So vicious and poisonous was this whole creed of "self-cultivation" with "sincerity" as its core, as preached by Mencius, that all representatives of the reactionary classes such as Tseng Kuo-fan[16] and Chiang Kai-shek, and revisionist ringleaders inside the Party such as Liu Shao-chi and Lin Piao, cherished it as a treasure, the foundation for "building up a state" and a "prime mover" for their counter-revolutionary activities. They sought to use "sincerity" as a cover for their essential weakness, their barbarous and cruel reactionary rule, and their criminal plot to push a revisionist line and restore capitalism.

[16] Tseng Kuo-fan (1811-72) was a chieftain of the Hsiang (present-day Hunan Province) troops in the late Ching Dynasty. He was a traitor and murderer who colluded with foreign invaders to suppress the Taiping Revolution.

Mencius was a reactionary thinker in China's history who advocated the restoration of the old order against the newly established political power of a rising class. The reactionary doctrines, line and tactics he set forth have been taken over by Chinese reactionaries in all subsequent times in their plotting for restoration and retrogression. Today, under the conditions of the dictatorship of the proletariat, the toppled landlord and capitalist classes in China also use these reactionary wares of Mencius in launching their attacks on the proletariat. The ghost of Mencius stalks through Liu Shao-chi's sinister book on self-cultivation and the Lin Piao anti-Party clique's plan for a counter-revolutionary coup d'etat entitled *Outline of Project "571."* Like Mencius himself, all the other reactionaries of the past and the revisionist ringleaders inside the Party — all of whom wanted to go against the forward movement of history — were unable to escape the fate of being crushed under history's wheels.

The Mass Criticism Group of Peking and Tsinghua Universities

Lin Piao and the Doctrines of Confucius and Mencius

Lenin pointed out that in the acute struggle between the proletariat and the exploiting classes, **"the more varied the exploiters' attempts to uphold the old, the sooner will the proletariat learn to ferret out its class enemies from their last nook and corner, to pull up the roots of their domination . . ."**[1] The current vigorous struggle in China, the criticism of Confucius, is an important part of the criticism of Lin Piao, and is precisely a battle to pull up the roots of the latter's counter-revolutionary revisionist line. Lin Piao's dark lair

[1] "Fear of the Collapse of the Old and the Fight for the New," *Collected Works*, FLPH, Moscow, 1964, Vol. 26, p. 403. Translation revised.

was crowded with Confucian ideological trash, filled with its stench of decay. More and more facts show that the reactionary doctrines of Confucius and Mencius constituted an important source of Lin Piao's revisionism. Lin Piao and his crew invariably resorted to them in attempting to restore capitalism politically, tamper with the Party's theoretical basis ideologically, form a counter-revolutionary clique of deserters and renegades organizationally, and engage in counter-revolutionary double-dealing, intrigue and conspiracy tactically. Once Lin Piao's disguise was stripped off, he was exposed for what he was — a hideous, out-and-out devotee of Confucius.

Following Confucius' "Self-Restraint and Return to the Rites" to Restore Capitalism

Lin Piao's political line was a counter-revolutionary revisionist one, an ultra-Rightist line of restoration and retrogression. In his own words, it was "self-restraint and return to the rites." In less than three months, between October 19, 1969 and New Year's Day of 1970, Lin Piao and one of his diehard conspirators wrote four scrolls reading: "Of all things, this is the most important: to restrain oneself and return to the rites." "Restraining oneself

and return to the rites" was Confucius' reactionary programme to restore the slave system. In holding it as the most important of all his concerns, Lin Piao revealed his pressing, wolfish ambition to subvert the dictatorship of the proletariat and restore capitalism.

The last years of the Spring and Autumn Period (770-476 B.C.) saw a tremendous social change in Chinese history — from the slave system to feudalism. The whole country was in upheaval, the slaves were constantly rising in rebellion, the newly emerging landlord class was vigorously urging reforms and struggling to seize power from the slave-owners, and the old social order — "the rule of rites" — was on the brink of collapse. Taking the stand of the declining slave-owning class, Confucius slandered this excellent state of affairs as one in which "the rites were lost and music was ruined," and as "absence of right principles throughout the country," and put forward his reactionary political programme of "self-restraint and return to the rites." By "return to the rites," he meant suppression of the slave uprisings, opposition to the reform line of the Legalist School representing the rising landlord class, and the retrogression of society. He wanted to restore the order of the slave-owning society of the Western Chou Dynasty (c. 11th century-771 B.C.) in accordance with the

Chou rites, that is, to reinstate the dictatorship of the slave-owners in which "rites, music and punitive military expeditions were all decided by the Son of Heaven." He wished to "revive states that were extinct, restore families that have lost their positions, and call to office those who have fallen into obscurity," that is, to reinstate the overthrown slave-owner regime and the slave-owning aristocrats who had been deprived of their privileged status, so as to seize back power from the newly rising landlord class.

In a nutshell, Confucius' "return to the rites" meant restoration of the old order. Lin Piao also attempted a restoration. These two were similar in their counter-revolutionary nature and political needs. That was why Lin Piao seized upon the motto "self-restraint and return to the rites" and held that "of all things, this is the most important." His attempt at a counter-revolutionary coup d'etat and the *Outline of Project "571"* furnish the best demonstration of the real content of his "return to the rites."

Lin Piao's "return to the rites" meant the subversion of the dictatorship of the proletariat which he and his gang hated rabidly, as they did the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution. They slandered the dictatorship of the proletariat, which protects the people and suppresses the enemies, as

"enforcing the laws of the emperor Chin Shih Huang" whom they attacked. They vilified the principle of continuing the revolution under the dictatorship of the proletariat as "manufacture of contradictions." They did their utmost to smear and negate the tremendous achievements of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution and wantonly calumniated the new things that have emerged in its course. They slandered the excellent situation and the flowering of the socialist cause since the beginning of the Cultural Revolution as "a prevalence of crisis" and "stagnation," and our land of proletarian dictatorship as a dark and dreary place. In short, in their eyes, nothing in socialist new China conformed to their "rites." Like Confucius, they were all extollers of the past and reactionary advocates of retrogression.

Lin Piao's "return to the rites" was a bid to usurp supreme power in the Party and the state and restore the dictatorship of the landlords and comprador-bourgeoisie. In October 1969, when Lin Piao inscribed "self-restraint and return to the rites" on a scroll, he went on, in imitation of Mencius, to counsel his sworn followers: "This is most urgent." What did "most urgent" mean in fact? We shall see from what follows:

In the winter of 1969, Lin Piao hung on the wall near his bed a scroll in his own handwriting: "No

ruler of any dynasty can surpass King Wen of Chou. . . ." Impatient to realize his dream of becoming an emperor, he styled himself a "sovereign" and compared himself to "King Wen."

In 1970 Lin Piao repeatedly resisted Chairman Mao's instructions and produced his anti-Party political programme, clamouring that "if the state has no head, the titles will not be correct and words will not carry weight." Desperately anxious to become "head of state," he conspired to usurp Party leadership and seize state power. Subsequently, he started a counter-revolutionary coup d'etat, which was smashed, at the Second Plenary Session of the Party's Ninth Central Committee.

In 1971 Lin Piao and his crew concocted a plan for an armed counter-revolutionary coup d'etat entitled *Outline of Project "571."* They were impatient to seize political power throughout the country and embarked on the coup in September that year.

These facts fully prove that the prime purpose of the Lin Piao anti-Party clique's "return to the rites" was to seize supreme power in the Party and the state. This is what was "most urgent" in their counter-revolutionary strategy.

The class content of Lin Piao's "return to the rites" was the reinstatement of the overthrown landlord class and the bourgeoisie and the estab-

lishment in China of a fascist Lin family dynasty. Confucius had clamoured that he wanted to "revive states that were extinct, restore families that had lost their positions, and call to office those who had fallen into obscurity." Lin Piao and his crew took over this reactionary slogan, and rabidly proclaimed their desire to "give political liberation to all" enemies of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

In a word, by picking up and feverishly waving Confucius' tattered banner of "self-restraint and return to the rites," Lin Piao attempted to fundamentally alter the Party's basic line and China's socialist system, subvert proletarian dictatorship and restore capitalism. However, all this was no more than an idiot's daydream.

Chairman Mao has said: **" 'Lifting a rock only to drop it on one's own feet' is a Chinese folk saying to describe the behaviour of certain fools. The reactionaries in all countries are fools of this kind."**[2] And Lin Piao was precisely such a reactionary. He had intended to ascend the throne as a vassal-king under the "nuclear umbrella" of his master — Soviet revisionism, but instead crashed to his death in the desert. Holding the ragged banner of "self-restraint and return to the rites," he travelled right

[2] "Speech at the Meeting of the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. in Celebration of the 40th Anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution."

to the end of the blind alley of **"Make trouble, fail, make trouble again, fail again . . . till their doom,"**[3] there to report his arrival to Confucius.

Using the Reactionary Philosophy of Confucius and Mencius to Oppose Dialectical and Historical Materialism

For the purpose of restoring capitalism, Lin Piao had not only a counter-revolutionary political line but a counter-revolutionary ideological line to serve it. The major source of the latter was the Confucius and Mencius' reactionary philosophy. In an all-out attack on dialectical and historical materialism, Lin Piao used the Confucian theories of "mandate of Heaven" and "innate genius" to oppose materialism, the Confucian "doctrine of the mean" to oppose materialist dialectics and the Confucian concept "virtue, benevolence, righteousness, loyalty and considerateness" to oppose the Marxist theory of classes.

Confucius preached "the mandate of Heaven," alleging that a supreme divinity called *"tien"* (heaven) was the creator of man and all things on

[3] Mao Tsetung, "Cast Away Illusions, Prepare for Struggle," *Selected Works,* Eng. ed., FLP, Peking, 1969, Vol. IV, p. 428.

earth, and controlled everything in Nature and in man's world. Heaven's will was irresistible. The slave-owners, like King Wen of the Chou Dynasty, had the power to rule the people because they had the "mandate of Heaven." Duke Chou[4] and Confucius himself also had the "mandate of Heaven" and so were "sages" endowed with "virtue" to "enlighten" the people. This religious, theological, idealist theory was concocted entirely for the purpose of preserving the dictatorship of the slave-owners. It was from this reactionary theory "the mandate of Heaven" that Confucius derived his apriorist idea that some persons were "born with knowledge" and his idealist conception that history was made by heroes. In his bid to usurp power and restore capitalism, Lin Piao laid hold of this idealist Confucian trash as a treasure. He wrote a scroll with the words: "The heavenly horse flies through the skies, solitary and free" and hung it in the centre of the wall at the head of his bed, comparing himself to "the heavenly horse" and describing himself as an exceptionally endowed person of dragon-like majesty, a superman, a genius sent by heaven to the world of man. In an

[4] The Duke of Chou whose personal name was Chi Tan established the rules and institutions upholding the dictatorship of the slave-owners of the Chou Dynasty. He was "the sage" most fervently worshipped by Confucius.

inscription addressed to one of his diehard co-conspirators, he described the "virtues" to which he and his band laid claim, as "an endowment from Heaven." Wasn't this the same stuff as Confucius' dictum "Heaven has endowed me with virtue"? For many years, Lin Piao and his diehard conspirators tried by every kind of lies and sophistry to palm off the theory of "innate genius" as Marxism. But to no avail. "An endowment from Heaven," these characters in Lin Piao's own handwriting, brand his theory of "innate genius" as a replica of Confucius' theory of "the mandate of Heaven." He clung to the theory of "innate genius," which was his anti-Party theoretical programme, because he wanted to prove himself a supreme ruler endowed with "Heaven's mandate."

Lin Piao argued that the "doctrine of the mean" (*chung yung*) was "rational." This exposed his true nature as a foe of the revolution and of dialectics. By *"chung yung"* Confucius and Mencius meant that everything should be done according to the "rites." The character *chung* meant being neither excessive nor deficient; the character *yung* meant conforming faithfully to custom. In a word, the "doctrine of the mean" required that everything should be done according to the old rules of the slave system, not allowing the least deviation or change. It was, and is, a metaphysical

theory for the use of reactionary classes in defending the old order and opposing all change. Yet Lin Piao constantly lauded it as "rational." Proceeding from this "rationality," he venomously reviled the struggle waged by the proletarian revolutionary line against the revisionist line as "excessive," "entirely Leftist," "going to extremes," "fighting in extreme ways" and "messing up the whole works." What a heap of labels! But it cannot tarnish in the slightest the brilliance of Chairman Mao's revolutionary line. It only demonstrates that Lin Piao clung to an ultra-Rightist line aimed at preserving the old system and its order and turning back the wheel of history. In his talk of "excess," Lin Piao was opposing the revolution with the Confucian "doctrine of the mean." Chairman Mao refuted this fallacy long ago, pointing out that **"a revolution is not a dinner party,"** and that **"proper limits have to be exceeded in order to right a wrong, or else the wrong cannot be righted."**[5] Lin Piao ranted about "messing up the whole works." Well, it is only the "whole works" of the bourgeoisie and the revisionists that have been messed up. Without messing their "whole works," we cannot destroy the old world

[5] "Report on an Investigation of the Peasant Movement in Hunan," *Selected Works,* Eng. ed., FLP, Peking, 1967, Vol. I, p. 28 and p. 29.

and create the new. Does it scare you that your "whole works" have been messed up? Well, this is only the start. There's still a lot to be done before all exploiting classes in the world are wiped out. The world outlook of the proletariat is materialist dialectics which **"is in its essence critical and revolutionary."**[6] Whether we foster new things to defeat old ones or use every means to save the old things from dying is the big issue in the struggle between the two lines. Theoretically, this struggle is bound to appear as one between materialist dialectics and metaphysics. Lin Piao used Confucius and Mencius' "doctrine of the mean" to oppose dialectics. This is one of the ideological roots of his reactionary ultra-Rightist line.

Lin Piao said that "virtue, benevolence and righteousness, loyalty and considerateness" as taught by the Confucian School were the principles of "human relations," and that this was "historical materialism." He also said that "loyalty which means treating people with benevolence, and considerateness which means tolerance and forgiveness — these are Confucian principles." He talked about "benevolence" in total separation from the class character of man, and about "human

[6] Karl Marx, *Capital,* "Afterword to the Second German Edition," Eng. ed., FLPH, Moscow, 1954, p. 20.

relations" in a way that erased class antagonism. Thus he used the Confucius and Mencius' reactionary theory of human nature to alter the theory of class based on historical materialism.

The theory of human nature preached by the Confucian School is hypocritical and idealist. It asserts an apriorist human nature that transcends class. Confucius alleged that "benevolence" meant "to love all men." Mencius claimed that man had an inborn "sense of benevolence," that "man is born good." Did they themselves really love all men without distinction of class? Not in the least. When the State of Cheng "killed to the last man" all its slaves who had rebelled, didn't Confucius commend the slaughter as "excellent"? Didn't Mencius make it a point to theoretically justify as a "universal principle" the exploitation and domination of slaves and labourers? Neither did these two love the newly emerging landlord class. As soon as Confucius took office as acting prime minister of the State of Lu, he killed Shaocheng Mao, a representative of the reformers. He also promptly expelled his own disciple Jan Chiu, broke off their relation as teacher and student, and instigated his other disciples to attack Jan Chiu for having served the newly emerging landlord class. These facts prove that the "human love" irrespective of class, "inborn benevolence" and other

notions advocated by Confucius and Mencius were just rubbish to fool the people. What they loved, in fact, was the handful of slave-owner exploiters and the reactionary system of slavery. Lin Piao also talked about "benevolence." But in his plan for a counter-revolutionary armed coup d'etat, the *Outline of Project "571,"* he viciously plotted to "devour" the proletariat at one mouthful, assassinate the great leader of the proletariat, overthrow the working people who are now masters of the country, and institute a fascist dictatorship. Those he and his crew loved were actually the handful of class enemies whom we have overthrown. Such is Lin Piao's "human nature," that is, the human nature of the landlord and capitalist classes. A chieftain of the Chiang Kai-shek gang said mournfully two years after Lin Piao's death: "Lin Piao . . . had relatively more human nature. Here is evidence of the Confucian ethic lying deep in men's hearts." This praise by the Chiang Kai-shek gang best explains what Lin Piao's human nature really amounted to.

On the one hand the reactionary classes feverishly preach the theory of human nature, dressing themselves up as "virtuous sovereigns" concerned for the people so as to hide their own man-eating features. On the other hand, they hoist the banner of "benevolence, righteousness and

virtue" to castigate revolutionary violence by the progressive classes. Didn't Confucius curse the newly emerging landlord class as "rebels with courage but without righteousness" and the insurgent slaves as "robbers with courage but without righteousness"? Mencius went even further. He hurled abuse at revolutionary violence, as "slaughter of men till the fields are littered with bodies," and "till cities are strewn with corpses," and as "devouring human flesh." He declared that it should be dealt with by capital punishment, shouting: "Death is not enough for such a crime." Lin Piao took over the mantle of Confucius and Mencius. With the reactionary theory of human nature as theoretical basis, he blustered: "He who relies on virtue will thrive and he who relies on force will perish." He cursed the dictatorship of the proletariat as "not benevolent." Chairman Mao has said: **" 'You are not benevolent!' Quite so. We definitely do not apply a policy of benevolence to the reactionaries and towards the reactionary activities of the reactionary classes."**[7] The proletariat must resolutely and mercilessly suppress all reactionary elements who dare to resist. Otherwise, our state will perish and the landlord and capitalist classes will be restored to power. Did

[7] "On the People's Democratic Dictatorship," *Selected Works*, Eng. ed., FLP, Peking, 1969, Vol. IV, p. 418.

not Lin Piao, under the camouflage of sham benevolence and righteousness, attempt to use counter-revolutionary violence to overthrow the dictatorship of the proletariat? In dealing with the counter-revolutionary violence of the reactionaries, we have no alternative but "do unto them as they would do unto us," and use revolutionary violence to suppress counter-revolutionary violence. We must uphold the Marxist theory of class struggle and the dictatorship of the proletariat and persist in the Party's basic line in order to continuously consolidate and strengthen the proletarian dictatorship. This is our conclusion.

Resorting to Confucian Tricks, Forming a Self-Seeking Clique, Engaging in Intrigues and Conspiracy

Lin Piao's political line and ideological line were revisionist. Organizationally, this inevitably led him to engage in splitting and form a self-seeking clique. Tactically, it inevitably led to double-dealing, intrigues and conspiracy. In order to entrench himself in the Party, and pull together his counter-revolutionary ranks while awaiting the opportunity to achieve his ambition of "return to the rites," Lin Piao directed his sworn followers and others to comb meticulously through the "Four

Books" and "Five Classics,"[8] the histories of China and other countries, and even novels and proverbs for material on ways of carrying out his counter-revolutionary conspiracies. All the tricks and double-dealing tactics piled up by the slave-owning class and the feudal landlord class became major ideological weapons in his splitting and plotting.

Confucius had said that to preserve the dying slave system, "a prince should employ his subjects according to propriety and subjects should serve their prince with loyalty," thus setting up the criteria for handling relations within the ruling clique of slave-owning nobles. Precisely these criteria were applied by Lin Piao within his anti-Party clique.

With Lin Piao, the adage "a prince should employ his subjects according to propriety" provided

[8] The "Four Books" — the four "canons" of the Confucians, namely the *Great Learning, Doctrine of the Mean, Analects of Confucius* and *Mencius.*

The "Five Classics" of Confucianism were — *Book of Songs, Book of History, Book of Rites, Book of Change* and *Spring and Autumn Annals.* Feudal rulers after the Han Dynasty gave them this collective name, and used them as an ideological tool to control the people.

The *Book of Songs* is China's earliest collection of songs. It was said that Confucius deleted some that were originally in the book.

The *Book of History,* also known as the *Shang Shu,* is a collection of political documents and records of history prior

the hypocritical pose. An out-and-out fascist dictator, he strained every muscle to establish his "absolute authority." He drew a line between those in and out of his favour on the principle — "those who obey me shall thrive, those who resist me shall perish." Yet he also sang tunes about "employing subjects according to propriety" and put up a show of "seeking wise men." In fact Lin Piao's "propriety" meant handing out official posts, promising special favours, inviting guests and giving them presents, wining, dining, and mutual flattery. In short, it meant using fame, gain and rank as lures to buy over a gang to serve his bid for a counter-revolutionary restoration. When his sworn followers were exposed by the masses, he

to the Spring and Autumn Period and the Warring States Period.

The *Book of Rites* contains the *Rites of Chou, Book of Ceremony* and *Records of Rites.* The *Rites of Chou* records the stipulations for government offices and functions of officials of the Chou Dynasty. The *Book of Ceremony* records the ceremonies for marriage, funeral, sacrifices and social intercourse during the Chou Dynasty. The *Records of Rites* contains essays on the subject by Confucians before the Chin and Han dynasties.

The *Book of Change* (*Yi Ching*), also known as the *Chou Yi,* was used for fortune-telling in ancient China.

The *Spring and Autumn Annals* were chronicles of contemporary history written in the State of Lu in the Spring and Autumn Period. Deletions and alterations were made by Confucius to safeguard the system of slavery.

used his position and power to shield and help them slip away unpunished. By "seeking wise men," he meant recruiting deserters, renegades and monsters, organizing a bourgeois headquarters and knocking together big and small counter-revolutionary "fleets" (Lin Piao's jargon for his secret agencies — *Tr.*) to serve the needs of capitalist restoration.

Behind Lin Piao's preachments that "a prince should employ his subjects according to propriety" lay his real desire — that his sworn followers should be "subjects serving their prince with loyalty." Like all previous reactionary rulers, he used the idea of "loyalty to the prince" as the ideological pillar to maintain his rule in the counter-revolutionary camp. He lauded Confucius and Mencius' concepts of "loyalty and filial piety," such as "respect for superiors" and "obedience," and insisted that obedience be absolute. He forced members of his secret agencies to swear allegiance and "eternal loyalty" to the Lin family, father and son. Even when the downfall of his anti-Party clique was imminent, Lin Piao issued the counter-revolutionary order of "succeed, or die to preserve virtue," vainly calling on members of his counter-revolutionary "fleets" to go to their deaths as funerary offerings for his "Lin dynasty." These facts show that the Lin Piao anti-Party clique adopted the moral guidelines and virtues preached

by Confucius and Mencius as important organizational principles for their own ranks.

Lin Piao cherished Confucius' saying: "Want of patience in small matters confounds great plans." He copied it and hung it on the wall as a counter-revolutionary maxim. To the oft-repeated painstaking criticism and education given him by Chairman Mao and the Party Central Committee, he reacted by nursing hatred in his heart and waiting for the chance to counterattack. While plotting to usurp Party leadership and state power, he frequently reminded himself "to have patience" and not to permit the "foolhardiness of the common man" to confound his "grand design" of "return to the rites" and so "spoil the great plan of a lifetime." Behind his mask of "patience," Lin Piao was gnashing his teeth, sharpening his knife and watching how the wind blew as he pursued his aim. This was actually a repeat performance of Hu Feng's[9] counter-revolutionary trick of "seeking survival in forbearance."

[9] Hu Feng, a counter-revolutionary, engaged in anti-Communist activities in the service of the Chiang Kai-shek bandit army before the liberation. Later, he wormed his way into the League of Left-Wing Writers, covering up his reactionary record. After liberation he formed a small counter-revolutionary clique and continued his reactionary activities. In 1955 Chairman Mao launched a movement to suppress counter-revolutionaries. In it Hu Feng and his clique were thoroughly exposed.

Lin Piao treasured *tao hui*,[10] meaning the "stratagem of concealment," as the way to "seek survival in forbearance" and realize his "great plan." In March 1970 when his anti-Party clique was hastening to draw up its scheme to usurp Party leadership and state power, he directed one of his diehard co-conspirators to write the words "*tao hui*" in a notebook. And he himself copied a poem from the *Romance of the Three Kingdoms* that praised Liu Pei for deceiving Tsao Tsao[11] by this "stratagem of concealment":

> Forced to lodge for a time in the tiger's lair,
> The hero was alarmed when his ambitions were laid bare.
> Using a thunderclap to cover his fright,
> He temporized with a wit that was quick and bright.

[10] The characters literally mean covering up luster and hiding traces.

[11] The *Romance of the Three Kingdoms*, a long Chinese historical novel, takes its material from historical events between the later years of the Eastern Han Dynasty and the time of the Three Kingdoms (184-280). The author was Lo Kuan-chung who lived in the 14th century.

Liu Pei (161-223) was the founder of the Kingdom of Han (Shu) in the period of the Three Kingdoms.. Tsao Tsao (155-220) was the prime minister in the later years of the Eastern Han Dynasty and father of Tsao Pi who founded the Kingdom of Wei in the Three Kingdoms period. Tsao Tsao was posthumously given the title Emperor Wu Ti of Wei.

Here Lin Piao was maligning the proletarian headquarters as the "tiger's lair" and comparing himself to a "hero" who "lodges for a time" in such a "perilous place." This not only reveals him as a bourgeois careerist and conspirator nestling beside us. It also shows his fiendish character — the use of double-dealing tactics to disguise himself and cover up his counter-revolutionary aims while awaiting the opportunity to execute his murderous plan against the proletarian headquarters.

In order to disguise his real self, Lin Piao was quick to temporize as required by the occasion, and secretly formulated a series of counter-revolutionary double-faced tactics, taking warning from preachments of Confucius and Mencius that "calamity is bound to befall anyone who shows love for what others hate and hate for what others love." Lin Piao's adoption of such Confucian adages as "The great man need not be true to his words or consistent in his action," "Without telling lies one cannot achieve great things" and "Keeping a smile on your face" are, without adding a single word, sufficient to vividly expose this counter-revolutionary double-dealer who "never showed up without a copy of *Quotations from Chairman Mao Tsetung* in hand and never opened his mouth without shouting 'Long Live,' and who said nice things to one's face but stabbed one in the back."

Why Did the Revisionist Chieftain Lin Piao Seek Help from Confucius and Mencius?

Like past chieftains of opportunist lines, Lin Piao was a representative of the bourgeoisie within our Party and an out-and-out devotee of Confucius. People may ask: "Why did a representative of the bourgeoisie seek ideological weapons from the slave-owning and feudal landlord classes? And why do all revisionist chieftains within the Party invariably seek help from the doctrines of Confucius and Mencius?" This is a question worthy of attention.

That the revisionist chieftain Lin Piao and his like worshipped Confucius was not strange at all. It had deep class and historical roots.

Firstly, the devotion of Lin Piao and his crew to Confucius was closely linked to the historical characteristics and class status of China's bourgeoisie and especially big bourgeoisie, which they represented. In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the world was entering the era of imperialism and proletarian revolution. The Chinese bourgeoisie was then living in a semi-colonial, semi-feudal society, and this shaped its class traits right from the start. China's bourgeoisie was very weak economically and politically, and in the ideological and cultural sphere it did not, nor could

it establish an ideological system powerful enough to replace feudal culture. The big bourgeoisie, which came to dominance in old China, was the product of a combination of imperialism and feudalism, and its fundamental character was comprador and feudal. It always stubbornly supported and eagerly promoted the enslaving imperialist ideology as well as the feudal culture of Confucius-worship and Confucian studies. In the period of the socialist revolution when the contradiction between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie has become the principal internal contradiction in China, whoever wants to restore capitalism in China must exercise a feudal, comprador and fascist dictatorship in politics, and also seek weapons from imperialism and feudalism in the sphere of ideology and culture. Chen Tu-hsiu, Wang Ming, Liu Shao-chi, and their like who represented the interests of the Chinese bourgeoisie, invariably reflected its class traits in their practice of revisionism and their resort to the doctrines of Confucius and Mencius. This was the more true of Lin Piao who came from a landlord-capitalist family and all along refused to remould his world outlook.

Secondly, in its historical roots the doctrines of Confucius and Mencius arose as the ideology of the declining slave-owning class — an exploiting-class ideology of a highly deceptive kind. Its essential

features were retrogression and opposition to progress, conservatism and opposition to reform, restoration of the old order and opposition to revolution. It was thus a doctrine of exploitation and oppression, and of counter-revolutionary comeback. Later it was utilized by the decadent landlord class and the big bourgeoisie as well as by the imperialists who tried to vanquish China, becoming the dominant ideology in China's feudal society and semi-colonial, semi-feudal society for more than 2,000 years. It was used by all the reactionary rulers of China's past as a spiritual fetter to enslave the working people, and became the ideological weapon of all reactionaries conspiring for a comeback and opposing communism. Because all past reactionary rulers energetically advocated and enforced the teaching of the doctrines of Confucius and Mencius, they froze into a traditional concept rooted in the ages and penetrating into every sphere of old China's social life. All reactionaries who wanted to push back the clock of history in China invariably took up the tattered banner of Confucius-worship and used the doctrines of Confucius and Mencius in every possible way to deceive and befog the masses. So it is not surprising that all the chieftains of opportunist lines in our Party who opposed the revolution and advocated retrogression should also have

revered Confucius. The revisionist chieftain Lin Piao was a big party tyrant and big warlord who did not read books, newspapers and documents and had no learning at all. Yet he tirelessly collected quotations from Confucius and Mencius and preached their doctrines, because his reactionary thought accorded with theirs. And this in turn was entirely determined by his counter-revolutionary nature as a restorer of capitalism and his vicious desire to use reactionary traditional ideas in an effort to subvert proletarian dictatorship and restore capitalism.

With the deepening of the movement to criticize Lin Piao and rectify the style of work, it became necessary to criticize the doctrines of Confucius and Mencius and ideas that exalt Confucianism and oppose the Legalist School. The current struggle in China to criticize Lin Piao and Confucius is a life-and-death struggle between the two classes and the two lines and an event of paramount importance for the entire Party, the entire army and the people all over the country. Not to criticize Confucius and ideas that exalt Confucianism and oppose the Legalists is, in effect, not to criticize Lin Piao. A deep criticism of the doctrines of Confucius and Mencius and of these ideas is of great significance for the thorough exposure and criticism of the ultra-Rightist nature of Lin Piao's

revisionist line, for strengthening education with regard to ideological and political line, for consolidating and expanding the achievements of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution and for doing a good job of the revolution in the superstructure. Under the leadership of Chairman Mao and the Party Central Committee, we must display the thoroughgoing revolutionary spirit of the proletariat and win new victories in the struggle to criticize Lin Piao and Confucius!

Kang Li

Confucius and Lin Piao Were Political Swindlers

Wang Ming, Liu Shao-chi, Lin Piao and other opportunist ringleaders of their kind were political swindlers. At root, their venerable teacher in China was precisely Confucius. Therefore, the study of that ancient swindler may help us better to spot political swindlers of the Lin Piao type.

Such men are generally full of tricks. While cheating people, they put on a show of perfect honesty and deep seriousness, solemnly swearing to practise what they preach. Confucius and his disciples, though in fact downright liars, were always preaching good faith and truthfulness in speech and writing. In the *Analects* alone, the character "*hsin*" (信), which has this meaning, appears no less than 38 times. Let us cite just two,

"An insincere man cannot get on at all";[1] "If the people have no faith in their rulers, the state will not stand."[2] Such utterances were intended to prove that the speakers were men of their word. Another passage in the same work, however, relates how Confucius' disciples once became suspicious of the habitual disparity between the words and deeds of their master. To whitewash himself, Confucius purposely beat his breast and stamped his feet, exclaiming as if deadly serious: "Do you think, my disciples, that I conceal anything from you? There is nothing I do about which I am not open with you; — that is my way."[3] Yet in fact, Confucius and his kind were never honest. He himself openly contended that if a father stole a sheep, the son should conceal the theft. And vice versa, a father should conceal a crime by a son. This, Confucius said, was the true meaning of "uprightness."[4] Wasn't this the logic of an out-and-out political swindler?

Like all frauds of his type, Confucius saw in lying and double-dealing the secret of getting on in life. A disciple, Tzu Kung, asked him what qualities a man must possess to be worthy of the title of "officer." Confucius replied that only those who were filial sons and loyal to the slave system deserved it, while those "determined to be sincere in what they say, and to carry out what they do" were lowly and obstinate "small men,"[5] completely unqualified to be trustworthy officers for the declining slave-owner class. In short, in Confucius' mind, one had to cheat, — otherwise he could not be a "superior man" and a careerist.

Confucius also carried this rule into the relations between people in the same body or group. He said: "There are some with whom we may study in common, but they may be unable to travel the same path. Among those who can go along with us, some may not abide by the same rites. Among those who can abide by the same rites, some may not be trustworthy in sharing secrets and making crucial plans."[6] Thus, he believed that not even fellow partisans should trust each other, that it was necessary for them to suspect and deceive each other.

In later times, Mencius who had a real grasp of Confucius' preachings further expounded this kind of political juggling in the brazen-faced remark: "The great man need not be sincere in what he says

[1] *Analects,* "Wei Cheng."
[2] *Ibid.*, "Yen Yuan."
[3] *Ibid.*, "Shu Erh."
[4] *Ibid.*, "Tzu Lu."
[5] *Ibid.*
[6] *Ibid.*, "Tzu Han."

or carry out what he does."[7] This was naked advocacy of swindler-philosophy. The counter-revolutionary careerist and conspirator Lin Piao constantly pondered on this deceiver's art. Taking the above quotation as a sacred maxim, he included it in a collection of excerpts he painstakingly compiled from the "Four Books." And he further paraphrased it by saying: "He who tells no lies is bound to fall"; "Without telling lies one cannot achieve great things." From all this we can see that such political swindlers got by only by telling lies, and could not survive for a day without them.

Liuhsia Chih, the leader of a slave uprising in Confucius' day, denounced the latter to his face as a "crafty hypocrite," that is, a political swindler. Confucius' "crafty hypocrisy" was determined by the nature of the declining slave-owning class which he represented. A diehard upholder of the system of slavery, he devoted his life to championing the reactionary political line of "restraining oneself and returning to the rites." The counter-revolutionary double-dealing tactics he used were, when all is said and done, in the service of this reactionary political line. Confucius' attempts to stage a restoration and turn back the wheel of history

[7] *Mencius*, "Li Lou."

were unpopular in his time. Rejected everywhere like a stray dog during his travels from state to state, he could muddle through only by political deception. But when one cheats, some telltale signs are bound to peep out. So Confucius was often in a fix — having to explain inconsistencies between his own words and actions. According to the Confucian doctrine, Duke Chao of the State of Lu acted "contrary to the rites" (i.e., to propriety) by marrying a woman who bore the same family name. However, in order to defend the rule of the slave system, Confucius felt bound to defend the reputation of the head of state. So, lying in stubborn defiance of the facts, he vouched for the duke as a "superior man" whose actions "accorded with the rites,"[8] and justified the lie by quibbling that "a subject should conceal the misconduct of his king and elder kinsmen, and to do so is within the rites." From this one can see that Confucius deliberately passed off what he considered a clear violation of the rites as something that not only accorded with, but was itself a component part of these "rites." Here the falsity and deceitfulness of the so-called "rites" stare one in the face.

"To comply in public but oppose in private, to say yes and mean no, to say nice things to a person's

[8] *Analects*, "Shu Erh."

face but play tricks behind his back . . ."[9] This is precisely the image of double-dealing we see in Confucius. In public, he pretended to be a person uninterested in public office, saying: "I am not concerned that I hold no office; I am concerned that I do not know the rites and cannot stand firm in life."[10] And, "The superior man is anxious lest he should fail to attain truth; he is not anxious lest poverty befall him."[11] Yet in fact, Confucius became so vexed when he had been out of office for only three months that he complained: "Am I a bitter gourd! How can I be hung up instead of being eaten!"[12] He mouthed the words: "The superior man is sociable, but not partisan."[13] But in fact, he cultivated and trained a group of die-hard followers, forming a clique sworn to the restoration of the slave system. Among these men he did not permit even the slightest infraction of his purpose, shouting savagely about one of them: "He is no disciple of mine! My pupils, beat the drum and assail him."[14] This "sage," who chanted

[9] Mao Tsetung, "The Role of the Chinese Communist Party in the National War," *Selected Works,* Eng. ed., FLP, Peking, 1967, Vol. II, p. 208.

[10] *Analects,* "Li Jen."

[11] *Ibid.*, "Wei Ling Kung."

[12] *Ibid.*, "Yang Hou."

[13] *Ibid.*, "Wei Ling Kung."

[14] *Ibid.*, "Hsien Chin."

piously: "The benevolent man loves others," and "what good is it to resort to killing in running a government?"[15] had the reformist Shaocheng Mao put to death only three months after coming to power.

Concerning such double-dealing by Confucius and his followers, Lu Hsun made the biting remark: " 'The superior man keeps away from the cookroom.' This is a way to fool both oneself and others. The 'superior man' insists on eating beef, but he is so kind-hearted that he cannot bear to see a steer showing fear before the butcher. So he waits until its meat comes before him as a steak, which he slowly chews." "Then he eats it with peace of mind and grows animated. He picks his teeth, rubs his belly and says: 'Now I've got everything I want.' "[16]

Confucius was not only apt at double-dealing in politics, he was a shameless hypocrite in everyday life. Did he not advocate a three-year period of mourning for the death of one's parents? Yet while wearing sackcloth in mourning for his mother, he no sooner heard of a banquet at the house of Chi,

[15] *Ibid.*, "Yen Yuan."

[16] Lu Hsun, *Random Thoughts After My Illness.* For the quotation "The superior man keeps away from the cookroom," see *Mencius,* "Liang Hui Wang," Part I.

a *ta fu* (senior official) of the State of Lu, than he importunately rushed there. Lacking an invitation, he was thrown out by the footman Yang Hu who scolded: "Our lord has invited only men of distinction, not a nobody like you!"[17] Did he not stress the rite that persons of different sexes over seven years old should not be allowed to sit together? Yet he himself violated this taboo while in the State of Wei. Being eager to obtain an official post there, he went clandestinely to see Nan Tzu, the wife of the ruling prince. The moment he crossed the threshold, he prostrated himself before the woman, not daring to draw a breath. This low clownishness disgusted even his disciple Tzu Lu, which prompted Confucius to swear by heaven like a crier of quack medicines: "If I have any dishonourable intention, let lightning strike me!"[18]

Did Confucius not boast about his own character, "Riches and honours are like a floating cloud to me";[19] and "The object of the superior man is truth; food is not his object"?[20] Yet while minister of justice of the State of Lu, his annual salary was 60,000 *tou* of millet, a fabulous sum which

[17] *Historical Records.*

[18] *Analects,* "Yung Yeh."

[19] *Ibid.*, "Shu Erh."

[20] *Ibid.*, "Wei Ling Kung."

enabled him to live in a grand style. For his taste in food, "no grain can be too fine and no meat can be cut too small." In clothing, he wore a garment of black to match his lamb's fur; or one of white over fawn's fur; or one of yellow to go with fox fur. In short, his was the decadent life of a slave-owning aristocrat. So Li Chih (1527-1602), a progressive thinker of the Ming Dynasty, pointed out sharply that judging by the luxurious way Confucius lived, to say that the "sage" had no interest in riches and honours was deception. And the bourgeois revolutionary Chang Tai-yen (1869-1936) said on this subject: "The fatal weakness of the Confucians was their obsession with power and wealth." This is an apt delineation of the pharisaical character of Confucius with its cruelty and trickery. Yet 2,000 years and more later, Confucius' disciple Lin Piao learned all this by heart. He and one of his sworn followers eulogized each other as being "gentle, bold and wise." Yet in reality, they had become bourgeois and rotten to the core in their thinking, politics and way of living. Lin Piao's philosophy of life was completely that of the landlord-bourgeois class, and his inner world was as filthy and ugly as that of Confucius.

Confucius was a political swindler, and so were the scholars who were nurtured in his reactionary

doctrines and adept at all kinds of vicious and underhand tricks.

At the beginning of the Western Han Dynasty (206 B.C.-A.D. 23), the feudal rulers promoted policies advocated by the Legalist scholars. The first Han emperor Kao Tsu (206-195 B.C.) did not trust the Confucians, and the two following ones, Wen Ti (179-157 B.C.) and Ching Ti (156-141 B.C.) ruled along Legalist lines. Emperor Wu Ti (140-87 B.C.), however, accepted the proposal of Tung Chung-shu (179-104 B.C.) to "honour only the doctrine of Confucius and ban all other schools." But there were numerous dissenters from this policy at the time. Wu Ti, in fact, did not discriminate against the Legalists as such. Many of the officials he appointed, like Sang Hung-yang (152-80 B.C.), were adherents of the Legalist School. The situation then, in short, was that fittingly described by Emperor Hsuan Ti (73-49 B.C.): "Our dynasty has its own system, which mixes force and benevolence."[21] (By this he meant the mixture of Legalist and Confucian ways of government.)

And later, the more top posts went into the hands of the Confucian scholars, the lower the moral standards in official circles. The point is illustrated by a story about the Confucian scholar, Chen

[21] *History of the Han Dynasty.*

Wan-nien, who, in the reign of Emperor Hsuan Ti, had won the favour of Prime Minister Ping Chi by means of obsequious flattery and obtained the high posts of deputy prime minister and censor. Becoming ill, Chen Wan-nien called his son Chen Hsien to his bedside and set about educating him. The old man prattled on deep into the night. The longer he talked, the wearier the son became, and at last the dull droning put him to sleep. As he nodded, he hit his head against a screen, and raised a bump on it. Enraged by this impertinence, the father grabbed a stick to hit him, shouting: "I've tried so hard to teach you, but you slept through it without hearing a word. Just tell me why?" Thereupon the boy answered: "What you've been driving at is quite clear to your son. You instructed me, sir, how to get ahead by crawling and flattery."[22] A vivid revelation of the true colours of the Confucian scholars and Confucian high officials!

Among the rulers of the Western Han, Emperor Yuan Ti (48-33 B.C.) alone truly believed in Confucianism. While a prince, he had already frequently suggested to his father that Confucian scholars be entrusted with high posts. For that he was reproved by Emperor Hsuan Ti, who made

[22] *Ibid.*

the rueful criticism: "This Prince will mess up our family's endeavour!"[23] His appraisal of his son was later corroborated by facts. As an emperor, Yuan Ti proved to be stupid and concerned with face-saving above all else. An example was the wrong he did to his own tutor, Hsiao Wang-chih, a renowned Confucian scholar whom Yuan Ti had deeply respected and trusted. The eunuchs Hung Kung and Shih Hsien were feuding with Hsiao and reported that he had been "disloyal to the emperor" and, as such, deserved imprisonment. The document was written in such an obscure literary style that Yuan Ti lacked the learning to comprehend the phrase recommending imprisonment. Yet he pretended to understand and gave his approval without knowing what it would lead to. His mistake was quickly revealed when he found, with a shock, that his tutor had been jailed. But then he considered that to declare Hsiao innocent would amount to admitting his own fault in groundlessly punishing his own teacher. Such loss of face seemed to him irrevocable. All the more as he was further pressed by the two eunuchs not to reinstate Hsiao, saying that it was a Confucian principle to conceal the wrongs of a superior. So, to pretend his mistake had been correct, Yuan Ti dismissed

[23] *Ibid.*

Hsiao from government service. Later, this same emperor tried to demonstrate the respect due from pupil to teacher, and prepared to make Hsiao Wang-chih prime minister. But on the other hand, he again allowed himself to be taken in by the two eunuchs and finally sent Hsiao back to jail. The old man wept bitterly, turned his eyes skyward and, with a long sigh, took his own life with poison. When Yuan Ti was informed, he too shed tears and blamed the two eunuchs: "You have really killed my esteemed teacher."[24] But what did he have to grumble about? The murderer was himself, along with the Confucian doctrines he believed in. As for Hsiao Wang-chih, his death was deserved, for it was he who had taught and moulded the emperor Yuan Ti into a follower of the Confucian "way." And this, in turn, did unto him what he had done unto others. When the emperor employed the ideas Hsiao had taught him against Hsiao himself, the latter found it unbearable and set off for the nether world to seek and complain to the "holy sage" Confucius.

The reign of the emperor Yuan Ti was a turning point in the history of the Western Han Dynasty, which then began its constant political decline. The emperor Hsuan Ti, his father, had had no faith

[24] *Ibid.*

in Confucian scholars, whom he denounced with the words, "The vulgar Confucian scholars do not keep abreast with the times. They love to denounce the present and praise antiquity, and to blind people to the present realities which are far ahead of the old rites. They are not worthy of my trust!"[25] This attitude was completely reversed by Yuan Ti. The policy of honouring the Confucians and opposing the Legalists came to prevail. The result was continuous worsening of the political situation until the downfall of the Western Han Dynasty.

During the Eastern Han Dynasty (25-220), the feudal rulers pushed on with this policy and promoted Confucian studies. To be well versed in the Confucian classics became the shortcut to wealth and advancement. Hypocrisy and corruption became dominant among the literati. Take, for instance, the case of the Confucian scholar Hsu Wu. After qualifying as a *hsiaolien*,[26] he conspired with his two younger brothers to stage a sham settlement of the family fortune. The two juniors

[25] *Ibid.*

[26] *Hsiaolien* was a scholarly degree of the Han Dynasty. The candidates were recommended by various localities, on the basis of moral character, as being filial (*hsiao*) and incorrupt (*lien*). The degree was a prerequisite for government officials in the Eastern Han Dynasty.

made a show of respect for the elder brother by giving up all their claims in his favour. Their purpose was to be themselves recommended for the *hsiaolien* degree, on the basis of the good reputation gained through this fraud. When they had succeeded, Hsu Wu invited many guests to his house and revealed to them his "noble spirit" in taking a great risk for the benefit of his brothers, since he himself might have got a bad name for coveting their share of the legacy. This admission, in turn, boosted his reputation to a new high. From this example of "model behaviour" extolled by the landlord class, we can see that the Confucian scholars were a bunch of political cheats who stopped at nothing in seeking personal gain.

Similarly revealing is a story about another such scholar Chao Hsuan, who won the name of a paragon of filial piety after living in the tomb of his parents for more than 20 years in token of mourning. His fame spread far and wide, and the imperial court repeatedly solicited his service in the government, which he always declined, being thus exalted to an ever higher fame. Finally, however, it was discovered that he had fathered five sons in his "tomb" room, and the whole fraud blew up. As Lu Hsun rightly put it: "Feverish preachings on filial piety indicate that devotees of the virtue are rare, and the cause of this scarcity is

none other than the consistent promotion of sham morality."[27]

The working people of the Han Dynasty (206 B.C.-A.D. 220) kept exposing and condemning such hypocritical and shameless conduct by the Confucian scholars. As a doggerel verse of that time said: "Scholars can't even read; filial *hsiaolien* evict their Dads. 'Pure' officials are dirty as mud; famous generals are timid as chicks." The self-styled Confucian pure-souled scholars were just muck in the eyes of the common people. In fact, even progressive thinkers in the ranks of the landlord class detested their shameless pretence and hypocrisy.

In the Western Han Dynasty the Legalist Sang Hung-yang criticized the Confucian scholars as men who "confuse facts with lies, and praise ancient times to undermine the present." Under the Eastern Han, Wang Chung (c. 27-97) pointedly castigated the social mores then dominant: "The vulgar Confucian scholars of our time cling to the ancient rites, but well-nigh all are devoid of sincerity." In his work *Chien Fu Lun* (*Discourses of the Anonymous*), Wang Fu, a philosopher in the Eastern Han Dynasty (25-220), characterized the Confucian scholars of the Han Dynasty as men

[27] Lu Hsun, "How to Be Parents in Our Time."

"highly principled in words, but artful in deeds; with righteousness on their lips, but evil in their hearts. The deeds refute what they say, and they do not say what they think." In present-day language, they were double-dealers and political swindlers. Towards the end of the Han Dynasty, Tsao Tsao (155-220), who trusted the Legalists, hated the hypocritical and shameless Confucians with his whole being. Pledging more than once to "rectify the prevailing bad morals," he severely upbraided the Confucian scholars of the Han Dynasty for their foul practices. In the course of the feudal society of China, the landlord class turned from a real tiger into a paper tiger. Concomitantly with their decline, Confucius became the highest authority on ideological matters and could no longer be challenged. By the Sung Dynasty (960-1279), a school of moral theories emerged. It was called the Cheng-Chu School of Principles after Cheng Hao, Cheng Yi and Chu Hsi who developed it on the basis of the precepts of Confucius and Mencius. Although it was branded a "pseudo-doctrine" by court order at one time, this school nevertheless came to dominate the ideology of later periods of the Chinese feudal society.

Chu Hsi in particular, contributed most to the spread and depth of the poison through the two works he compiled — *Annotations to the Four*

Books and *An Outline History of China*, which expounded the Confucian doctrine and presented in most complete form the reactionary theories of the School of Principles. Being a true adept of the Confucian doctrine, this Chu Hsi was a typical double-dealer and hypocrite. He tortured a prostitute to exact a confession of scandal for use against a political enemy of his. Chu Hsi frequently lauded the "holy sage" by saying, "If Heaven had not produced Confucius, there would be eternal darkness." Yet when he learned that there was a site in the Chienyang county school which was excellent according to geomancy, he grabbed it for himself and, to clear the ground, he ordered the removal of a statue of Confucius. As the clay idol was being dragged away, its arms and legs broke off, and the whole incident created a tumult. Chu Hsi was also a tireless propagator of the maxim: "Of all the morals, filial piety is supreme." Yet he ill-treated his own aged mother by making her eat the stale rice while he himself gobbled fresh grain.

However, Chu Hsi was not the only shameless pharisee and veritable mean man of the Cheng-Chu School — the rest of its members and followers were no better. After his time, they were the swiftest to change sides when the Southern Sung Dynasty (1127-1279) was overthrown by the Yuan

(1271-1368). For this reason, the new dynasty also boosted the Confucian doctrine. The official history of the Sung Dynasty, compiled in Yuan times, devoted many pages to praise the Sung scholars of the School of Principles. Concerning these sham moralists, Li Chih of the Ming Dynasty said with biting sarcasm: "Outwardly, they clung to moral doctrines; inwardly, they coveted wealth and high posts. Clad in scholar's elegant garments, they behaved like low curs." Li Chih was a scholar who fought his way out of the Confucian camp to which he had once belonged. As such, he was well informed on its dark secrets, which prompted him to compare its adepts with swine and dogs.

All the double-faced, hypocritical behaviours of Confucius and his followers through the centuries constituted a reflection of the desperate methods adopted by dying classes. That is why all such classes plotting restoration and retrogression have revered and learned from Confucianism and prostrated themselves before this supreme master of political swindling. The bourgeois careerist and conspirator Lin Piao was Confucius' true disciple. He took over the entire legacy of deception of Confucius, Mencius, Chu Hsi and company. He was a double-dealer and pharisee "who never showed up without a copy of *Quotations from Chairman Mao Tsetung* in hand and never opened his mouth

without shouting 'Long Live,' and who spoke nice things to your face but stabbed you in the back." Lin Piao personally compiled a collection of excerpts from the Confucian "Four Books," which he copied, recited and acted upon. He publicly praised Chu Hsi's "philosophy of handling people." For a long time, he posed as a "hero" who "had firm faith in Marxism-Leninism." In reality, he was a sham Marxist, a political swindler. Lin Piao's counter-revolutionary double-dealing was exposed by his quotation of a poem from the *Romance of the Three Kingdoms*. The poem goes:

> Forced to lodge for a time in the tiger's lair,
> The hero was alarmed when his ambitions were laid bare.
> Using a thunderclap to cover his fright,
> He temporized with a wit that was quick and bright.

Here, Lin Piao used the metaphor "tiger's lair" to mean the socialist new China where he had been "forced to lodge," only to bide his time to stage a counter-revolutionary coup d'etat to restore the dictatorship of the landlord and bourgeois classes and massacre the people. His ambition was so wanton that it could not be "laid bare," so he could only plot with his handful of sworn followers in dark corners. How to conceal his true aim? He borrowed the stratagem of "temporizing with a

wit that was quick and bright." As the situation changed, he would make a turn accordingly. By such endless opportunism, he deceived the people and the Party, using his "temporizing" on the surface as a subterfuge to "cover up" his unchanging bourgeois careerist nature. He had a bone-deep hatred for the revolutionary Chinese people who, under the leadership of Chairman Mao, are persisting in following the socialist road and criticizing revisionism and Confucianism. It was the class hatred which the landlords, rich peasants, counter-revolutionaries, bad elements and Rightists harbour against the proletariat and working people. In Lin Piao, it found its concentrated manifestation in the *Outline of Project "571,"* his plan for a counter-revolutionary armed coup d'etat.

But, just as Chairman Mao has said concerning diehard reactionaries, **"they always have many schemes in hand, schemes for profiting at others' expense, for double-dealing, and so on. But they always get the opposite of what they want. They invariably start by doing others harm but end by ruining themselves."**[28] This was the logical end neither Confucius nor Lin Piao were able to escape. As the movement of criticizing Lin Piao and

[28] "New-Democratic Constitutional Government," *Selected Works*, Eng. ed., FLP, Peking, 1967, Vol. II, p. 413.

Confucius deepens, thorough criticism and condemnation of the hypocritical ways of Confucius and his followers may enhance our ability to see through sham Marxists such as Lin Piao and his like, and help us to carry the socialist revolution in the superstructure through to the end.

Yu Fan

Bankruptcy of Lin Piao's Counter-Revolutionary Tactics

— A Repudiation of His Sinister Notes

The big party tyrant and big warlord Lin Piao, who read neither books nor newspapers and was devoid of any learning, had a way to hide in dark corners to sum up his counter-revolutionary experience and plan the line and tactics for his counter-revolutionary activities. A passage in the notes of his behind-the-scene talks records that he said: "The doctrine of the mean . . . is rational," then enumerated six points of "attention," namely: "Stand on the Left side," "Boldly combat the ultra-Left trend of thought," "Resolutely combat the Right deviation," "Unite with the majority of those people who have a vacillating political stand and wrong ideas," "Disintegrate indirect allies" and "The stratagem of concealment." In his copy of

the well-known big Chinese dictionary, *Tzu Hai*, he made similar marginal comments beside the entry "doctrine of the mean," adding: "All this together amounts to a correct line."

Here we have excellent texts from which to learn by negative example. Analysis of this material can greatly widen our field of vision and help us distinguish more clearly the ugly true face of the bourgeois careerist, conspirator and counter-revolutionary double-dealer Lin Piao. It adds to our understanding of the ultra-Rightist essence of his revisionist line and of his whole bag of tricks of "saying nice things to one's face while stabbing one in the back."

These notes of Lin Piao's clandestine talks were taken between April 1969, when the Ninth National Congress of the Communist Party of China was held, and August-September 1970, the time of the Second Plenary Session of the Party's Ninth Central Committee. By then, the revisionist report he had cooked up in collusion with Chen Po-ta to present at the Ninth National Congress had been rightly rejected by the Party's Central Committee. Instead, the Ninth Congress adopted the political report drafted under Chairman Mao's guidance, reaffirmed the Party's basic line and policies for the entire historical stage of socialism, and proclaimed the total bankruptcy of Liu Shao-chi's

bourgeois headquarters. Lin Piao's scheme, too, came a cropper. And it was precisely at this juncture that Lin Piao and a sworn follower inscribed for each other, within a period of three months, several scrolls bearing the Confucian saying: "Of all things, this is the most important: to restrain oneself and return to the rites" as a way of expressing their opposition to the line laid down at the Party's Ninth National Congress. Their vain attempt was to act on the Confucian precept, "Revive states that are extinct, restore families that have lost their positions, and call to office those who have fallen into obscurity," in order to usurp leadership in the Party and state, and push for retrogression and capitalist restoration. What Lin Piao set down in his sinister notes was the counter-revolutionary line and set of tactics he had devised for realizing his criminal schemes. It was the broad generalization of his counter-revolutionary experience accumulated over many years. It represented the line and set of tactics followed by Lin Piao and his crew in their frenzied attacks on the Party and people during and after the Second Plenary Session of the Ninth Central Committee of the Party.

As recorded in the notes, Lin Piao's first point of "attention" for his sworn followers was: "Stand on the Left side," meaning, as the notes explained,

to assume "a firm, high Left-wing posture." The emphasis on the "posture," and on its being both "firm" and "high," was really insistence on the necessity for disguise, and skilful disguise, not sparing a few tears to make it more convincing. If we tie in this self-exposure with Lin Piao's actual behaviour throughout the years, things become all the clearer. His practice of "never showing up without a copy of *Quotations from Chairman Mao Tsetung* in hand and never opening his mouth without shouting 'Long Live' " was in fact the "posture," the false appearance, a hoax. Beneath it lay the truth and the essence — his vain attempt at "self-restraint and return to the rites," that is to say, at subversion of the proletarian dictatorship and restoration of capitalism. All this enables the revolutionary people to discern still better the despicable features of the counter-revolutionary double-dealer Lin Piao, helps them learn the lessons of the class struggle and the struggle between the two lines, and further improves their ability to distinguish between real and sham Marxism.

One of the main characteristics of revisionism is that it opposes Marxism under the cloak of Marxism. This disguise becomes all the more essential under the dictatorship of the proletariat in China where Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought has become the acknowledged guiding

ideology of the Party, the army and the people, where Chairman Mao's proletarian revolutionary line predominates, and where Chairman Mao and the Party Central Committee are held in high esteem by the people of the whole country. Here, if the revisionists did not so mask themselves, they could hardly get by for a single day. Lin Piao's purpose in pretending to be a man of the Left, a revolutionary, was precisely to cover up his counter-revolutionary revisionist line. Chairman Mao says in his preface to "Materials Concerning the Hu Feng Counter-Revolutionary Clique": **"Counter-revolutionaries in disguise conceal their true features by giving a false impression. But since they oppose the revolution, it is impossible for them to cover up their true features completely."** Sham is sham. Disguises will not last long, and sooner or later they are bound to be exposed. And the more high-flown the "posture," the more fully will the reality be exposed and the quicker and more complete will be the collapse. The ignominious end of Hu Feng, and of Lin Piao, proves the validity of this law.

"We judge a person not by what he says or thinks of himself but by his actions,"[1] Lenin pointed

[1] *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism*, FLP, Peking, 1972, p. 257.

out. In the open, Lin Piao mouthed some revolutionary phrases and assumed a "high Left-wing posture." In secret, he indulged in counter-revolutionary scheming. He was, in reality, an out-and-out ultra-Rightist. Coming from him, the words "Boldly combat the ultra-Leftist trend of thought" were just another expression of his long-standing opposition to revolution, progress and Marxism, and his stubborn pursuit of capitalist restoration, retrogression and revisionism — a flagrant declaration of his ultra-Rightist stand.

In the eyes of Lin Piao and company, to make socialist revolution was "ultra-Left," ran counter to the Confucian "doctrine of the mean" and therefore had to be rabidly opposed. That this view was explicitly made known within the Lin Piao anti-Party clique becomes perfectly clear from a reading of their notes and their *Outline of Project "571."* In these, they barefacedly attacked China's socialist system under the proletarian dictatorship, opposed the previous political movements to criticize the bourgeoisie and its agents, opposed the general line, the Great Leap Forward and the people's commune, and vilified our Party's principled struggle to uphold Marxism-Leninism against modern revisionism. They really bared their fangs, and their tune was exactly the same as that of the imperialists, revisionists and other reac-

tionaries abroad and of the landlords, rich peasants, counter-revolutionaries, bad elements and Rightists at home. They spouted the same reactionary nonsense as that uttered by Peng Teh-huai in his savage assault on the Party at the Lushan meeting in 1959.

The attacks of Lin Piao and company upon the "ultra-Left trend of thought" was in fact aimed mainly against the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution. Employing the most malicious language, they assailed it as "chaos" and "a mess," described the new things emerging in the Cultural Revolution as "a general mess-up" and rabidly attacked and undermined all that was new. This only proved their desperation and their inveterate hatred and mortal fear in the face of this revolution. They were shameless renegades from the proletarian revolution and proletarian dictatorship, reactionaries who were trying to pull history backward by protecting the old order of feudalism, capitalism and revisionism and everything pertaining to it. Their assaults are proof, from the opposite side, that **"the current Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution is absolutely necessary and most timely for consolidating the dictatorship of the proletariat, preventing capitalist restoration and building socialism."** If anything was "messed up," it was the antiquated conventions and customs of

capitalism and revisionism, with the result that the handful of counter-revolutionaries like Liu Shao-chi and Lin Piao were hauled into the open. A fine achievement! The revolutionary people everywhere applaud it warmly; only Lin Piao and his sworn followers, and the reactionaries at home and abroad whom they represent let out wails of pain.

Those who still maintain skepticism about the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution should draw a good lesson from the negative example set by Lin Piao. For he was the ringleader of those who consider it a "mess-up," and it was in his anti-Party clique that the reactionary trend of thought which negates the Cultural Revolution had its roots. We should make full use of Lin Piao, this teacher by negative example, as we carry on the struggle between the two classes and two lines, criticize the revisionist line and the Confucian doctrines which he pushed, further consolidate and expand the great accomplishments of the Cultural Revolution, stick to the socialist road and fight retrogression and capitalist restoration.

While going all out against what he called the "ultra-Left trend of thought," Lin Piao also ranted, with ulterior motives, about "resolutely combating the Right deviation." Why should this scamp, a Rightist of the first order, have set up a clamour in this vein? For the answer, let us look at the

actions of Lin Piao's anti-Party clique. Like his "opposition to ultra-Leftism," his so-called "opposition to the Right deviation" had its hidden meaning. In fact it was another tactic with which to oppose Chairman Mao's revolutionary line and carry out anti-Party activities. That is to say, Lin Piao dubbed as a "Rightist" anyone who implemented Chairman Mao's Marxist-Leninist line and opposed or disagreed with Lin Piao's revisionist line, anyone who adhered to **"uniting to win still greater victories"** and resisted Lin Piao's plot to create splits. It will be recalled that at the Second Plenary Session of the Ninth Party Central Committee, under Chairman Mao's leadership, the plot of Lin Piao and his crew to stage a counter-revolutionary coup d'etat was smashed by our Party. This struggle heightened the fighting spirit of the proletariat and deflated the arrogance of the Lin Piao anti-Party clique. Gnashing his teeth with hatred, Lin Piao railed at our victory as a "revival of the Rightist forces." Obviously he was trying to steal the revolutionary slogan of combating the Right deviation and employ it against the implementation of Chairman Mao's revolutionary line and policies, and using the label of "Right deviation" to mask his attack on the communists and the broad masses of proletarian revolutionaries who upheld

Marxism, revolution and Chairman Mao's revolutionary line.

What is Left, what is "ultra-Left" and what is a Right deviation? All are decided by the standard of objective reality and by class criteria, which Lin Piao and his crew cannot be allowed to wilfully distort or deny. Marxism holds that only those who promote the development of the objective world in line with its inherent laws are of the Left, are revolutionary. Only scientific knowledge, that is, **"the concrete, historical unity of the subjective and the objective, of theory and practice, of knowing and doing,"**[2] and a line based on such scientific knowledge are correct, accord with the laws of social development and move history forward. The basic line for the historical period of socialism set for our Party by Chairman Mao has been summed up from, and proved correct by, the practice of revolution. It represents the fundamental interests of the vast masses of the labouring people, and is a line for continuing the revolution under proletarian dictatorship, guiding our socialist revolution from victory to victory. To conscientiously carry out Chairman Mao's revolutionary line is to be truly on the Left. Opportunist lines **"are all characterized by the breach between the subjective and the objective, by the separation of knowledge from practice,"**[3] and incompatible with Chairman Mao's proletarian revolutionary line. "Left" opportunists run ahead of the given stage of the objective process of development, regard fantasies as truth and press for the immediate realization of ideals which can be reached only in the future. In action, they are adventurists. Right opportunists, on their part, fail to advance in accord with changes in objective circumstances and their understanding remains at the level of the previous stage. **"They simply trail behind, grumbling that it** [the chariot of society] **goes too fast and trying to drag it back or turn it in the opposite direction."**[4] This is true of all diehards and reactionaries. Lin Piao and company were precisely such reactionary diehards, vainly trying to push the chariot of history into reverse. Their so-called "opposition to the ultra-Left" and "opposition to Right deviation" were nothing but an effort to replace the objective truth with their idealist, reactionary world outlook, setting up retrogression and capitalist restoration as the standards. Thus, whatever ran contrary to their counter-revolutionary desire for restoration

[2] Mao Tsetung, "On Practice," *Selected Works*, Eng. ed., FLP, Peking, 1967, Vol. I, p. 308.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 307.

[4] *Ibid.*

was dubbed as either a surge of "ultra-Left trends of thought" or a "revival of the Rightist forces" and put in the category of things to be smashed. Here Lin Piao's revisionist fallacies and his fascist countenance of a rank party tyrant and warlord stand fully revealed.

Those who practise revisionism politically are bound to be splitters organizationally, and this is a common feature of all revisionist lines. Lin Piao's 4th and 5th points of "attention" were schemes for organizational splits. His so-called "uniting with the majority of those people who have a vacillating political stand and wrong ideas" was meant to scrape together counter-revolutionaries to serve as cannon fodder and be formed into counter-revolutionary diversionist groups. It had similar significance to the Confucian precept of "calling to office those who had fallen into obscurity." Working towards this despicable end, he resorted to every kind of trickery common among bourgeois politicians, such as corrupting people ideologically by flattery and favours, luring or bribing prospective adherents into his ranks by wining and dining, handing out gifts or official posts and making various promises. As for those who opposed him, he tried to disintegrate their ranks by spreading rumours and sowing dissension. Lin Piao thought that he could "unite an over-

whelming majority of people" by this means — wishful thinking at its crudest!

The people all over our country are determined to go the socialist road; the overwhelming majority stand on the side of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought and rally closely around the Party's Central Committee headed by Chairman Mao. Those who trail in the wake of Lin Piao and practise splitting and retrogression are but a tiny minority. Lin Piao's revisionist line predetermined his utter isolation within the Party, the army and the people as a whole. However, just like the Hu Feng counter-revolutionary clique, Lin Piao, this teacher by negative example, has provided a good lesson for those Party members who have committed ideological and political mistakes. **"What should be the attitude . . . when criticized? There are two alternatives: one is to correct their mistakes and to be good Communists, the other is to degenerate and even fall into the pit of counter-revolution. The second alternative really exists and counter-revolutionaries may be beckoning to them."**

The Party and the people are united as one — this is the fundamental guarantee of the victory of our cause, and this too proved the greatest obstacle to Lin Piao's attempt at capitalist restoration. His so-called "disintegration of indirect allies" was

meant to undermine revolutionary unity and split the revolutionary forces. In order to split the Party, the ranks of the cadres and the masses, he evilly divided the revolutionary ranks into "this force" and "that force" or the "upper strata" and "lower strata" in vain attempts to sow dissension. He recruited deserters and renegades to form a personal clique, and lined them up in the bourgeois headquarters he headed. But splittist intrigues are doomed to failure. In our Party's past, the chieftains of all other opportunist lines had also tried to split the Party, but none succeeded. Nor did Lin Piao succeed, but ended up by cutting himself off irrevocably from the Party and the people. History has proved that the Party members will not approve splitting, nor will the masses of the people. Through the exposure and criticism of Lin Piao and his anti-Party clique, our Party has become more united and stronger than ever; the power of the proletariat and revolutionary people has grown further and the proletarian dictatorship is more consolidated.

The last point mentioned in the sinister notes was the stratagem of keeping your real aims concealed, that is, intrigue and conspiracy. If there is anything new at all in Lin Piao's revisionist line and tactics, it is his brazen injection of such underhand methods into the sphere of political line and

tactics — this indeed is somewhat of a "new feature." Lin Piao, the bourgeois conspirator and careerist who had managed to worm his way into the Communist Party, well understood that in China, where Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought is deeply rooted in the hearts of the people and the proletarian dictatorship is more consolidated than ever, to usurp the Party leadership, seize state power and restore capitalism was not something to be done easily. He had to keep his "high aspiration" at restoration locked in his breast, furtively applying his "clever stratagem" of temporizing. When the tide of revolution blocked his restorationist attempt, he made a pretence of surrender to deceive the Party and the people so as to survive and "patiently" await future opportunities. That is to say, he tried to wear an honest face while secretly and assiduously sharpening his sword and keeping a close watch on the direction of the wind so as to try his hand again when the time came. Accordingly, he considered the revolutionary ranks, the Communist Party and the country under the dictatorship of the proletariat as a "tiger's lair" in which he was "forced to lodge for a time." This was his own admission to being a counter-revolutionary careerist and conspirator, a time bomb planted in the revolutionary ranks.

But, whoever intrigues and conspires is bound to fail and come to a bad end. There is no exception to this rule, either in modern or in ancient times, in China or elsewhere. Lin Piao rode to power as a result of his intriguing and conspiring, and met his end for the same reason. For several decades, while he was making his way up in the Party, his intrigues and conspiracies grew increasingly vicious and perfidious, in particular after the Ninth Party Congress. Then he went so far as to plot in dark corners for counter-revolutionary coup d'etat, and vainly attempted to murder our great leader, subvert the proletarian dictatorship and set up a hereditary fascist regime with the Lin family as rulers. But Lin Piao's plots, intrigues and conspiracy came to naught. He was merely courting his own ruin. As the saying goes: "With all your calculations and intrigues, you are too clever; they bring you no good but will cost you your life!"

Summing up the above, it becomes clear that Lin Piao's sinister notes give away his whole array of counter-revolutionary tactics. They record specific directions on a variety of topics ranging from the outward disguise of counter-revolution to its inner content, from counter-revolutionary slogans to concrete measures, from counter-revolutionary political demands to organizational line.

We see here the sinister programme of a conspirator and restorationist fanatic, the confession of a counter-revolutionary double-dealer! The wild ambition of Lin Piao and his sworn followers to restore capitalism and their underhand, insidious and hypocritical tactics are all down in those notes in black and white. Lin Piao called all this the "correct line." Moreover he topped it off with the so-called "doctrine of the mean." This not only reveals the ultra-Rightist essence of his revisionist line. It also exposes the reactionary and perfidious nature of the "doctrine of the mean" itself.

In fact, the so-called "doctrine of the mean" is one of counter-revolutionary restoration used by conspirators to deceive the people. The reactionaries of all periods of Chinese history, from Confucius' time onward, when approaching collapse and resorting to deception to restore the old order of things, have invariably put on smug airs and bragged that, while everyone else went to extremes, they alone had mastered the "doctrine of the mean." And only recently that old-line counter-revolutionary diehard Chiang Kai-shek was still teaching his son to study the "orthodox way and the method of the mind" advocated by the Confucian scholar Chu Hsi of the Sung Dynasty in his introduction to the *Doctrine of the Mean.* This so-called "orthodox way" is the doctrine of

restoration preached by Confucius and Mencius, and the "method of the mind" denotes intrigue and conspiracy under cover of the "doctrine of the mean." Lin Piao boosted "doctrine of the mean" as being "rational," and linked it up with his counter-revolutionary line and tactics. Clearly, just like Chiang Kai-shek, he took it as the "key to success" in counter-revolutionary activities. This is another proof that he was no Marxist-Leninist at all but a devotee of the doctrines of Confucius and Mencius, a renegade from proletarian revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Dirty and despicable counter-revolutionary deeds under cover of the "doctrine of the mean" — such is the common characteristic of the reactionaries. The chief proponents of the various opportunist lines within our Party, and in particular of the Right opportunist lines, all acted in this way. Examples are the "eclectic line in the light of the doctrine of the mean" put forward by Chen Tu-hsiu and Wang Ming's Right capitulationist line which advocated that antagonistic parties, armies and classes should "have regard for each other," "love and respect each other," and "show courtesy and deference to each other." Another instance was the fallacy spread by Liu

Shao-chi that struggle between the two lines should be conducted "in an appropriate manner" and that "going beyond the limit or falling short should be equally opposed." All came out of the same shop and bore the same features. Note that Chu Chiu-pai, a chieftain of the "Left" opportunist line, did not forget to recommend himself as understanding the doctrines of Confucius and Mencius when he knelt before the reactionaries in recantation and became a turncoat. All renegades of their ilk behaved in the same way because, like Confucius, although utterly antagonistic to revolution, they were afraid to show their counter-revolutionary features openly and so had to appear fraudulently as neither Leftist nor Rightist but "fair and impartial" and "alone correct." Actually, they were attempting to muddy the waters in search of opportunities for realizing their counter-revolutionary goals. Lin Piao's trickery was precisely of this sort. Engels long ago mercilessly exposed such swindlers by pointing out: **". . . today, the very people who, from the 'impartiality' of their superior standpoint, preach to the workers a socialism soaring high above all class antagonisms and class struggles — these people are either neophytes, who have still to learn a great deal, or they are the worst enemies of the workers — wolves in sheep's**

clothing."[5] Lin Piao was just such a wolf in sheep's clothing, a ferocious enemy of the proletariat and the revolutionary people. We must maintain high revolutionary vigilance against such swindlers and study seriously so as to gain a good command of Marxism and avoid being deceived by them.

Chairman Mao has profoundly enjoined us: **"Practise Marxism, and not revisionism; unite, and don't split; be open and aboveboard, and don't intrigue and conspire."** This is the criterion for distinguishing between the correct line and the erroneous line, and it is also a thorough exposure and deep-going criticism of Lin Piao's counter-revolutionary line and tactics. The sinister, counter-revolutionary notes of Lin Piao and company are a true record of their practice of revisionism, splittism, intrigue and conspiracy under cover of the "doctrine of the mean." To be sure, though true, it is a record not of success but of bankruptcy. History has brought merciless ridicule upon this group of counter-revolutionaries. When Lin Piao fled in panic to save his skin and tried to go over to the enemy in betrayal of the Party and the country, he was only courting his own ruin, and his

[5] *Preface to the Second German Edition of "The Condition of the Working Class in England"* published in 1892.

dream of restoring capitalism, along with his whole array of counter-revolutionary tactics, exploded like a soap bubble.

Liang Hsiao

Reflections on the "Discourses on the State Control of Salt and Iron"

— *the Great Polemic in the Middle of the Western Han Dynasty Between the Legalist and Confucian Schools*

Fierce contentions between the Confucian and Legalist schools went on continually over a very long period in China's history. The Conference on the State Control of Salt and Iron held in the year 81 B.C. (the sixth year after the young Emperor Chao Ti's succession to the throne left vacant by Emperor Wu Ti) was among the high points in these polemics. The issues it debated ranged from the political and economic to the military and cultural affairs of the time. The book *Discourses on the State Control of Salt and Iron* was the record of the conference, edited by Huan Kuan, a Confucian of the Western Han Dynasty. The essence of the struggle at the conference was whether to carry on Emperor Wu Ti's political line of consolidating

the unification of China and strengthening the centralized state system. The protagonists were Deputy Prime Minister and Censor Sang Hung-yang on one side, and the Minister of War, General Huo Kuang on the other. The latter, however, did not attend the conference in person, but spoke through his mouthpieces, Confucian scholars, holding the titles of *hsienliang* and *wenhsueh*.[1]

Sang Hung-yang was an outstanding Legalist who for several decades had served under Emperor Wu Ti and helped in framing and carrying out the important policies of the consolidation of centralized state and resistance against the attacks of the state's northern neighbours, the Hsiungnu. Huo Kuang came to power after the death of Emperor Wu Ti and quickly collected a personal clique. After a few years of meticulous preparation, he and his henchman Tu Yien-nien, (under the pretext of inquiring into the woes of the people) hand-picked some 60 Confucians from among the *hsienliang* and *wenhsueh* scholars from all parts of the country and had them brought to the capital, Changan, by horse-drawn carriages where the conference on salt and iron was at once called as

[1] *Hsienliang* (贤良) and *wenhsueh* (文学) were titles for Confucian scholars at that time. *Wenhsueh* was a generally applicable title, while *hsienliang* was only for scholars with official rank.

a sudden attack against Huo Kuang's opponents. At the meeting, the doctrines of Confucius and Mencius were lauded to the skies while Chin Shih Huang, the first emperor of the Chin Dynasty, and the Legalists were maligned. The purpose was, of course, to get Sang Hung-yang out of the way and change the political line of the deceased Emperor Wu Ti.

Sang Hung-yang, at the conference, stood courageously against the tide and, linking his argument with the actual struggle, thoroughly refuted his overwhelmingly numerous adversaries and threw these Confucian scholars into utter confusion. Neither the obvious pro-Confucianism of the editor of the *Discourses* nor the arrangement of the contents to give prominence to the bigoted and reactionary talk of these Confucian scholars can obscure the brilliance of the Legalists' thought that shines through in this work.

For over 2,000 years the Legalists have been attacked and slandered by reactionary forces in China, right up to the renegade and traitor Lin Piao, who also vilified them as the "school of punishments." So it is good for us to read the *Discourses*, and conscientiously sum up the historical experience of the contention between the Confucian and Legalist schools in the middle of the Western Han Dynasty, because it can help us to

better understand and criticize the reactionary nature of Lin Piao's adulation of Confucius and hostility to the Legalists, of his splittism and retrogression, and of his capitulationism and treason.

I

At the very beginning of the conference, the Confucians unleashed a vehement attack on the state control of salt and iron initiated in Emperor Wu Ti's time. At first sight, the issue appeared to be economic. In fact, there was vicious political intent. As this measure was important to Emperor Wu Ti's policy of strengthening the centralized state power and resisting the Hsiungnu, to discard it would destroy the material foundation underlying the entire framework of these internal and external policies of Emperor Wu Ti's.

The Confucians clamoured that the state control of salt and iron had violated the time-honoured principle that the state should "appreciate morality and depreciate profits; and prefer righteousness over wealth." They charged that it had made the government "compete with the people for profits," and greatly enriched the state to the detriment of the people, thus becoming a "plague" of the "entire society." Furthermore, they contended that "thriving at the top means exhaustion at the base,"

meaning that the policy had undermined farm production and damaged the vitality of the country. What impressive rhetoric! They spoke in the tones of an upright band seemingly concerned with the interests of the country and welfare of the common folk.

However, all their talk about "appreciating morality and depreciating profits, preferring righteousness over wealth" etc. was mere trash picked up from the arsenal of reactionary Confucian ideology. Confucius had constantly intoned: "The superior man thinks in terms of righteousness, the inferior man thinks in terms of gain."[2] This "righteousness of the superior man," so fervently promoted by Confucius, was in fact the reactionary spirit of restoring and safeguarding the slave system. It represented the extremely narrow personal interests of a cluster of moribund slave-owning aristocrats. His fierce attack on the "gain of the inferior man" was in fact directed against the political and economic interests of the newly emerging forces. The reactionary essence of the Confucian outlook on "righteousness" and "gain" lies precisely in this.

The Confucian scholars at the conference denounced "profit" in the name of "righteousness."

[2] *Analects,* "Li Jen."

But their real aim was to nullify Emperor Wu Ti's policy of the state control of salt and iron and discard the Legalist political line. Sang Hung-yang fought them tit for tat, openly stated his anti-Confucian Legalist stand, and asserted boldly and rightly that the policy was "of benefit to the country." Citing numerous historical facts, he lauded the Legalist reforms. Contrasting the achievements of Shang Yang with the failure of Confucius, Mencius and company, he pointed out that Shang Yang's reforms had rapidly built up the state of Chin till it was able to finally incorporate the six other Warring States and build a unified country. Confucius and Mencius' ceaseless talk about benevolence and righteousness, on the other hand, "had not brought security in times of danger, nor restored order out of chaos," — and in the end, they could do nothing to halt the downfall of the slave system. Such were the devastating blows Sang Hung-yang showered upon the concepts of "righteousness" vs. "gain" propagated by the Confucian scholars.

Did these Confucians want only to be righteous without regard to their personal interests? What a whopping lie! Confucius, Mencius and their followers had always been greedy and insatiable when it came to real, material interests. Didn't Confucius say: "When the young have wine and

food, they should set them before their elders."[3] Let us see the despicable actions by which Confucius "set an example." Once, when roving through the states of Chen and Tsai, he and his disciples were besieged and starving. The latter somehow got hold of some wine and meat. Confucius, putting his indisputable "rights" into practice without a moment's hesitation, grabbed a chunk of pork, sank his teeth into it and swilled it down with wine. Despite his proclaimed opposition to commerce, his tours were in fact paid for by the disciple Tzu Kung, a big merchant, and the bigger the sum the happier was the master. The Confucian scholars at the conference of iron and salt were indeed exactly as what Sang Hung-yang exposed them to be — crafty hypocrites "pure in words but dirty in deeds." Every one of them was zealous in promotion-seeking and money-grabbing. When these were temporarily beyond their reach, they, secretly envious of others' wealth, pretended to be disinterested. No sooner did an opportunity come their way than they would suddenly change into hungry wolves, striving to devour all they could. This was the true picture of their preference for righteousness over personal interests.

[3] *Ibid.*, "Wei Cheng."

These same Confucians had assailed the state control of salt and iron in the guise of "pleading for the common people," saying that the government was "competing with the people for profits." They wailed that the people could not afford ironware or even salt, that they had nothing but torn clothes against the cold and suffered affliction on a diet of coarse grain. This sounded as if the Confucians were really seeking the welfare of the working people. But it was all a fraud, for who would actually benefit from abolition of the state control of salt and iron? During the reign of Emperor Wen Ti when money mints, iron foundries and saltworks could all be owned by private individuals, a handful of leading regional lords and princes and commercial and handicraft slave-owners monopolized these trades. Their ill-gotten gains came from the labour of huge numbers of poor peasants and slaves, and some became "rich as the emperor" or "wealthier than the princes." Wielding tremendous economic power, these tycoons indulged in splitting, secession and rebellion and became the basic menace to unity under the centralized state. Clearly, the "people" whose interest the Confucians at the conference served were not the multitudes of working people, but these leading regional lords and princes and big commercial and handicraft slave-owners — the reactionary forces scheming re-

gional secession. The policy of the state control of salt and iron was aimed precisely at "competing for profits" with these interests, and this was objectively in line with the demands of history at that time. Sang Hung-yang's refutation hit at the sore point of the *hsienliang* and *wenhsueh* scholars with his vigorous denunciation: Gentlemen, he said in effect, if your ideas prevail, the despotic regional forces will be the only ones to benefit, and the state will be left powerless to do anything at all. Your arguments are designed to serve only the interests of the seditious regional forces by undermining the central government.

Indeed, when the Confucians clamoured for "abolition of the state control of salt and iron and the return of rights," they actually meant the destruction of the centralized power of the united feudal state, and return of their "rights" of splitting and secession. Such demands were merely a new edition of Confucius' old call, "Revive states that are extinct, restore families that have lost their positions, and call to office those who have fallen into obscurity." The only difference was that times had changed since Confucius' day. With the further advance of the class struggle, some elements within the landlord class, contented with the vested interests they had acquired, had turned into a big-landlord conservative force which had

begun to collude with the remnants of the slave-owning forces aiming at restoration. Sang Hung-yang's struggle against the *hsienliang* and *wenhsueh* Confucian scholars was a fight against both of these retrograde forces. He defended the strengthening of the centralized state achieved under the Legalist line in Emperor Wu Ti's reign, the forward movement of history and the unity of the country. Historically, when attacking reforms accomplished by the progressive forces, the reactionary forces have often posed as "pleading for the people." It is a favourite tactic of theirs. Flaunting this threadbare banner, Lin Piao and his crew viciously assailed the socialist revolution and socialist construction of China as leading to "a rich state but an impoverished people." In essence, like the *hsienliang* and *wenhsueh* scholars of the Han Dynasty, they in no way represented the labouring people, but were working in the interests of a small restorationist force overthrown by the revolutionary class.

These Confucian scholars were plain parasites who "roved around, ate without having to farm and clad without having to raise silkworms." Yet at the conference, they droned on about "better utilization of land by planting more mulberries and hemp." What a joke! Was it not clear as daylight which of the two schools, the Legalist or the Confucian, placed more stress on agriculture? The

Legalist Shang Yang had put heavy emphasis on farming and military affairs, giving agriculture great prominence in his policy. Chin Shih Huang decreed that landholders should report the area of their land so as to fix the amount of land tax. The result of this measure was that the feudal land-owning system was sanctioned by law on a nation-wide scale, pushing forward the development of agriculture at the time.

Emperor Wu Ti continued and developed this Legalist line. While laying stress on agriculture, he enforced the state control of salt and iron. The measure was detrimental only to the interests of the trading and handicraft slave-owners; its benefits were that it overcame the "shortage of state funds" and provided enough money for "border defence," "relief for the distressed and reserve against natural calamities." Sang Hung-yang, speaking at the conference, defended and expounded the Legalist concept of "stressing the fundamental while restraining the subsidiary," and refuted the fallacy of the Confucians that the suspension of the state control over salt and iron was the only way to "bring extensive benefit to agriculture." He pointed out that in running state affairs, it was necessary to have appropriate measures for both the fundamental and the subsidiary endeavours, so as to ensure the simultaneous growth of agriculture,

handicrafts and trade. He explained that without the handicrafts, farming implements would be in short supply; and without trade, there would be no exchange of goods. As a result, farm production would be impeded and public finance would be set back. Hence, he contended, Emperor Wu Ti's policy of state control of salt and iron, state monopoly of handicrafts and trades, and control of prices was in the interest of the growth of agriculture. The Confucians, however, advanced the slogan of "bringing extensive benefit to agriculture" in opposition to the state control of salt and iron. They did so solely in order to force the state to abandon its monopoly in handicrafts and trade, so that the commercial and handicrafts slave-owners could stage a comeback in both these fields, and step up their land-grabbing even more — which would undermine farming and sabotage the economic foundations of the centralized state.

Debates on internal policy at the conference were centred on the problem of whether the country was to stay unified or split apart. This had been the issue even since the abolition of the principalities and the adoption of the prefecture system in the reign of Chin Shih Huang. Liu Tsung-yuan's *A Dissertation on the System of Principalities*, written in the Tang Dynasty, provides an outstanding historical summary of the debate. Taking over the

policy of Chin Shih Huang, Emperor Wu Ti of Han acted to strengthen the centralized state power and safeguard the smooth implementation of the policy of the state control of salt and iron by resolutely suppressing the force of the regional despots. He decreed that slave-owners in trade and the handicrafts, as well as usurers, must report the value of their property for tax. When most did not comply, informing against them was initiated and encouraged. Those convicted of wilful concealment were sentenced to confiscation of property and hard labour. This brought wholesale ruin upon these slave-owners in the middle and upper brackets and the confiscations amounted to "hundreds of millions in property-values; thousands of men and women slaves; tens of thousands of *mu* of land in small counties and several times more in big counties."

As a result of continuous struggles, the material foundation on which the regional despots had relied in their rebellions was greatly undermined, and the centralized state of the emergent landlord class, initiated by Chin Shih Huang, was substantially consolidated. Throughout most of the 2,000 and more years of Chinese history since that time, our country has remained united. To this, Emperor Wu Ti and Sang Hung-yang made a definite contribution. By contrast, the renegade and traitor

Lin Piao followed in the footsteps of the *hsienliang* and *wenhsueh* Confucian scholars of the Han Dynasty when he wantonly attempted to undermine the unity of our great socialist motherland — completely violating the will of the people and the trend of history. Therefore, he could only end up being spat out and denounced by the people, and buried in obloquy by history.

II

In China's history, most reactionary forces of secession in internal politics have at the same time been capitulators in the face of foreign aggression. The Confucians at the conference on salt and iron were no exception. They vehemently attacked and slandered Emperor Wu Ti's policy of resistance to the aggression of the Hsiungnu.

Conjuring the ghost of Confucius, they cited their master's aphorism, "Put a high value on moral force and little on warfare," and branded the war of resistance against the Hsiungnu as "resorting to armed contention in disregard of morality." The war, according to them, should not have been fought in the first place, and occurred only because a few "busybody ministers" had talked Emperor Wu Ti into it. This was nothing but capitulationist twaddle.

With regard to any war, one must first distinguish whether it is just or unjust. The state of the Hsiungnu was a military regime based on slavery, lying north of the domain of the Western Han. It had a cavalry numbering scores of thousands, and oppressed and enslaved dozens of the surrounding smaller states, becoming the veritable tyrant of the North. Western Han was a state with a more advanced social system. Being a big and populous agricultural country rich in natural resources, it excited the appetite of its aggressive northern neighbour, who frequently made sudden marauding attacks along the northern frontier. This inflicted great distress on the people and constituted a serious menace to the Western Han Kingdom. **"In the final analysis, national struggle is a matter of class struggle."**[4] In this light, the contradiction between the Hsiungnu and Western Han was one between the slave-owning Hsiungnu aristocracy and the working people of Western Han, between the backward slave system and the newly emerging feudal system. Therefore the war against the Hsiungnu incursion in the Han Dynasty was a just war. Emperor Wu Ti held to the stand of resist-

[4] Mao Tsetung, "Statement Supporting the Afro-Americans in Their Just Struggle Against Racial Discrimination by U.S. Imperialism," August 8, 1963.

ance, appointed outstanding generals like Wei Ching and Huo Chu-ping who were both of slave origin, and finally won a protracted and arduous war. In this war against aggression, the united centralized state of Western Han mobilized its economic, political and military resources on a massive scale, which was a basic factor in ensuring its triumph. The state control of salt and iron played a particularly important part in raising war funds. The Confucians trotted out "disregard of morality" to denounce and reject this progressive and just war of national self-defence, thus fully exposing their "morality" as nothing but treason and capitulation. Sang Hung-yang refuted their nonsense which confused just with unjust wars. He pointed out that the war against the Hsiungnu was fought for national security, not for territorial aggrandizement, and that Western Han had raised "a righteous army to put down a tyrannical power," that is, to fight off the aggressor. Thus, Sang Hung-yang courageously defended Emperor Wu Ti's political line of resisting aggression and strengthening the centralized state power.

The *hsienliang* and *wenhsueh* scholars stopped at nothing in their efforts to generate reactionary public opinion against this just war. They spread defeatism through such gibberish as "resistance

will ruin the country," "territory is worthless," and so on. They stirred up fear of war and harped on the hardships and expenditure involved, saying: "After a big war it will take many generations to recover," "fields will be left untilled and towns abandoned," "mothers weep and wives mourn in bitterness," and so forth. After presenting the just war in such gloomy colours, they came out with capitulationist proposals: "truce and friendship between the two sovereigns," dismantling of the defence works of Western Han, and appeasing the Hsiungnu with large sums of money.

The crux of the unscrupulous vilification of this just war by the Confucian scholars was the attempt of the reactionary political forces they represented to surrender to the Hsiungnu aggressors as a way to achieving their fond dream of secession. To go to the class essence of the matter, they were trying to form a reactionary political alliance between the aggressive forces of the Hsiungnu slave-owners and the restoration forces of the Han slave-owners. Throughout the 100 years and more from the founding of the Western Han Dynasty to the conference on salt and iron, the menace of collusion between internal and external reactionary forces to subvert the centralized state was ever-present. At the start, Prince Hsin of Han, Prince Chen Hsi

of Tai and Prince Lu Wan of Yen all conspired with the Hsiungnu and turned into shameful traitors to Han. In the Rebellion of the Seven States during the reign of Emperor Ching Ti, the Princes of Wu, Chu and Chao likewise conspired with the Hsiungnu. When Emperor Wu Ti was engaged in the war of resistance against the Hsiungnu, the regional despots "nursed sedition in their hearts." And no sooner had Emperor Wu Ti died than the reactionary forces represented by these scholars launched their frantic attack at the conference on salt and iron. Clearly the struggle between two lines — of surrender or resistance — had not ceased, but was in full blast.

This piece of history teaches us: All secessionists and advocates of retrogression, being unpopular and devoid of real strength, are bound to seek hidden masters outside. Taking help from foreign aggressors, they subvert the unity of the country and become traitors. Lin Piao and his crew, in their bankrupt attempt at "self-restraint and return to the rites," became agents of the new tsars, the Soviet revisionists. Is this not the same old pattern?

At the conference on salt and iron, Sang Hung-yang was upholding the unity of the country and resistance to aggression, and from this standpoint, righteously refuted the capitulationist line of the

Confucians. He correctly summed up the historical experience of Western Han — its failure of securing peace with the Hsiungnu through a "policy of affinity" — and pointed out that the Hsiungnu state was "greedy and aggressive in nature," and "would sign a hundred treaties but keeps to none." Rather, it would perfidiously start an aggressive war whenever there was an opportunity. There was no room for illusions about such a ferocious enemy. The only way was to defeat it through an anti-aggression war — no moral persuasion would move or melt it. In this way, Sang Hung-yang stressed the necessity of preparing against war and aggression, declaring that without it there would be no way of coping with a sudden attack. Hence he called for a policy of keeping strong garrisons on the frontiers, getting them to till the land for self-support, and "building more walls and storing more weapons for defence." By being alert, he said, one could be master of the situation — otherwise the outcome would be enslavement to others. Sang Hung-yang argued that only by persisting in the just war "of right against wrong" could the aggressors be totally defeated and "fall like autumn leaves after a frost." His statements were a vigorous rebuttal to the Confucians who were trying to surrender, betray and subvert the country's unity.

III

The debate between the Confucian and Legalist schools at the conference reflected the sharp antagonism between two historical outlooks; it was a struggle between two lines of thought, one standing for historical retrogression, the other for innovation and progress.

The reactionary class stand of the *hsienliang* and *wenhsueh* scholars — their aim of upholding and restoring the system of slavery — determined that their outlook on history should be one of retrogression and return to the ancient ways. "Heaven changes not, likewise the Way changes not" — such was their stubborn belief. They propagated it as eternal principle that the state should "follow the ways of the three ancient kings" (Yu of the Hsia Dynasty, Tang of the Shang Dynasty and Wen of the Chou Dynasty). In other words, they wanted the slave system of the Hsia, Shang and Chou dynasties as the permanent pattern of society. In their eyes, the progress of humanity and change in society were both impossible and history should forever halt at a given point, while all monarchs should be in the cast mould of those three ancient kings. They were loud in praise of the time of Duke of Chou, when supposedly "officials, regardless of the degree of their sagacity, were all put to

good use in running state affairs." They insistently demanded "restoration of the ancient order" — i.e., the dictatorship of the slave-owners — and pictured conformists to the old ways and obstinate conservatives as sages and prodigies sent by heaven who were bound to prosper. But they viewed all persons working for change, which in their eyes could only make things worse from generation to generation, as heinous criminals "ignorant of the Way" and bound to perish. Clinging to this reactionary view of history, the Confucians at the conference showered curses on all the Legalists, from the forerunners to those of their own time. In particular, they were filled with hatred for Chin Shih Huang, the outstanding statesman of the emerging landlord class, and the famous Legalist Shang Yang.

Sang Hung-yang, as a representative of the landlord class in its ascendant period, sharply challenged this reactionary outlook on history. He maintained that to run a country successfully, it was necessary to proceed from realities and the demands of the particular situation. Indeed, he said, the reason why things flourished under those ancient kings lay precisely in the realism of their policies, which conformed to the conditions of their times. Therefore, he concluded, reforms were necessary when times changed. He esteemed highly

the historic achievements of the Legalists, pointing out that Shang Yang, "by reforming the laws and enlightening the people, brought great success to the state of Chin," thus "rendering meritorious services that made him a gigantic figure of lasting fame." He was particularly enthusiastic in praise of the outstanding merits of Chin Shih Huang who had "burned the Confucian books and buried the scholars" in resolute maintenance of the dictatorship of the landlord class and of the unity of China. With regard to the reactionary ideas of Confucius and the counter-revolutionary restorationist activities of the followers of Confucius and Mencius, Sang held that the action of Chin Shih Huang in "rejecting their ideas by burning their books and burying those persons instead of employing their service" was a giant step forward.

Praise for the past to decry the present and insistence that "things are worse now than before" are the common trait of all reactionary forces that assail revolutions and progressive causes. Ideologically, such views stem from a reactionary outlook on history, committed to retrogression and opposed to change. In order to smear the present, the reactionaries have to beautify the past and falsify history. That is precisely what was done by the *hsien-liang* and *wenhsueh* scholars. They blackened the period of achievements that began when Emperor

Wu Ti initiated the policies of strengthening the centralized state and resistance against the Hsiung-nu, and ranted that everything was in a mess. At the same time, they described the rotten society of the slave system as a perfect, marvellous, unimaginably fine world, a world in which taxes were insignificant, labour service imposed by the state was kept to a minimum, and the labourer could "return home without having to change from summer to winter clothes," because the duration was no more than a season while the distance between his home and the place of such work was "a mere few hundred *li*." Moreover, according to them, in that world, there was no exploitation, no oppression, and the slave-owners "took only a fixed amount," never acting arbitrarily. In short, under the slave system, there had been "no excessive demands from those above, and no drudgery for those below," even the weather was always well-behaved, so that "three years farming produced one extra year's reserve," and "premature death and famine were unknown." What a paradise! Where in human history did such a society exist under slavery? A paradise, yes, but only for a handful of slave-owners — and to misrepresent it as the paradise of the "whole people" was nothing but the usual trick of all followers of Confucius and Mencius trying to restore the old order. When the *hsienliang* and

wenhsueh scholars "passed fine-sounding lies off as truths and praised ancient times to undermine the present," Sang Hung-yang saw clearly that their reactionary purpose in thus falsifying history was to nullify Emperor Wu Ti's policy of strengthening the centralized state and the dictatorship of the landlord class.

This bunch of retrograde Confucians also flew the threadbare banner of "return to the life of the ancients," chattering endlessly that people must emulate their ancestors in every way such as wearing coarse hempen clothes, eating rice lightly roasted and mixed with tares, living in thatched sheds or caves and making music when gay by beating on wood or stone, etc.

Did these scholars want to do this themselves? Another fraud! The Confucian classics themselves tell us: For the master's taste, "no grain can be too fine and no meat can be cut too small."[5] Confucian teachings abounded in such malodorous "points of etiquette." So how on earth could their devotees choose to live the primitive life? Sang Hung-yang was not fooled. He unmasked one of the main moral traits of the Confucians — their hypocrisy. He denounced *hsienliang* and *wenhsueh* scholars as hypocrites who paid lip service to every virtue, but were rotten to the

[5] *Analects*, "Hsiang Tang."

core inside, who were "dignified in appearance but greedy in soul," and who "felt one way but talked another." In a word, they were like sneak-thieves prowling around a house.

He further pointed out that these Confucian scholars' reactionary outlook on history was vivid proof of their utter hypocrisy, as well as their thorough decadence and "disharmony with the times." To completely refute these men who claimed Confucius as their "original master" and were fond of "chanting the words of the dead," Sang Hung-yang extended his ruthless exposure and profound criticism to Confucius himself. He reminded the scholars that this man Confucius, whom they worshipped as the great sage, was a person who could not sell his services in the State of Lu, was kicked out of the State of Chi, and was given no employment at all in the State of Wei. In the city of Kuang, he was besieged by the people who wanted to kill him, and in the states of Chen and Tsai, he was surrounded and prevented from obtaining food and drink. He was a fellow who "preached retrogression, knowing no one would accept his ideas — this shows his obstinacy; pursued fame and riches all the more when he met with obstacles, showing his greed; roved and talked regardless of the situation and the listener, showing his stupidity; and was insulted and thwarted

at every step yet clung to life, showing his lack of shame." These four words "obstinacy, greed, stupidity and shamelessness" draw a true-to-life picture of the moribund class character and reactionary world outlook of Confucius, founder of the school named after him. Sang Hung-yang's bitter denunciation was a vigorous salvo of criticism fired at "the sage" by the newly emerging landlord class coming after that by the outstanding revolutionary hero of the slaves, Chih of Liuhsia. These rebuttals ring with militancy even to our day.

Chairman Mao has pointed out profoundly with regard to all diehards that they **"cannot march ahead to guide the chariot of society; they simply trail behind, grumbling that it goes too fast and trying to drag it back or turn it in the opposite direction."**[6] The *hsienliang* and *wenhsueh* Confucian scholars at the Conference on the State Control of Salt and Iron in Western Han times, and Lin Piao in our own day, were diehards of this kind, with eyes growing out of the backs of their heads, able only to look backward but not forward. However, all plotters of restoration, all those who try to turn the clock back, end up badly and are inevitably crushed under the advancing wheel of history.

[6] "On Practice," *Selected Works*, Eng. ed., FLP, Peking, 1967, Vol. I, p. 307.

Tien Kai

Historic Struggles by China's Working People Against Confucius

"I take it no other people in the world know Confucius as well as the so-called ignorant mob in China do," said Lu Hsun.[1] Indeed, while the reactionary ruling classes exalted Confucius to incredible heights by honouring him with the awe-inspiring title of "the sage" and calling Confucianism "the Way of the sage," the labouring people did quite the opposite — they called Confucius (whose given name was Chiu and family name Kung) "Chiu the Robber" and branded the Confucian canons as "demon books." These two different attitudes vividly reflect the fundamental

[1] "Confucius in Modern China."

antagonism in ideology between the toiling masses and the reactionary ruling classes.

As a thinker who stubbornly upheld the slave system, Confucius in his words and deeds ran directly counter to the great historical current of the liberation of the slaves. No sooner had he appeared on the political stage and started his counter-revolutionary career than the slaves of his time waged a tit-for-tat struggle against him. This situation shows through in the *Analects*, a collection of Confucius' words and deeds. Furthermore, "Chih the Robber," a chapter in the work *Chuang Tzu*, vividly describes a face-to-face struggle against Confucius by Chih, leader of the insurgent slaves. Chih "had 9,000 followers assailing and doing violence to the nobles everywhere," which struck terror into the hearts of the slave-owning aristocrats so that "wherever they (the insurgent slaves) passed through the country, in the larger states the city walls were guarded and in the smaller the strongholds were manned." Using his ideas of "benevolence" and "morality" as a tool, Confucius tried to dissuade Chih from raising revolts and offending the upper orders. But Chih completely refuted him in debate, leaving him tongue-tied. Then, says the account, Confucius "went out at the door and mounted his carriage. Thrice he missed the reins as he tried to take hold of them. His

eyes were dazed, and he could not see"; his face was ashen and he made off in dire confusion.

The *Analects* records a dialogue between Tzu Lu, a disciple of Confucius, and an old man carrying a bamboo rake. "Tzu Lu said to him, 'Have you seen my master, Sir?' The old man replied, 'Your four limbs do not toil and you people do not know the difference between the five grains — what kind of master is he anyway?' " Hitting the nail squarely on the head, this critical remark exemplified the utter contempt of toilers for Confucius as an exploiter and parasite. Since then it has come into China's common parlance to describe the exploiting classes and their intellectuals.

The chapter "Chih the Robber" tells how, when Confucius sought a personal audience with Chih, the insurgent leader was filled with loathing at the very sight of such a creature, and, slamming the door, denounced him as a parasite who "gets his food without farming and his clothing without weaving."

To appropriate without working was in the very nature of Confucius and the slave-owning class he represented — and the existence of this non-labouring exploiter class was the root cause of the slaves' untold suffering. Himself an exploiter who neither farmed nor wove, yet wanted to eat and dress finely, Confucius concocted a whole series of re-

actionary arguments to justify exploitation and heap contempt upon manual labour. His "ideal" was for the exploiters to do nothing and get everything while the labourers did everything and got nothing. He said: "If the ruler loves propriety, the common people will not dare to be irreverent. If he loves righteousness, they will not dare to disobey. If he loves sincerity, they will not dare to hide what is in their minds. If he does all this, the common people will flock to him from all quarters, carrying their children on their backs. What need has he to know farming?"[2]

In the opinion of Confucius, no slave-owner need perform "menial" tasks such as farming because the people would submissively allow themselves to be exploited and oppressed provided that the slave-owners used "propriety," "righteousness" and "sincerity" to preserve their own rule and social order. The slaves, however, readily saw through this kind of statecraft designed by Confucius for the exploiters. They countered it by projecting their own ideal society in which people "farm to feed themselves, weave to clothe themselves and do not harm each other." Essentially, the slaves' opposition to Confucius was a reflection of their class

[2] *Analects*, "Tzu Lu."

demand: struggle against exploitation and oppression to win freedom and liberation.

Confucius' reactionary political stand — for restoration of the old order and retrogression to the past — also came under bitter attack by the slaves. In his day, the collapse of the slave system was already the overpowering trend. Yet he ran everywhere, trying to save the slave system from ruin under the slogan: "Revive states that are extinct, restore families that have lost their positions, and call to office those who have fallen into obscurity." This attempt at retrogression by Confucius aroused strong dissatisfaction and indignation among the working people. A doorkeeper of the time castigated him as a diehard ignorant of the times, "who knows that the trend cannot be turned back and still wants to do so." He was also mocked by two farmers, Chang Chu and Chieh Ni. When his disciple Tzu Lu asked them, as they tilled the land, about where a river could be forded, they replied: "The flood is everywhere under the sun. Who can go against it?"[3] In other words, the collapse of the slave system was like a great flood, no one could change this tide of history and Confucius, in his vain effort to do so, was really overreaching himself. Chih, the slave leader, was even more explicit

[3] *Ibid.*, "Wei Tzu."

when he angrily denounced Confucius for bragging about King Wen and King Wu, and pointed out that Confucius praised the past only for the reactionary purpose of condemning the present. In attempting to turn history backward and obstinately defend the evil slave system, Chih declared, Confucius was committing a heinous crime.

The slaves rejected the Confucian school of thought which had his concept of "benevolence" as its core. Chih announced without hesitation: "What Chiu says is what I mean to reject." Confucius saw filial piety and brotherly duty as the fundamentals of "benevolence," because if everybody held to them there could be no insubordination or rebellion. And it was precisely for this that Chih criticized Confucius' idea of "benevolence." Rallying facts to demonstrate the many crimes of the ruling slave-owner aristocracy, he exposed Confucius' talk about filial piety and brotherly duty as sheer deception of the people.

Basing himself on the interests of the slave class, Chih presented his own view of morality, diametrically opposed to Confucius'. He maintained that the slave-owners' appropriation of things without work was utterly immoral, whereas the rebellion of the slaves against the slave-owners to seize back these ill-gotten gains was the height of morality. While engaging in this just fight, he

said: "It is bravery to go in first, righteousness to withdraw last, wisdom to know the appropriate time, benevolence to be fair in distribution."[4] Thus Chih gave his own, new interpretations of the moral qualities of courage, righteousness, wisdom and benevolence.

From the words and deeds of Confucius, the slaves clearly saw that his political character was completely despicable and they fully exposed and criticized it. Confucius kept mouthing "benevolence," "righteousness" and "morality" all the time, bragged that "Heaven has endowed me with virtue (to govern the world)" and had the impudence to consider himself "the sage." But in the eyes of the slaves, he was merely an "artful deceiver," mean and shameless. Chih denounced Confucius as a reactionary politician "wagging his tongue to create trouble," "using lies and pretence to bewitch the rulers in order to seize wealth and position," a "crafty hypocrite" who "habitually praises people to their faces" and "also habitually abuses them behind their backs." These succinct words graphically portray his hideous true face.

Confucius, indeed, left no fine words unsaid while stopping at no evil deed. He talked abundantly about "love for man" and preached:

[4] *Lu Shih Chun Chiu* (3rd century B.C.).

"What good is it to resort to killing in running a government?" But only three months after coming into office, he executed Shaocheng Mao, a minister of the State of Lu who advocated reform. As for Chih, Confucius labelled him behind his back as a "scourge in the world." But to his face, Confucius said that Chih possessed the "three sterling qualities" of mankind (a tall handsome figure, ability to understand the world and bravery — *Translator*). Doesn't this show up Confucius as a double-dealer who flattered people to their faces and maligned them behind their backs? The way Chih unmasked Confucius can serve us as valuable experience for detecting careerists, conspirators and double-dealers in our own day.

Actuated by the class instinct of the reactionary slave-owning aristocracy, Confucius was extremely hostile to the slaves and went so far as to expressly malign the labouring people as "birds and beasts" "not fit to mix with." The slaves, naturally, rejected him with disdain and jeered at him wherever he went. For instance, he was detained by the local inhabitants when he travelled to Kuang (in present-day northeastern Honan Province), refused food when he went to the State of Chen (now eastern Honan and a part of northwestern Anhwei Province) and taunted as "a homeless dog with its

tail between its legs"[5] when he was in the State of Cheng (now central Honan Province south of the Yellow River, with its capital in present-day Hsin-cheng County). The insurgent slaves vowed that "when they died, they would be buried with iron cudgels in their hands," so that when they met the chieftains of the slave-owners like King Tang of Shang Dynasty and King Wen of Chou, they could smash in their heads with these implements. Even in death, they wanted to fight to the end against the slave-owning class represented by Confucius.

The revolutionary spirit of the slaves in their struggle against Confucius showed their determination to overthrow the evil system of slavery. It was their indomitable and heroic fight that shook the rule of slavery to its foundations and propelled the changeover of society to the feudal system.

In feudal society, however, the theories of social hierarchy and patriarchal ethics which Confucius employed to maintain the slave system were transformed by the intellectuals of the landlord class into the theoretical basis of feudalism and the spiritual weapon of the landlord class in its rule over the peasants. This is why in Chinese feudal society which lasted more than 2,000 years, all the peasants' revolutionary struggles from the time of

[5] *Historical Records.*

Chen Sheng and Wu Kuang (?-208 B.C.) to the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom (1851-64) invariably assailed Confucius and his reactionary ideology.

Chen Sheng and Wu Kuang, leaders of the first peasant uprising in Chinese history, posed the question: "Are the princes and earls, generals and ministers a special breed?"[6] They denied point-blank that "the king's authority is bestowed by Divine Rule" and thus in essence repudiated Confucius' idealist theory of the "mandate of Heaven" and his reactionary dictum: "The king is a king and the subject a subject."

Towards the end of the Eastern Han Dynasty, the insurgents known as the "Yellow Turbans"[7] proclaimed: "The God of Blue Heaven is no more. The God of Yellow Heaven will hold sway." Their desire to change the "heaven" of the landlord class into the "heaven" of the peasant class was a forceful repudiation of the Confucian School's idealist metaphysics with its assertion: "Heaven changes not, likewise the Way changes not."

During the peasant uprising at the end of the Tang Dynasty, the banner of "equality" was hoisted for the first time and its leader Wang Hsien-chih

[6] *Ibid.*

[7] The Yellow Turbans' Uprising: A peasant revolt in A.D. 184 in the late Eastern Han Dynasty. Led by Chang Chiao, the insurgents took their name from their headdress.

called himself the "Heaven-Sent Great General of Equality"; peasant uprisings in the Sung Dynasty raised the slogan "Eliminate the differences between the high and the low and between the rich and the poor"; the Red Turban insurgents at the end of the Yuan Dynasty[8] proclaimed their intention to "wipe out injustice"; and Li Tzu-cheng who led the uprising in the late Ming Dynasty (1368-1644) issued slogans which included "Equal distribution of land," and "No payment of grain tax." All these represented the Chinese peasants' elemental stand for equality and equalitarianism as they fought against the feudal system. Such ideas were clearly the very antithesis of Confucian ones, which upheld patriarchal hierarchy. So it was inevitable that all peasant uprisings through China's history directly or indirectly aimed their attacks at Confucius, the guardian-god of the feudal system.

The peasant rebels also defied Confucius, called the "sage" by the feudal ruling class, by direct revolutionary action. The uprising of the Red Jackets[9] broke out in the late Kin Dynasty

[8] So named because of their red headdress. Led by Liu Fu-tung, this peasant revolt broke out in 1351.

[9] The Red Jackets' Uprising: A peasant revolt in 1214 in the late Kin Dynasty. Led by Yang An-erh and Yang Miao-chen, the insurgents were named after the upper garment they wore.

(1115-1234). When one of its contingents led by Hao Ting took Chufu, birthplace of Confucius, they burnt the temple built to him there so that "half of the halls and sanctuaries, porticoes and corridors were reduced to ashes"; they also set fire to the three cypress trees said to have been planted by Confucius himself, thus venting their fierce hatred for him. In the middle of the Ming Dynasty, peasant insurgents led by Liu Lu and Liu Chi[10] again captured Chufu. Billeting themselves in the temple of Confucius for a night, they showed their fury at him and his ideas by grazing their horses in the "sacred place" and throwing into a cesspool the "Four Books" and "Five Classics" kept in the Kueiwen Tower (temple library). Peasant rebels also often dealt sternly with, and sometimes even killed, Confucian scholars who "quoted classics and history books" to oppose the revolution. Their blows at these counter-revolutionary intellectuals of the landlord class were in reality aimed at Confucianism which the latter tried to defend.

The revolution of the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom led by Hung Hsiu-chuan in the middle of the 19th century, the biggest peasant uprising in China, was

[10] Leaders of a peasant revolt in the early 16th century, the biggest of its kind in the middle of the Ming Dynasty. The insurgents three times fought their way to the vicinity of Peking, the imperial capital of the Ming Court.

at the same time a gigantic campaign against Confucius without precedent in China's history. One marked feature of this revolution was that from the outset, it expressly linked the overthrow of the system of feudal autocracy with the destruction of Confucianism, the spiritual pillar of feudal rule, through pointed criticism of both "the sage" and his reactionary thinking.

In the year following the conclusion of the Opium War,[11] Hung Hsiu-chuan, showing dauntless revolutionary spirit, smashed the "sacred" tablet displayed at the village school where he taught — bearing the title "The Most Perfect, Most Sage Ancient Teacher" conferred on Confucius by the Ching Court. This was an open challenge to Confucius and to the whole feudal system. Some time later, to help the peasants free themselves from the bondage of traditional feudal ideas, Hung Hsiu-chuan composed a story with the following content: One day, the "God-Emperor" sternly condemned the books of Kung Chiu (Confucius) as full of "misleading and wrong ideas" and leading people astray.

[11] In 1840, when the Chinese people opposed the opium traffic, Britain sent troops to invade China on the pretext of protecting trade. The Chinese armed forces commanded by Lin Tse-hsu fought a war of resistance. The people of Kwangchow spontaneously organized themselves into the "Quell-the-British Corps" (*Ping Ying Tuan*) which dealt heavy blows to the aggressor.

Kung Chiu tried to defend himself by specious arguments. Infuriated, the "God-Emperor" ordered a divine messenger to flog Kung Chiu who fell on his knees and kept begging for mercy. In this allegory, the "God-Emperor" was a personification of the revolutionary peasants fighting for liberation, and his denunciation and flogging of Confucius represented the ruthless criticism of the latter by the revolutionary peasants who thus sought to square accounts with "the sage." This story vividly exemplifies the resolute opposition to Confucius by the Taiping revolution.

Hung Hsiu-chuan wrote: "When an examination was made of the cause of all evil, it all traced back to the fact that Kung Chiu's books, which he used to teach people, were full of wrong ideas." He regarded the reactionary thinking of Confucius as the ideological root of all the evils of feudal rule. So the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom declared the canons of the Confucian School to be "demon books" and banned their reading. "All demon books by Confucius, Mencius and other writers and heresies by them are to be burnt. To buy and sell or keep and peruse them is forbidden, and any violation is punishable by law." After Nanking was made the Taiping capital, a special "office for the expurgation of the books" was set up under Hung Hsiu-chuan's personal auspices. The "Four

Books" and "Five Classics" of the Confucian School were examined and revised, in an effort to judiciously absorb from them anything that might be valid. The result was that only the sentence "All within the Four Seas are brothers" in the numerous volumes of the Confucian canon was found to agree with the revolutionary purpose of the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom. It can be seen from this that the Taipings were rather resolute in their criticism of Confucianism.

The Taiping Heavenly Kingdom published a series of works to expound the theories of the revolution and formulated a set of revolutionary policies and measures based on these theories. Among the revolutionary works were three written by Hung Hsiu-chuan at the outset of the revolution — *Yuan Tao Hsing Shih Hsun* (*Instructions to Awaken the World to Follow the Fundamental Way*), *Yuan Tao Chueh Shih Hsun* (*Instructions to Arouse the World to Follow the Fundamental Way*) and *Yuan Tao Chiu Shih Ko* (*Song of Saving the World According to the Fundamental Way*). They were followed by *Tien Chao Tien Mu Chih Tu* (*Land System of the Heavenly Dynasty*) promulgated after Nanking was made the capital and *Tzu Cheng Hsin Pien* (*New Proposals as a Guide to Government*) promulgated in the later period of the revolution. Thus the Taipings repudiated the reactionary

thinking of Confucius in both theory and practice and dealt the feudal system a heavy blow. By summing up the experience of the peasant uprisings in China's history, these works developed to a new height the revolutionary ideas held by her peasants from ancient times. They were spearheaded directly at the feudal-patriarchal ideology and system, and at Confucian thinking which was its theoretical basis.

Notable was the Taiping state's revolutionary advocacy of the emancipation of women; it uncompromisingly criticized the reactionary Confucian preachment that "men are superior and women are inferior" and fiercely attacked those shackles that kept women in bondage: the feudal masculine authority of the husband and the so-called "cardinal guides and constant virtues" of the Confucians.

Hung Hsiu-chuan said: "In the world, all men are brothers and all women are sisters." He stood for universal equality for all, including that between men and women. *The Land System of the Heavenly Dynasty* stipulated: "Land is to be distributed to everyone, regardless of sex." This was aimed at giving women economic equality with men. Women in the Taiping revolutionary ranks could take part in politics and hold official posts; they could join the army to fight side by side with men, and sit for civil service examinations. Thus

women were made men's equals politically, culturally and in military affairs. To raise women's social status, it was laid down in writing that "money should not be taken into consideration when marriages are being arranged," and marriage by purchase was banned. Prostitution and the keeping of household slave girls were prohibited. Evil customs that humiliated women, such as foot-binding, were abolished. The movement for the emancipation of women in the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom signified a new stage in the struggle of China's peasantry to break away from feudal-patriarchal rule.

The rejection and criticism of the Confucian thought by the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom, together with its resolute anti-Confucian revolutionary practice (burning down temples of Confucius, destroying the wooden tablets to his memory, expurgating the canons of Confucianism and banning its teachings), aroused panic and inveterate hatred in the feudal ruling class. Tseng Kuo-fan, the butcher who strangled the Taiping revolution, set up a howl: "All the proprieties, virtues, human relationships, classics and moral codes China has possessed for several thousand years are being discarded and swept away at one stroke. This is not just a disaster to our great Ching Dynasty but an unprecedented catastrophe to the renowned

[Confucian] faith, a disaster bemoaned by our Confucius and Mencius in the other world." Hence he called on all counter-revolutionary "gentlemen who cherish the Way" to "rise up in anger and act to defend the Way." The curses and dirges of the reactionaries showed by negative example that the Taiping campaign against Confucius had hit the feudal ruling class in a vital spot.

For more than 2,000 years, the working people of our country have advanced wave upon wave, new fighters taking the place of those falling in the battle, in their heroic and indomitable campaign against Confucius. It was an important component of their struggle against the decadent system of slavery and feudalism, a concentrated manifestation of that struggle in the ideological sphere. Where there is oppression, there is resistance; the greater the oppression, the stronger the resistance. This is a law of the class struggle. So the more the reactionaries exalted Confucianism, which defended class exploitation and oppression, the more resolute were the working people in their struggles against it.

Historically, the anti-Confucian struggles of the working people had different characteristics from those waged by the rising landlord and capitalist classes. Before they seized political power, and for a time afterwards, these exploiting classes repre-

sented the forward movement of society and wanted to change the old social system in order to establish and consolidate their own rule; hence they strongly opposed Confucian thinking which stood for restoring the old order and retrogression. Their repudiation and exposure of these aspects of Confucianism was often sharp, penetrating and of revolutionary significance. But they could not carry their criticism beyond these limits.

The working people, in contrast, besides exposing Confucius as a diehard restorer of the old, also unmasked him as an exploiting-class parasite. When the landlords and capitalists became the ruling classes and assumed a new position in history, they changed from real to paper tigers and, no longer demanding social progress but endeavouring to consolidate their own rule, gradually shifted from opposing Confucius to making a cult of him. But the working people, whose fundamental interests coincide with the direction of social progress and who are the decisive forces in social changes, have always stood in the forefront of the fight against Confucius.

The rising landlord and capitalist classes fought Confucius for the purpose of replacing the old systems of exploitation with new ones. The working people, who in their class position were exploited and oppressed, fought Confucius because they were

against all class exploitation and oppression. In their own class interests, they advanced the revolutionary idea of "equal distribution" as diametrically opposed to the Confucian theory of "benevolence and righteousness"; this was further than any progressive thinker of an exploiting class could go. In their struggle they raised such revolutionary slogans as "Equality for all without classifying people into high and low," "Eliminate the difference between the high and the low and between the rich and the poor." All these stood for their plain wish to eradicate the social hierarchy and ultimately all class differentiation.

Lenin pointed out: **"The idea of equality is the most revolutionary idea in the struggle against the old system of absolutism in general, and against the old system of feudal big landownership in particular."**[12] When the working people raised the call for elimination of differences between high and low, rich and poor, and for equality and democracy, their revolutionary nature determined that they would be more courageous and thoroughgoing than any thinkers of the exploiting classes in their criticism of Confucius' reactionary ideas of preserv-

[12] "The Agrarian Programme of Social-Democracy in the First Russian Revolution, 1905-07," *Selected Works,* Lawrence and Wishart Ltd., London, 1946, Vol. 3, p. 178.

ing the system of inequality. They closely linked the ideological struggle with the political struggle, criticizing Confucianism not only ideologically but by their revolutionary practice as well.

The criticism of Confucius by China's working people in the past had its own distinguishing characteristics as compared with that launched by progressive thinkers of the exploiting classes. But it, too, had limitations, both class and historical. Neither the slaves nor the peasantry were classes representing a new mode of production. Neither could project a new social system to replace the old, so it was impossible for them to use a world outlook based on science against that of the exploiting classes. It was impossible for them to unmask fully the class interests which Confucius represented, or to understand correctly the class content embodied in the struggle between the Confucian and the Legalist schools. This is why in their struggle against Confucius, despite the heavy blows they dealt at Confucius and his reactionary thinking, they were not able to inflict a final defeat on this thinking, or to replace it with something else. This task only the proletariat can accomplish. The proletariat is the greatest revolutionary class in history, and is carrying out **"the Communist revolution** [which] **is the most radical rupture with traditional property relations; no wonder that its development involves the most radical rupture with traditional ideas."**[13]

At the time of the great May 4th Movement, the Chinese proletariat entered the stage of history and became the leading class in our revolution. Guided by Marxism-Leninism, it began the new democratic revolution — thoroughly anti-imperialist and anti-feudal. A new chapter then opened in the Chinese working people's struggle against Confucius. The resounding militant slogan "Down with the Confucian Shop" was raised. Chairman Mao pointed out: **"The cultural revolution ushered in by the May 4th Movement was uncompromising in its opposition to feudal culture; there had never been such a great and thoroughgoing cultural revolution since the dawn of Chinese history."**[14]

After the May 4th Movement, a new cultural force armed with Marxism, presenting a new appearance, and armed with new weapons, made heroic attacks on the feudal culture of thousands of years represented by Confucian thinking; it displayed the thoroughgoing revolutionary spirit of the proletariat, making a rupture with all traditional ideas.

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[13] Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, Eng. ed., FLP, Peking, 1972, p. 57.

[14] "On New Democracy," *Selected Works*, Eng. ed., FLP, Peking, 1967, Vol. II, p. 374.

Our great leader Chairman Mao used the Marxist world outlook to penetratingly criticize Confucius' reactionary thinking, linking his criticism closely with the practice of the new democratic revolution, in a number of his works, including "Report on an Investigation of the Peasant Movement in Hunan," "The Orientation of the Youth Movement," "On New Democracy" and "Oppose Stereotyped Party Writing."

In "On the People's Democratic Dictatorship," written on the eve of the founding of the People's Republic of China, Chairman Mao made a sharp and clear-cut criticism of the reactionary nature of Confucius' so-called "policy of benevolence"; this work has become the programme of the Chinese people for consolidating the proletarian dictatorship. The criticism of the reactionary film *The Life of Wu Hsun* — the first major campaign on the ideological and cultural front led by Chairman Mao after the founding of the People's Republic of China, used iron-clad facts to tear away the hypocritical mask of the "Way of Confucius and Mencius," exposing the reactionary true colours of Wu Hsun: the big rascal, usurer and landlord who had served the whole landlord class and the reactionary government. This criticism was not only an attack on the bourgeoisie, it was also the first frontal battle against Confucianism in the period of

the socialist revolution. From that time on, the question of whether one makes a cult of Confucius or criticizes him has become a major element of the struggle on the ideological front in the period of the socialist revolution, the struggle between Marxism and revisionism, between those striving to consolidate the proletarian dictatorship and those scheming to subvert it.

Today's struggle is the continuation of that of the past. Picking up the mantle of history's reactionaries and raising the tattered banner of the Confucian cult and ideology, Lin Piao and his gang futilely tried to conjure back capitalism, using the corpse of Confucius as a talisman in their plot of counter-revolutionary restoration. Therefore, the broad masses of workers, peasants, soldiers and revolutionary intellectuals in our country, guided by Mao Tsetung Thought and carrying forward the revolutionary spirit of the working people's past struggles against Confucius, are making a thoroughgoing criticism of Confucius' reactionary thinking at the same time as they deepen the movement for criticizing Lin Piao and rectifying style of work. This has important immediate as well as far-reaching historical significance in consolidating the dictatorship of the proletariat and winning new victories for the socialist revolution in the superstructure.

Shih Chung

Historical Experience in the Struggle to Criticize Confucius During the May 4th Period

— Commemorating the 55th Anniversary of the May 4th Movement

Fifty-five years ago the revolutionary dawn of the May 4th Movement broke over semi-colonial and semi-feudal China, a land then enveloped in darkness. It marked the development of China's anti-imperialist and anti-feudal bourgeois democratic revolution to a new stage — the stage of the new-democratic revolution, led by the proletariat, had begun!

Early in 1919, soon after the end of World War I, the imperialist countries had called a conference in Paris to share the spoils and divide up the colonies among themselves. At this so-called Paris Peace Conference, they crudely rejected China's reasonable demand that the special rights held by imperialism in Shantung be abrogated. Reaching

China, the news infuriated the Chinese people who had long been oppressed by the imperialist and feudal forces. Thus arose the great May 4th Movement, erupting like a volcano.

On May 4, 1919, patriotic students in Peking held a rally on Tien An Men Square, followed by a mammoth demonstration. It raised demands for "upholding the sovereignty of the state in the international arena and punishing the traitors at home," and called for the overthrow of imperialism and the traitorous government. The movement soon spread to other parts of the country. Beginning June 3, workers in Shanghai and many other places staged strikes and demonstrations in quick succession. China's working class stood up like a giant and took the van of the struggle against imperialism and feudalism, displaying its mighty power. Under the impact of the actions by workers and students, the shops in China's major cities shut their doors. Thus the May 4th Movement expanded into a nationwide revolutionary surge participated in by the proletariat, the petty bourgeoisie and the bourgeoisie.

As the movement developed, a gigantic struggle to criticize Confucius was launched under the resounding revolutionary slogan "Down with the Confucian Shop!" With Marxism-Leninism as its weapon, a newborn cultural army of the proletariat

led all the allies it could unite around itself in valiant attack on the "Confucian Shop." The attack unmasked the hypocrisy of the so-called "benevolence, righteousness and virtue" peddled by Confucianism, vehemently denouncing its man-eating ethical code — the "Three Cardinal Guides and Five Constant Virtues."[1] The politically advanced intellectuals and the broad masses of students put out many progressive publications. Shouts of "Down with the Confucian Shop!" echoed through the land. The spearhead of this struggle of criticism and condemnation of Confucius was directed squarely at imperialist and feudal cul-

[1] The "Three Cardinal Guides" refer to the three reactionary ethical and moral principles set forth by Tung Chung-shu (179-104 B.C.), a representative of the Confucian School in the Western Han Dynasty. They were: Subjects should be guided by the sovereign, the son by the father and the wife by the husband. That is to say, the sovereign, father and husband had absolute authority, while subjects, son and wife could only obey. These principles were said to be the will of the heaven (divinity). Thus these "Three Cardinal Guides" represented political, clan, religious and masculine authority, which became the four thick ropes that continued to bind the Chinese people, particularly the peasants for more than 2,000 years. The "Five Constant Virtues" refer to the five so-called eternal principles, namely, "benevolence, righteousness, propriety, knowledge and sincerity." They were the reactionary moral concepts the Confucians used to support the "Three Cardinal Guides" and regulate society in accordance with them.

ture. Thus the politico-ideological foundations of reactionary rule were deeply shaken.

Why did the proletariat, as soon as it appeared on the political scene, choose the doctrines of Confucius and Mencius as the targets of its first hard blow on the cultural and ideological fronts?

Chairman Mao has pointed out: **"A cultural revolution is the ideological reflection of the political and economic revolution and is in their service."**[2] The criticism and condemnation of Confucius during the May 4th Movement period met the specific needs of the new-democratic revolution led by the proletariat, a revolution thoroughly and uncompromisingly opposed to imperialism and feudalism. The "Down with the Confucian Shop" battle was essentially a political and ideological struggle against imperialism and feudalism by the proletariat and the broad masses.

The doctrines of Confucius and Mencius constituted an ideological system in the service of restoration and retrogression. As such they went against the tide of history from their first appearance. And in late times, every reactionary and declining ruling class in China made use of this body of doctrines as ideological and theoretical weapon to preserve or restore its reactionary rule. These

[2] "On New Democracy," *Selected Works*, Eng. ed., FLP, Peking, 1967, Vol. II, p. 373.

doctrines thus became the most vicious mental shackles, obstructing the masses of the people from making revolution and going forward.

On the eve of the May 4th Movement, all China was imprisoned in the foul atmosphere of reverence for Confucius and restoration of the old order. The bourgeois-led Revolution of 1911 had driven out the last Ching Dynasty emperor, but the foundation of feudal rule was not demolished, nor was the task of opposing imperialism and feudalism carried out. China remained under the rule of imperialism and feudalism. In the few years between the Revolution of 1911 and the May 4th Movement of 1919, two imperialist-backed harlequinades of counter-revolutionary restoration had been enacted in China — the first by Yuan Shih-kai, chief of the northern warlords, the second by another feudal warlord, Chang Hsun.

The first thing these two did was to give wide publicity to counter-revolutionary ideas of restoration and retrogression. Clamouring that "things now are worse than before," both Yuan Shih-kai who dreamt of ascending the throne himself and Chang Hsun who tried to reinstate the deposed emperor Hsuan Tung called for a return to the past. Pursuing this reactionary purpose, they used Confucius-worship and study of the Confucian classics as major tools of restoration and retrogression.

Yuan Shih-kai decreed worship of Confucius in June 1913. In January of the following year, the "political conference," an organ controlled by Yuan Shih-kai, adopted two separate resolutions on the offer of regular sacrifices to heaven and to Confucius, and in September, a much bruited ceremony was held to "worship Confucius the sage." In 1915, Yuan Shih-kai ordered that study of the Confucian classics be resumed in all primary and middle schools. This was followed in January 1916 by his farcical restoration of the monarchy. In 1917, Kang Yu-wei, chief of the Protect-the-Emperor Party, ganged up with the feudal warlord Chang Hsun to stage another farce of Confucius-worship and attempted restoration. These people clamoured that Confucianism must be written into the "constitution" as the "national religion." They worked overtime to spread the fallacy: "China owes its existence to Confucianism; without Confucianism, there would be no China." The "Confucianist Society," "Worship-Confucius Society" and similar organizations quickly emerged. For a time this mad dance of ghosts and monsters went on unrestrained.

Meanwhile, the imperialists were also resorting to the doctrines of Confucius and Mencius, using them as a "door knocker" for their purpose of invading China and enslaving the Chinese people for-

ever. The U.S. imperialist Gilbert Reid and others like him strove zealously to sell Confucianism. They advocated that Confucianism and Christianity should harmonize with, respect, inspire and supplement each other so as to prevent "social disturbances," that is, oppose the Chinese people's revolution. Hermann Keyserling, a secret agent of the old tsars working in the field of culture, clamoured that only through reverence for Confucius could China bring about a revival of the ancient principles and prevent people's hearts from being captivated by revolution. These statements expressed his bitter hatred for the Chinese people's revolutionary cause.

So historical experience shows that the doctrines of Confucius and Mencius have served not only as an ideological tool for feudal rulers in their oppression of the Chinese people but also as a political vehicle of the imperialists in their invasion of China. As Chairman Mao incisively points out: **"Imperialist culture and semi-feudal culture are devoted brothers and have formed a reactionary cultural alliance against China's new culture."**[3]

Through long years of revolutionary struggle, the Chinese people gradually discerned the link between Confucius-worship and restoration, and between Confucius-worship and national treason. They came to understand ever more deeply that the doctrines of Confucius and Mencius served imperialism and the feudal classes and therefore had to be overthrown. To knock this ideological weapon out of the reactionaries' hands and smash the mental fetters binding the people, Confucius had to be opposed. Precisely for this reason the slogan "Down with the Confucian Shop!" raised during the period of the May 4th Movement, voiced the heart's desire of the people in their hundreds of millions. Through this struggle to criticize Confucius, the idol the reactionaries of ages had lauded as sacrosanct was toppled, and the doctrines of Confucius and Mencius were unmasked in their ferocious reality. This brought mental liberation to the masses and powerfully impelled the development of the movement for a new culture, the workers' and peasants' movements and the entire anti-imperialist and anti-feudal revolution.

Chairman Mao highly praised the great significance of the opposition to the "Confucian Shop" with its old stereotypes and dogmas during the May 4th Movement. **"If there had been no fight against the old stereotype and the old dogmatism during the May 4th period, the minds of the Chinese people would not have been freed from bondage to**

[3] "On New Democracy," *Selected Works*, Eng. ed., FLP, Peking, 1967, Vol. II, p. 369.

them, and China would have no hope of freedom and independence."[4] This scientific thesis profoundly reveals the relationship between the struggle to criticize Confucius and the Chinese revolution and points out the importance of carrying out a revolution in the cultural and ideological spheres. The doctrines of Confucius and Mencius instil the belief that oppression and exploitation are justified and to rebel is unjustified, require the oppressed people to "follow the conventions and regulations" and forbid their rising in revolution. The "Down with the Confucian Shop" struggle during the May 4th Movement, by contrast, tore apart this ideological net, overturned the old dictum that it was "unjustified to rebel" against reactionaries, aroused people to fight against the old world, and thus opened up bright prospects for victory in thoroughgoing anti-imperialist and anti-feudal revolutionary struggle.

This mental emancipation paved the way for the spread of Marxism-Leninism in China. In the past, no infringement of the dignity of Confucius had been allowed. Confucianism was regarded as unalterable principle; the old ethical code and virtues as beyond question; and "to condemn the sage

[4] Mao Tsetung, "Oppose Stereotyped Party Writing," *Selected Works*, Eng. ed., FLP, Peking, 1967, Vol. III, p. 55.

Confucius and his canon" as the most heinous of crimes. Thanks to the struggle to pull down the "Confucian Shop," blind faith in its tenets was destroyed and young people were fired with enthusiasm to seek the truth and find an ideological weapon for making revolution. Beginning with the May 4th Movement, a mass ideological movement began to develop in China for the study and propagation of Marxism-Leninism. Organizations devoted to these purposes, such as the "Society for the Study of Marxist Theories" and "Society for the Study of Socialism," sprang up one after another. The *Manifesto of the Communist Party* and *Socialism: Utopian and Scientific* appeared in Chinese editions as did other Marxist classics, while large numbers of books and articles popularizing Marxism-Leninism were published. A number of intellectuals who had acquired the rudiments of communist ideology used Marxism-Leninism to direct forceful criticism at the doctrines of Confucius and Mencius. Not only did they bare the ugly nature of these old-line stereotypes and dogmas, but in the course of criticizing them, they disseminated Marxism-Leninism. With "Down with the Confucian Shop" as their starting point, many people abandoned the traditional ideas it represented and gradually accepted Marxism-Leninism and took the revolutionary road. Thus,

during the May 4th Movement, the "Down with the Confucian Shop" struggle promoted the spread of Marxism-Leninism and paved the way — both in ideology and by preparing cadres — for the founding of the Communist Party of China.

As early as in the May 4th period, our great leader Chairman Mao was in the forefront of the fight to smash the "Confucian Shop." In April 1918, he founded the Hsin Min Hsueh Hui (New People's Study Society), a revolutionary organization pledged to the transformation of China and the world. After the outbreak of the May 4th Movement, he edited the famous *Hsiangchiang Review* and other revolutionary publications, and inaugurated the Culture Bookstore and a Marxist study society — all in order to advance the revolution and disseminate Marxism-Leninism. Meanwhile, with Hunan Province as a base and the New People's Study Society as the core, he organized and led struggles against imperialism and feudalism by people of all strata. In carrying on these revolutionary activities, he gave great importance to the struggle on the ideological and cultural fronts.

Armed with Marxism-Leninism, Chairman Mao incisively exposed the doctrines of Confucius and Mencius for what they were — an autocratic ideology which had been used by the reactionary ruling

classes for more than 2,000 years to oppress and enslave the people, and a reactionary tool in the hands of the imperialists and their lackeys, the feudal warlords, to do the same. For the people to shake off oppression and enslavement and win complete emancipation, it was essential to smash the yoke of Confucian ethics. Chairman Mao pointed out that following the Russian October Revolution, Marxism-Leninism was introduced into China and became an irresistible rising tide. But only by overthrowing the ideological rule of the doctrines of Confucius and Mencius could Marxism-Leninism be spread and the people roused to carry out a thoroughgoing anti-imperialist and anti-feudal revolution. Closely combining the criticism of the doctrines of Confucius and Mencius with the struggle against imperialism and feudalism, Chairman Mao spearpointed the attack directly against imperialism and the semi-colonial, semi-feudal social system. He represented the correct line and orientation in the struggle to criticize Confucius in the May 4th period by promoting the spread of Marxism-Leninism in its course.

In the "Down with the Confucian Shop" fight, besides communist-minded intellectuals there were revolutionary intellectuals from the petty-bourgeoisie and the bourgeoisie who took part. However, it was with the stand and the political

aim of different classes that the latter joined the struggle, and they gradually became differentiated as a result of the development of the revolutionary movement. Some were able to keep moving forward and persist in the struggle, thanks to their constant efforts to remould their ideology as it went forward. Others fell behind and turned passive. Still others became turncoats.

Lu Hsun (1881-1936), the chief commander in the "Down with the Confucian Shop" struggle during the May 4th period, levelled devastating and wide-ranging criticisms at the doctrines of Confucius and Mencius. Upholding the political orientation of thorough and uncompromising opposition to imperialism and feudalism, he linked the criticism of Confucianism closely with the anti-imperialist and anti-feudal struggle. While participating in the fight, he eagerly studied Marxism-Leninism, was strict in dissecting his own thinking and action politically, kept remoulding his world outlook and so came to the realization that "the future belongs solely to the rising proletariat." Thus he was able to keep in step with the times, stand in the forefront of the battle, persevere in the struggle to criticize Confucius and step by step become a staunch communist fighter. Chairman Mao said: **"Lu Hsun was a man of unyielding integrity, free from all sycophancy or obsequiousness; this quality is in-**

valuable among colonial and semi-colonial peoples. Representing the great majority of the nation, Lu Hsun breached and stormed the enemy citadel; on the cultural front he was the bravest and most correct, the firmest, the most loyal and the most ardent national hero, a hero without parallel in our history. The road he took was the very road of China's new national culture."[5]

In striking contrast to Lu Hsun was Wu Yu (1871-1949), a representative of the bourgeois intellectuals. Though he joined the ranks of the "Down with the Confucian Shop" struggle during the May 4th period and even gained some fleeting fame, his criticism of the doctrines of Confucius and Mencius was far from thoroughgoing because it proceeded from the stand and political programme of the bourgeoisie. As the revolution advanced and Wu Yu's illusions of a bourgeois republic vanished, he threw aside the slogan "Down with the Confucian Shop," degenerated, lost heart and finally turned into a notorious opium addict. Chen Tu-hsiu (1880-1942), a representative of the bourgeoisie who had sneaked into the proletarian revolutionary ranks, posed as being "against Confucius" during the May 4th period. But because

[5] "On New Democracy," *Selected Works*, Eng. ed., FLP, Peking, 1967, Vol. II, p. 372.

he obstinately clung to the bourgeois stand and feared and opposed the people's revolution, he switched from "opposing Confucius" to revering Confucius and, pushing his Right opportunist line, clamoured that the latter's "value" be "reassessed." Chen Tu-hsiu ended up as a faithful running dog of imperialism and of the landlord and capitalist classes.

As for Hu Shih (1891-1962), a man of letters of the comprador-bourgeois class, he had long been a devotee of Confucius. In the early stage of the May 4th Movement he was swept into the torrent of the "Down with the Confucian Shop" struggle. But he merely speculated on the revolution to pocket some political capital. Because he stood with the comprador-bourgeoisie, he could only make a sham criticism. That was why he did not get to the heart of the doctrines of Confucius and Mencius at all; instead, he concentrated on what he called the "reforming" of "literary forms." And when faced with the deepening of the revolution, the wide dissemination of Marxism-Leninism and the upsurge of the workers' and peasants' movements, he quickly dropped his mask of anti-Confucianism and showed his true colours as a Confucius-worshipper. He provoked a debate on "problems and 'isms,' " clamoured for "more study of problems and less talk about 'isms' " and openly

aimed his spearhead at Marxism-Leninism. Later he worked hard for the imperialists, whom he advised to "conquer the hearts of the Chinese nation" with the doctrines of Confucius and Mencius. Thus he fully exposed himself as an imperialist flunkey who revered Confucius, worshipped everything foreign and was a traitor to his country.

The historical experience of the struggle to criticize Confucius during the May 4th period is proof that only the proletariat, with the new cultural revolutionary force it leads, is able to criticize Confucius in real earnest, and that thorough criticism of Confucius is only possible if one adheres to the proletarian stand and world outlook. The proletariat cannot achieve its own final emancipation without emancipating all mankind. To achieve both its immediate revolutionary goal and its ultimate ideal of communism, it must make a most radical rupture with all antiquated traditional ideas. Therefore, the historical task of smashing the "Confucian Shop" can be fully accomplished only by the proletariat. All revolutionaries in China who plunge into the thick of the current struggle to criticize Confucius should act like Lu Hsun — consciously take the proletarian stand, hold to the correct political orientation and study Marxism-Leninism diligently while criti-

cizing the class enemy and the doctrines of Confucius and Mencius. And as Lu Hsun did, they should rigorously dissect their own thinking and actions, remould themselves and move constantly forward in the struggle. The deepening of the struggle to criticize Confucius is bound to lead to the expansion and consolidation of the proletarian revolutionary ranks and the maturing of hosts of new revolutionaries nurtured by Marxism-Leninism. The history of the struggle to criticize Confucius in the May 4th period has proved this.

The "Down with the Confucian Shop" struggle in that period was a great revolution on the cultural and ideological fronts in modern China. As Chairman Mao points out: **"The cultural revolution ushered in by the May 4th Movement was uncompromising in its opposition to feudal culture; there had never been such a great and thoroughgoing cultural revolution since the dawn of Chinese history. Raising aloft the two great banners of the day, 'Down with the old ethics and up with the new!' and 'Down with the old literature and up with the new!', the cultural revolution had great achievements to its credit."**[6] But naturally, the struggle did not end there. After the May 4th

6 "On New Democracy," *Selected Works*, Eng. ed., FLP, Peking, 1967, Vol. II, p. 374.

Movement the struggle between opposition to and veneration for Confucius still kept on. Representatives of different reactionary classes invariably hoisted the tattered flag of the "Confucian Shop" in repeated counterattacks against the proletariat and the revolutionary people, and in efforts to reverse the verdict on Confucius and his rubbish long after these had been overthrown by the May 4th Movement. From Chiang Kai-shek, the autocrat and traitor to the people, to the quisling Wang Ching-wei, from the renegade, hidden traitor and scab Liu Shao-chi to the renegade and traitor Lin Piao — all without exception have made a fetish of the doctrines of Confucius and Mencius; and so have the imperialists and social-imperialists supporting them. The more moribund and decadent they become, the more fervidly do all such elements revere Confucius. Such is the law of class struggle. So long as there is class struggle, there will be the struggle between opposition to and veneration for Confucius; therefore the struggle to criticize Confucius is a long-term task.

Chairman Mao said long ago: **"This task was merely begun in the period of the May 4th Movement, and a very great effort — a huge job of work on the road of revolutionary remoulding — is still necessary to enable the whole people to free them-**

selves completely from the domination of the old stereotype and dogmatism."[7]

In China, all revolutions led by the proletariat have been accompanied by criticism of the doctrines of Confucius and Mencius. And it is precisely in the course of continuous repudiation of these doctrines that the proletariat and revolutionary people have pushed the revolution forward. During the half century since the May 4th Movement, in the periods of both the new-democratic revolution and the socialist revolution, Chairman Mao has closely linked the struggle against domestic and foreign reactionaries with that against the "Left" and Right opportunist lines in the Party, and repeatedly repudiated the doctrines of Confucius and Mencius and their worshippers. He has criticized them both politically and ideologically, using the world outlook of dialectical and historical materialism. These criticisms constituted an important content of the two-line struggles within our Party. Chairman Mao's brilliant theses in criticism of Confucius, written during these struggles, are important summaries of the historical experience of struggles both between Marxism and revisionism and between the proletarian world outlook and the

[7] "Oppose Stereotyped Party Writing," *Selected Works*, Eng. ed., FLP, Peking, 1967, Vol. III, p. 55.

bourgeois world outlook. They are our ideological weapon for the current deep-going criticism of Confucius combined with criticism of Lin Piao.

Chairman Mao has said: **"The May 4th Movement, however, had its own weaknesses. Many of the leaders lacked the critical spirit of Marxism, and the method they used was generally that of the bourgeoisie, that is, the formalist method."**[8] These weaknesses made it impossible for many people at that time to make a scientific analysis of class relations in Chinese history and to expose the class content of the struggle between the Confucian and Legalist schools. They failed to make a Marxist study of the historically progressive role of the Legalist School, and of its writings which militantly criticized the Confucian School. Today, hundreds of millions of workers, peasants, soldiers, revolutionary cadres and revolutionary intellectuals are earnestly studying Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought while they criticize Lin Piao and Confucius. Already there have emerged many activists who enthusiastically apply the Marxist stand, viewpoint and method in their criticisms and analyses. In the movement to criticize Lin Piao and Confucius, the Party calls on us to use the weapon of Marxism, **"read and study conscien-**

[8] *Ibid.*, p. 54.

tiously and have a good grasp of Marxism," and undertake serious study both of the current situation and of history so as to make substantial progress.

The present movement to criticize Lin Piao and Confucius is the continuation and development of the proletarian-led struggle to criticize Confucius that has gone on since the May 4th Movement. The "Down with the Confucian Shop" struggle of that time was waged to stem the adverse current of restoration stirred up by imperialism and feudal warlords, clear the way for the extensive dissemination of Marxism-Leninism and impel the anti-imperialist and anti-feudal new-democratic revolution forward. And today we criticize Confucius in depth in order to uphold Marxism and oppose revisionism, continue the revolution under the proletarian dictatorship, do away with the pernicious influence of Lin Piao's revisionist line, consolidate and expand the achievements of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution and speed the advance of socialist revolution and construction. The "Down with the Confucian Shop" struggle in the May 4th period raised the curtain on the new-democratic revolution. The present extensive and profound struggle to criticize Lin Piao and Confucius will guarantee greater successes in socialist revolution and construction. Therefore, it constitutes a strategic task not only of immediate but also of far-reaching historic significance. With the victorious development of the revolution, people will gain deeper understanding of its importance.

The conditions under which we criticize Confucius today differ greatly from those of the May 4th period. We have experienced the new-democratic revolution and more than 20 years of socialist revolution, especially the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution. We have the wise leadership of Chairman Mao and the sharp ideological weapon of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought. We have the powerful dictatorship of the proletariat, and directly participating in the criticism are the broad masses of workers, peasants and soldiers. Thus we are able to carry on the movement to criticize Confucius more broadly and thoroughly than ever before. A great deal of work is needed to further deepen the criticism of Lin Piao and Confucius. We can certainly make it a success and carry the revolution in the realm of the superstructure through to the end if we act upon Chairman Mao's teachings, firmly grasp the political orientation of the struggle, carry forward the revolutionary spirit of the May 4th Movement and make wise use of the historical experience gained in the criticism of Confucius since the May 4th period.

Fang Hai

The Proletarian Cultural Revolution Is a Deep Criticism of the Doctrines of Confucius and Mencius

In China, ever since the proletariat appeared on the political stage as a class-conscious, independent political force, the revolutions it led have invariably been closely linked with criticism of the reactionary Confucian and Mencian doctrines. The Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution initiated and led by Chairman Mao is a great political revolution. It is also a profound criticism of the doctrines of Confucius and Mencius.

The reactionary doctrines of Confucius and Mencius are doctrines of restoration. Every reactionary ruling class in Chinese history has made use of them in an attempt to hold back social progress and restore the old order. Representatives of opportunist lines within the Communist Party are

agents of the landlord class and the bourgeoisie. In order to turn back the wheel of history and oppose the proletarian revolution, they inevitably pick weapons from the trashy ideological arsenal of the decadent slave-owning and landlord classes to attack the proletariat and so are bound to be diehard defenders and frenzied peddlers of the reactionary doctrines of Confucius and Mencius. During the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, we have smashed the two bourgeois headquarters, one headed by Liu Shao-chi and the other by Lin Piao. The struggle against Liu Shao-chi and Lin Piao is also a struggle between opposition to and worship of Confucius. The criticism of their revisionist lines involves widespread criticism of the reactionary doctrines of Confucius and Mencius. Like all other ringleaders of opportunist lines within the Party, Liu Shao-chi and Lin Piao were worshippers of Confucius. The reactionary doctrines of Confucius and Mencius constitute one of the main ideological sources of their revisionist lines.

The sinister book on "self-cultivation" by the renegade, hidden traitor and scab Liu Shao-chi stemmed from the reactionary doctrines of Confucius and Mencius and was directed against the proletarian revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat. Most of the vicious views he spread were new versions of these doctrines. Confucius

and Mencius preached "loyalty and considerateness" and "accord among men," and Liu Shao-chi on his part urged people to "learn from Confucius in practising the principle of considerateness," to show "magnanimity, forbearance and the spirit of conciliation and compromise"; all of which he did in order to promote his theory of "the dying out of class struggle" and of "peace within the Party." Confucius and Mencius preached that "only the highest who are the wise and the lowest who are the stupid cannot be changed,"[1] and that "the common people should be directed to do things but not made to comprehend them."[2] Liu Shao-chi sang the same tune; he slandered the working class as "having developed to a considerable extent the mentality of the guildsmen and of the hooligans," and "lacking a sense of social responsibility," and accused the peasants of thinking of nothing except "keeping cool and sleeping at their homes." All this he did in order to peddle his theory of "docile tools" and his thesis that "the masses are backward." Confucius and Mencius spread such fallacies as "those who work with their minds govern, while those who toil with their hands be governed,"[3] and that "he who excels in learning

[1] *Analects*, "Yang Huo."
[2] *Ibid.*, "Tai Po."
[3] *Mencius*, "Teng Wen Kung."

can be an official."[4] Correspondingly, Liu Shao-chi peddled the ideas of "joining the Party in order to climb up," "studying in order to become an official" and "going to the countryside to gild oneself." Liu Shao-chi proved himself a worthy disciple of Confucius and Mencius by parroting their canons and imitating their actions.

The bourgeois careerist, conspirator, double-dealer, renegade and traitor Lin Piao was likewise an out-and-out Confucian. He used the reactionary doctrines of Confucius and Mencius to oppose and sabotage the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution in a bid to subvert the dictatorship of the proletariat and restore capitalism in China. The adage "restrain oneself and return to the rites,"[5] preached by Confucius, was taken up by Lin Piao as his reactionary programme for the restoration of capitalism. Confucius and Mencius spread the notion that some people are "born with knowledge,"[6] and other fallacies of idealist apriorism. Lin Piao used these as reactionary ideological weapons for a "return to the rites."

In their slanders against the labouring people and contempt for manual labour, Liu Shao-chi and

[4] *Analects*, "Tzu Chang."
[5] *Ibid.*, "Yen Yuan."
[6] *Ibid.*, "Chi Shih."

Lin Piao were entirely at one with Confucius and Mencius. Confucius engaged in demagogy and swindling wherever he went. Lin Piao emulated him by playing double-faced tricks, and saying all the fine-sounding words while doing everything evil. Lin Piao and Confucius not only used the same language, but their politics, ideology and tactics ran in the same vein.

Liu Shao-chi and Lin Piao were adherents of Confucius. In the cultural revolution and the struggle to consolidate and develop its rich achievements, it is necessary for us to criticize Confucius along with criticism of Liu Shao-chi and Lin Piao. Although Confucius was a spokesman for the slave-owners of more than 2,000 years ago, what binds all three together indissolubly is their essence — all representing reactionary exploiting classes and manifesting a common ideology and behaviour, i.e., the effort to turn back the wheel of history. Therefore, we must criticize Confucius while criticizing Liu Shao-chi and Lin Piao. The current struggle to criticize Lin Piao and Confucius has the purpose precisely of consolidating and carrying forward the major achievements of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, strengthening the dictatorship of the proletariat and opposing the restoration of capitalism in China. As Lenin pointed out, if we want to expose the counter-revolutionary inner

nature of revisionism to the full, we must lay bare its origins. In criticizing Bogdanov, a revisionist who had sneaked into the Russian Bolshevik Party, Lenin traced his revisionism back to the Englishman Berkeley, father of reactionary bourgeois idealism. Lenin pointed out: **"The 'recent' Machians have not adduced a single argument against the materialists that had not been adduced by Bishop Berkeley."**[7] Now, in criticizing Liu Shao-chi and Lin Piao and their counter-revolutionary revisionist lines, we are stripping them right down to their origins in Confucius. Can we not see that the "latest" goods hawked by these political swindlers are the time-worn stock-in-trade of the Confucian Shop? Can we not see that their whole sinister system of thought, their entire reactionary ideology constitutes a black line linked with that of Confucius and Mencius?

Chairman Mao teaches us: **"There is no construction without destruction, no flowing without damming and no motion without rest."**[8] Put destruction first, and in the process you have construction. In the Great Proletarian Cultural Rev-

[7] V. I. Lenin, *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism*, Eng. ed., FLP, Peking, 1972, p. 29.

[8] "On New Democracy," *Selected Works*, Eng. ed., FLP, Peking, 1967, Vol. II, p. 369.

olution, both Liu Shao-chi and Lin Piao have been exposed as faithful adherents of Confucius. Their counter-revolutionary revisionist lines have been scathingly criticized alongside the reactionary doctrines of Confucius and Mencius. During the fierce struggle to smash the two bourgeois headquarters of Liu Shao-chi and Lin Piao, the masses of people engaged in large-scale destruction of the traditional ideologies of the reactionary classes which were stubbornly defended by those two and built up proletarian ideology on a large scale. The decadent ideologies upheld by Liu Shao-chi and Lin Piao had as their main source the doctrines of Confucius and Mencius, which made up the most reactionary part of China's feudal culture and ideology. The Chinese bourgeoisie was feeble politically and economically, and moreover was closely linked with the feudal forces, so it could not, and did not oppose the feudal culture in a thoroughgoing way. At all times, its culture and ideology retained many feudal dregs. Liu Shao-chi and Lin Piao were representatives of this bourgeoisie within the Party. In practising revisionism, they were bound to employ the doctrines of Confucius and Mencius to oppose proletarian culture and ideology. It was for the sole purpose of creating public opinion to prepare for the overthrow of

the dictatorship of the proletariat that they spared no effort in seizing upon the field of ideology, assiduously preached the reactionary doctrines of Confucius and Mencius, frantically exercised a counter-revolutionary dictatorship over the proletariat in the departments under their control and fostered a lush growth of poisonous weeds. The aim of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution is to oppose and prevent revisionism, seize back that portion of power usurped by the bourgeoisie, exercise all-round proletarian dictatorship in the superstructure including all fields of culture, consolidate and strengthen the socialist economic basis, and prevent capitalist restoration, thereby enabling our country to continue its advance along the socialist road. In the final analysis, this revolution is aimed precisely at destroying the ideology of the declining exploiting classes and transforming the world according to the world outlook of the proletariat.

During the cultural revolution a multitude of brand-new things emerged in the course of the up-and-down struggle against the revisionist lines pushed by Liu Shao-chi and Lin Piao. Their appearance also came about as a result of penetrating criticism of the doctrines of Confucius and Mencius which were so stubbornly upheld by Liu

Shao-chi, Lin Piao and other political swindlers. Literature and art began to portray and serve the workers, peasants and soldiers who took over those realms, so that the emperors, kings, generals, ministers, scholars and beauties who for centuries had personified Confucian and Mencian values on stage were swept from the boards. This in itself was a penetrating criticism of the reactionary idealist conception of history — "only the highest who are the wise and the lowest who are the stupid cannot be changed" — preached by Confucius and Mencius, in which the people were regarded as mere chaff. On the educational front, the cultural revolution wrote an end to the situation in which education was divorced from the masses of workers and peasants and from productive labour, and to domination of the schools by bourgeois intellectuals. Workers, peasants and soldiers now attend universities, run them and are transforming them with Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought. Millions of educated young people are going to the countryside to integrate themselves with the peasants. All this constitutes a deep criticism of the reactionary thinking that "he who excels in learning can be an official," peddled by Confucius and Mencius, with its contempt for the working people. Cadres in state organs and other parts of the superstructure

are taking the "May 7" road[9] — they are able to work well at whatever job they are given to do, either as officials or as rank-and-filers. This again is a deep criticism of the reactionary view of Confucius and Mencius that "those who work with their minds govern." Lin Piao and his crew were consumed with fear and hatred of these socialist new things born in the course of criticizing Confucianism, and by the breakaway of more and more people from the doctrines of Confucius and Mencius. They left no stone unturned to undermine the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution and negate everything new. In their plan for a counter-revolutionary armed coup d'etat, known as *Outline of Project "571,"* they attacked the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution in the most vicious language. They slanderously described the excellent situation emerging after the Great Prole-

[9] In line with Chairman Mao's directive of May 7, 1966, all cadres go to "May 7" cadre schools in rotation. There they do serious reading and study linked with the present-day struggle, take part in collective productive labour as ordinary working people and go to live and work in agricultural production brigades to temper themselves. Thus they remould their world outlook. This is a strategic measure for carrying out the basic line of the Party in the historical period of socialism, opposing revisionism and preventing its emergence and consolidating the dictatorship of the proletariat.

tarian Cultural Revolution in which the socialist cause is flourishing as "beset with growing crises" and "fallen into stagnation," the practice of educated young people going to mountainous areas and countryside as "a disguised form of reform through labour" and the policy of cadres going to the "May 7" cadre schools as "disguised unemployment." The more they step up their frenzied opposition to the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution and to the newborn things, the more we should expand and deepen our criticism of Confucius and Lin Piao so as to consolidate and develop the tremendous achievements of the cultural revolution and promote the speedy and healthy growth of the new things.

The facts of Chinese history show that only a cultural revolution carried out and led by the proletariat can penetratingly criticize and thoroughly oppose Confucius on a wide range of questions. In the past, the newly rising landlord class and bourgeoisie did, each in its turn, oppose and criticize Confucius. But their class interests determined that they could not be thorough in this. As Chairman Mao has pointed out: **"In past history, before they won state power and for some time afterwards, the slave-owning class, the feudal landlord class and the bourgeoisie were vigorous, revolutionary and progressive; they were real**

tigers. But with the lapse of time, because their opposites — the slave class, the peasant class and the proletariat — grew in strength step by step, struggled against them more and more fiercely, these ruling classes changed step by step into the reverse, changed into reactionaries, changed into backward people, changed into paper tigers. And eventually they were overthrown, or will be overthrown, by the people."[10] When the landlord class and the bourgeoisie (including the intellectuals in their service) were ascending, they stood for transformation and progress and opposed and criticized the doctrines of Confucius and Mencius which advocated restoration of the old order and blocked their way forward. But after these classes had seized political power, and held it for a time, they changed over to worship for Confucius in order to consolidate their own rule and preserve their own interests, and in their turn promoted a counter-revolutionary ideological and political line for the maintenance of the old order. When a class or a person changes from opposition to Confucius to worship of Confucius, it marks the change in that class or person from revolutionary to reactionary and from progress to retrogression. Such changes

[10] "Talk with the American Correspondent Anna Louise Strong," *Selected Works*, Eng. ed., FLP, Peking, 1969, Vol. IV, pp. 98-99.

of stand are determined by the interests and nature of the exploiting classes and represent a law of class struggle independent of man's will.

The proletariat is different from all the exploiting classes. Representing the most advanced relations of production, it is the greatest class in the history of mankind, the most powerful revolutionary class ideologically, politically and in terms of strength. It is a class which, from first to last, stands firmly for the progress and transformation of society and works for the interests of the vast majority. Only a cultural revolution led by this class, the proletariat, is up to the task of thoroughly opposing and criticizing Confucius. When the proletariat of China mounted the political stage, history placed this task upon its shoulders.

The great May 4th Movement of 1919 raised the slogan "Down with the Confucian Shop!" and thus began to break down the 2,000-year-old cult of Confucius. **"The May 4th Movement was uncompromising in its opposition to feudal culture."**[11] From that time on our country's democratic revolution entered a new stage. And as the new-democratic revolution led by the proletariat developed in depth, the struggle against Confucianism also became ever fiercer and deeper. In the course of the socialist revolution the economic base of the bourgeoisie has already been smashed. But this exploiting class refuses to quit the stage of history and, turning its attention to winning the battle in people's minds, is attempting to use the ideology of the exploiting classes and the reactionary doctrines of Confucius and Mencius to corrupt the masses, undermine the dictatorship of the proletariat and restore capitalism.

[11] Mao Tsetung, "On New Democracy," *Selected Works*, Eng. ed., FLP, Peking, 1967, Vol. II, p. 374.

Ever since the founding of the People's Republic of China, the great leader Chairman Mao has paid close attention to the class struggle in the sphere of ideology and repeatedly issued instructions and launched criticism against the reactionary Confucianism. In the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution and the current criticism of Lin Piao and Confucius, both initiated and led by Chairman Mao, Confucianism is being criticized more penetratingly and on an incomparably wider scale than in any of the previous cultural revolutions in China's history. The May 4th Movement belonged in its nature to the bourgeois-democratic revolution, so it was not possible for it to oppose the ideologies of all the exploiting classes. The current movement to criticize Lin Piao and Confucius, however, is a political and ideological struggle in which Marxism is triumphing over revisionism, and the

proletariat over the bourgeoisie in the realm of the superstructure — a more profound revolution in the ideological sphere.

During the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution we have smashed the two bourgeois headquarters headed by Liu Shao-chi and Lin Piao, and deeply criticized the counter-revolutionary revisionist lines which they pushed and the doctrines of Confucius and Mencius which they touted. Their attempt to imitate Confucius in conspiring for restoration was thwarted. This is a great victory of Chairman Mao's proletarian revolutionary line. But we cannot say that the struggle between the criticism and the worship of Confucius has come to an end with this great movement. On the one hand, Liu Shao-chi and Lin Piao were not two isolated persons, but representatives of a class and a political line; and although they have been overthrown, we must continue to examine thoroughly and repudiate politically and ideologically the revisionist lines they acted upon and the doctrines of Confucius and Mencius which they advocated. On the other hand, we must see that the struggle between criticism and worship of Confucius has all along been an important component of the struggle between the two classes and the two lines, and is, therefore, a long-term fighting task.

Although Liu Shao-chi, that worshipper of Confucius, was overthrown during the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, Lin Piao came out to unfurl the tattered banner of Confucius-worship. This fact shows vividly that the followers of Confucius will not disappear as a result of just one or two cultural revolutions. The Party's basic line tells us that socialist society covers a considerably long historical period and that throughout this historical period, there are classes, class contradictions and class struggle, there is the struggle between the socialist road and the capitalist road, there is the danger of capitalist restoration and there is the threat of subversion and aggression by imperialism and social-imperialism. Struggles between two lines within the Party, which reflect these contradictions, will also continue for a long time, and may occur ten, twenty or thirty more times. Lin Piaos will appear again and so will persons like Wang Ming, Liu Shao-chi, Peng Teh-huai and Kao Kang. The doctrines of Confucius and Mencius are doctrines for restoration, as long as there is anyone attempting restoration there will be reverence for Confucius and utilization of his doctrine to push the revisionist line and oppose the proletarian revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat. Therefore, the criticism of Confucius and Mencius will continue throughout the entire historical period of

socialism in the struggle between the two classes, two roads and two lines and will at all times be one of the main contents of the socialist revolution in China. We must stick to the Party's basic line for the historical period of socialism, persist in making revolution under the dictatorship of the proletariat, deepen the class struggle and the two-line struggle and carry the struggle of criticism of Lin Piao and Confucius through to the end. Only so can we consolidate and develop the victorious achievements of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, strengthen the dictatorship of the proletariat and carry the proletarian revolution constantly forward.

Tang Hsiao-wen

Liuhsia Chih Denounces Confucius

Kung Chiu (Confucius) represented the ideology of the decadent and declining slave-owning aristocracy. Reactionaries in the past revered him as "the sage." The ringleaders of the various opportunist lines in the Chinese Communist Party likewise all revered Confucius, and the renegade and traitor Lin Piao was a devout disciple of his. Contrariwise, the working people have always hated Confucius bitterly, held him in contempt and sternly refuted and criticized his reactionary preachments. The denunciation of Confucius by Liuhsia Chih more than 2,000 years ago, as told in an essay entitled "Chih the Robber" in the book *Chuang Tzu*, constitutes a splendid page in the his-

tory of the working people's struggle against Confucius.

Outstanding Leader of a Slave Uprising

Chih was slandered as a "big robber" and "Chih the Robber" by the reactionary classes for more than 2,000 years. Now it is time to reverse this reversal of history. In fact, he was no "robber," but an outstanding leader of a slave uprising. He was known as Liuhsia Chih because he resided in Liuhsia (in eastern Puyang County in the present-day Honan Province).

Liuhsia Chih lived towards the end of the Spring and Autumn Period (770-476 B.C.) when China was undergoing a great social upheaval, the change from the slave to the feudal system. To hold back the collapse of their system, the slave-owning aristocrats, who were already on the verge of their doom, stepped up their cruel oppression and exploitation of the slave class and other working people. The court and nobles lived a licentious, extravagant life while the working people, hungry and inadequately clothed, were weighed down by heavy toil and barely able to keep alive. Because of this, "the common folk suffered severely and both husband and wife cursed the times"; class contradiction was very sharp and large-scale slave uprisings occurred in many places. According to historical records, city-wall builders rebelled in the State of Chi, the masses rose in arms in the State of Cheng and handicraft slaves attacked their ruler in the State of Wei. With "swords, poison, water and fire" as weapons, slaves in various places seized "vehicles, horses, clothes and fur coats" from the nobles and the rich. The outstanding leader of an armed slave uprising in the states of Chi and Lu (present-day Shantung Province) was Liuhsia Chih.

Out of their class prejudice, exploiting-class historians have done their utmost to disparage Liuhsia Chih and negate his merits and some slanders against him are also contained in the essay "Chih the Robber." Few records of his activities are extant. But even what has survived shows that Chih was a wise and valiant hero, judicious, farsighted and a skilful commander. He had a theory and a programme, was good at organizing the masses and enjoyed their support. In the essay "Chih the Robber," we read: Liuhsia Chih "had 9,000 followers assailing and doing violence to the nobles everywhere." Upon their arrival, the slave-owning aristocrats fled pell-mell, the big aristocrats entrenched themselves in walled cities and the smaller ones hid themselves in strongholds surrounded by earthen walls — none dared resist.

This proved that Chih's powerful contingents wielded far-reaching influence and were a major threat to the reactionary rule of the slave-owning aristocracy. By fighting over a wide range of territory, the forces led by Chih had an extensive impact. So, his name became synonymous with slaves in revolt in many states at that time. The mere mention of his name was enough to make aristocrats tremble in their boots.

Revolutionary force **"is the instrument with the aid of which social movement forces its way through and shatters the dead, fossilized political forms."**[1] In class society, violent revolution is the general law governing the replacement of one social system by another. In Chinese history the slave uprising which Liuhsia Chih led was a great attempt by the exploited class to solve social contradictions through violent revolution. The slaves, long oppressed and kept at the bottom rung of society, rose in revolt, smashed the shackles imposed on them by the slave-owning aristocrats and shook both the economic base and the superstructure of the slave system, and gave history a strong push forward. This was an excellent thing.

Progressives and advocates of reform in China's past have left us positive comments on the slave

[1] Frederick Engels, *Anti-Dühring*, Eng. ed., FLPH, Moscow, 1962, p. 254.

uprising led by Liuhsia Chih. Hsun Tzu (313-238 B.C.), a thinker of the new emerging landlord class and a noted representative of the Legalist School, acknowledged that Liuhsia Chih was convincing in debate and enjoyed high prestige among people of the lower strata. Some later progressive thinkers also referred to Liuhsia Chih as an "outstanding" sage of the common people in revolt. But the moribund and declining slave-owning aristocrats mortally feared and hated this slave uprising. They reviled Chih as a monster, a "big robber" who relished human flesh and blood and killed people in order to grab their wealth.

Confucius, who stubbornly upheld the slave system, was full of implacable hatred for Liuhsia Chih. He viciously cursed him as a violator of law and of filial piety, and a "scourge in the world." He was determined to eliminate this "scourge." In coordination with the violent suppression by the slave-owners, he put on an outward show of kindness, personally went to see Liuhsia Chih and tried by every means to induce him to surrender. When he approached Chih, Confucius repeatedly bowed in sign of respect and did his utmost to please and flatter him. Using such deceptive words as "benevolence," "righteousness" and "virtue" and tempting Chih with honours and bait such as "building a big city with a circumference of several hundred

li" and "revering you as one of the ruling nobles," Confucius tried to persuade him to lay down his arms and turn into a docile subject of the slave-owning aristocrats.

Liuhsia Chih burned with hatred for Confucius who was wandering about like a stray dog stubbornly trying to safeguard the slave system. He flew into a rage when the man's name was announced. When Confucius came in, Chih glared at him furiously and with one hand on his sword, sharply denounced him to his face. He sternly condemned Confucius' reactionary doctrine and his advocacy of retrogression and return to the old ways, and exposed his "craftiness and hypocricy" in all their ugliness. Thoroughly refuted, Confucius was left speechless and beat a hasty retreat. In the eyes of this people's hero, Confucius — revered as the "sage" by reactionaries — was but a contemptible clown. In his struggle against Confucius, Liuhsia Chih showed dauntless courage and revolutionary militancy.

"The Robber Confucius" Is Justly Refuted

Confucius, when meeting Liuhsia Chih, openly slandered the slave uprising he led as a shameful action. He urged Chih to follow the way of the

Confucian School, learn deportment from the "sage and scholars," "demobilize the soldiers and assemble his brothers so that they could offer sacrifices to ancestors together." Faced with so sinister an intrigue and such reactionary preachments, Liuhsia Chih exposed and criticized them without mercy.

Ancient Kings Were "Trouble-Makers" — Not Examples to Follow

Liuhsia Chih firmly refuted Confucius' reactionary ideas of following the ancient kings and trying to turn back the clock to restore the old order. Confucius' advocacy of "offering sacrifices to ancestors together" and following the examples of "sages" were meant to carry out his reactionary political programme of "self-restraint and return to the rites" and uphold and restore the weakened and shattered rules, institutions and social order of the slave system of the Western Chou Dynasty. For this purpose, Confucius lauded the slave society of the Shang and Western Chou dynasties as a paradise on earth. He prettified the chieftains of the slave-owning class in the Shang and Chou dynasties as the "most holy sages," lofty in virtue and prestige, and demanded that people prostrate themselves before them. Liuhsia Chih rebutted Con-

fucius' nonsense, denounced the cruel rule of the slave-owning aristocrats and exposed the rottenness and darkness of the slave system.

Liuhsia Chih said pointedly that the chieftains of the slave-owning aristocracy were not "sages" at all but shameless "trouble-makers" who oppressed the people and made it impossible for them to live in peace. Society under their rule was no paradise on earth, but one entirely contrary to reason in which "the strong bullied the weak, the rich oppressed the poor." In Liuhsia Chih's view, a highly moral society was one in which people "farm to feed themselves, weave to clothe themselves and do not harm each other," that is, a society without exploitation or oppression. This profoundly expressed the aspiration of the slaves to rid themselves of exploitation and oppression and win emancipation.

Liuhsia Chih denounced Confucius' adoption of the system of the Western Chou Dynasty and his attempt at controlling public opinion as a way of seeking "riches and honour" for himself, protecting the slave-owners' ruling position and forcing the slaves to continue to live in misery. Showing extreme contempt for the power, position and extravagant life of the ruling nobles — which Confucius dangled before him as bait — Liuhsia Chih declared that the life of a parasite who consumed

without working was extremely shameful and that the rule of the slave-owning aristocrats would be short-lived, come to a bad end and become "extinct in later generations."

Liuhsia Chih's criticism and refutation of Confucius' stand for the revival of the ancient ways and retrogression expressed the revolutionary rebel spirit of the oppressed slaves who feared neither "the ancestors" nor "the sages" but were determined to overthrow the old system. From it we can see clearly that the slaves would never tolerate Confucius' efforts to restore slave-owner rule. Neither deception nor violent suppression can help the reactionaries stem the advance of history. Chairman Mao has pointed out: **"The Chinese never submit to tyrannical rule but invariably use revolutionary means to overthrow or change it."**[2]

"Filial Piety and Brotherly Duty" Were Nothing But Deceitful Nonsense

What Confucius taught was a reactionary theory with restoration of the rites of Chou as its aim and "benevolence" its core concept. He presented

[2] "The Chinese Revolution and the Chinese Communist Party," *Selected Works*, Eng. ed., FLP, Peking, 1967, Vol. II, p. 306.

"filial piety and brotherly duty" as the fundamentals of "benevolence" and alleged that only by following these fundamentals could one become a "loyal subject" guarding the slave-system state. Confucius' precepts of "filial piety and brotherly duty" were aimed at upholding the hierarchy and patriarchal system of the slave-owning aristocrats: "the king is a king, the subject a subject, the father a father and the son a son." With sharp eyes Liuhsia Chih penetrated to the reactionary essence of Confucius' doctrines and said straight to the point that Confucius was trotting out the nonsense of "filial piety and brotherly duty," because he dreamt of becoming a rich noble ruling over the people. Chih cited numerous facts in powerful exposure of the deceitfulness of Confucius' precepts of "filial piety and brotherly duty."

In his eyes, all the "loyal subjects" and "wise men" exalted by Confucius were accomplices of emperors and kings in oppressing the working people and faithful henchmen of the nobility. Their so-called "virtuous" deeds could only "make everyone laugh" and "all were unworthy of esteem." The "loyal subjects" and "wise men" who were faithful unto death to the slave-owners were no more than swine and dogs perishing in a foul ditch.

Chih asked Confucius to his face: Why, if you regard your doctrines as principles universally applicable under heaven, were you chased out again and again from the State of Lu, unable to remain in the State of Wei, ignored by people in the State of Chi and besieged in the states of Chen and Tsai? Why was it that you had to run here and there, driven from pillar to post and "could not find a place to stay under heaven"? "Are your doctrines of any worth?" His scathing criticism laid bare the ugliness of the "loyal subjects," "wise men" and "superior men" exalted by Confucius and his like.

Taking the revolutionary stand of resistance to slave-owner oppression, Liuhsia Chih considered it entirely just for the slaves to rise in rebellion and wrest back the wealth they had created from the hands of the slave-owning aristocrats. On the basis of the slaves' experience in their struggle, he gave completely new interpretations to such moral concepts as courage, righteousness, wisdom and benevolence. He explained: When the slaves went into battle against the nobles, courage meant fearlessness of death and being in the van of the charge; during a retreat, righteousness meant staying in the rear to cover the withdrawal; wisdom meant being good at analysing situations and seizing the opportune moment for battle; and benevolence meant sharing equally what was captured. In the course of his criticism of Confucius' precepts of "filial piety and brotherly duty," this outstanding

leader of the slave uprising was the first man in Chinese history to put forth from real life the moral standards of the slave class, diametrically opposed to those of the slave-owning class.

Here we find profound proof that, in class society, **"morality has always been class morality; it has either justified the domination and the interests of the ruling class, or, as soon as the oppressed class became powerful enough, it has represented its revolt against this domination and the future interests of the oppressed."**[3]

The moral standards set forth by Liuhsia Chih represented the interests of the oppressed slaves and their indignation against the slave-owners. Confucius' precepts of "filial piety and brotherly duty," on the contrary, were ideological weapons used by all the reactionaries to safeguard their reactionary rule — to the working people, they were nothing but fallacies made up to fool the masses.

Confucius, a "Crafty Hypocrite," Was the "Robber"

Striking a grand pose, Confucius talked glibly about benevolence, righteousness and virtue and dressed himself up as a "born sage." His disciples and

[3] Frederick Engels, *op. cit.*, pp. 131-32.

followers went so far as to extol him with such sayings as: "If Heaven had not produced Confucius, there would be eternal darkness."[4]

However, when this "sage" put on his handsomely decorated hat and his long robe, and with a show of courtesy called on Liuhsia Chih, his hypocritical face was immediately unmasked. Upon hearing of Confucius' arrival, Liuhsia Chih contemptuously remarked that this fellow was a "crafty hypocrite" of the State of Lu, cunning and sly, who mouthed fine words in order to deceive. He sternly denounced Confucius as a double-dealer with honey on his lips but murder in his heart, "habitually praising people to their faces" and "also habitually abusing people behind their backs"; a parasite who lived on the people's sweat and blood, "getting his food without farming and his clothing without weaving"; a reactionary politician "wagging his tongue to create trouble" and mad for official position, riches and honour. Chih enumerated Confucius' crimes of confusing people by false words and deeds and seeking fame and gain. Giving tit for tat, he boldly branded Confucius "big robber" and "Chiu the Robber" — guilty of "heinous crimes."

[4] *Quotations from Chu Tzu.*

Was Confucius a "sage" or a "big robber," a "superior man" or a "crafty hypocrite"? To this question, the reactionary ruling classes and the working people give entirely different answers. As the great revolutionary Lu Hsun put it: "It was those in authority who boosted Confucius in China, making him the sage of those in power or those anxious to take power, a sage having nothing to do with the common people."[5] The working people always regarded Confucius as a hypocrite who talked glibly about benevolence, righteousness and virtue and was a scoundrelly and reactionary advocate of retrogression.

In upbraiding Confucius to his face, Liuhsia Chih showed a clear-cut stand and boldly refuted him with reasoning and facts. Confucius' scheme of luring Chih into surrender thus ended in utter failure. In conclusion, Liuhsia Chih told him without mincing words, "What you preach is what I oppose. Get out! No more of your talk!" After this severe scolding by Chih, Confucius lost control of himself. Pallid with fear, and with blankly staring eyes, he tottered to his carriage, his hands shaking so much that it took him three tries to get hold of the reins. Like a vicious dog after a bad beating,

[5] Lu Hsun, *Confucius in Modern China.*

he fled in desperation with his tail between his legs.

The lowly are most intelligent; the élite are most ignorant. As a reactionary thinker for the slave-owning aristocrats, Confucius held the working people in contempt. He spouted such trash as "The superior man thinks in terms of righteousness, the inferior man thinks in terms of gain."[6] He slandered the working people as lacking morality, out for small gains, knowing only how to farm and labour, mere tools in the service of the lords. But the self-styled "superior man," Confucius, was defeated in his struggle with Liuhsia Chih. This was a vivid proof that the slaves who were looked down upon as mean and base by the slave-owning aristocrats were in fact most industrious, courageous and wise, and were the motive force for destroying the old world and propelling history forward, whereas Confucius and his devotees — who thought they were the élite, oppressed the masses of the people, despised productive labour, and were in fact most rotten, reactionary and ignorant.

Many statesmen and thinkers in China's history opposed Confucius to varying degrees. But it was rare to find a man like Liuhsia Chih who rejected the slave system of exploitation and oppression of

[6] *Analects,* "Li Jen."

man by man, and so sharply and incisively criticized all the representatives of the slave-owning aristocrats, ranging from emperors, kings and "sages" to "loyal subjects" and "wise men." He was able to do this because he himself was severely exploited and oppressed by the slave system, and thus best understood the reactionary nature of Confucius' preaching. We see from this that the working people have always been the main force in opposing Confucius in Chinese history.

Lin Piao — the "Robber Confucius" of Contemporary China

The face-to-face struggle between Liuhsia Chih and Confucius reflected the sharp struggle between two classes — slaves and slave-owning aristocrats — more than 2,000 years ago. Confucius' reactionary idea of restoring the slave system was firmly opposed by the slave class, which Liuhsia Chih represented. The reactionary fallacies advocated by Confucius were long ago refuted to the hilt by slaves who rose in revolt. Nevertheless, later reactionaries invariably used the doctrines of Confucius and Mencius as an ideological instrument to deceive the people and protect their reactionary rule. The bourgeois careerist and conspirator Lin

Piao was a devotee of Confucius. He took Confucius' bag of fallacies as his ideological weapon in trying to change the Party's basic line for the entire historical period of socialism, subvert the dictatorship of the proletariat in China, restore capitalism and found his fascist Lin dynasty.

From Confucius, Lin Piao took over the reactionary slogan "self-restraint and return to the rites" for his plot to restore capitalism, regarding it as important beyond compare. Lin Piao, like Confucius, was a reactionary going against the tide of history.

Lin Piao took Confucius' idealistic theory of "genius" for his own anti-Party theoretical programme. He styled himself the "heavenly horse," a "sage" who was "always the first to know and become aware." By contrast, he regarded the working people as a "mob" that thought only of "making money" and "getting rice" and knew nothing of revolutionary principles. This was no more than a refurbished version of the slander "working tirelessly for gain" — which the disciples of Confucius had flung at Liuhsia Chih.

Lin Piao plagiarized the Confucian fallacies of "virtue," "benevolence and righteousness" and "loyalty and considerateness," labelled them historical materialism and used them to attack the dictatorship of the proletariat. Ranting that "he

who relies on virtue will thrive and he who relies on force will perish," Lin Piao reviled the dictatorship of the proletariat as "tyrannical" and "dictatorial," and wanted us to carry out a "policy of benevolence" towards overthrown landlords, rich peasants, counter-revolutionaries, bad elements, Rightists and other monsters. Like Confucius, he was a spokesman of reactionary classes on the verge of extinction.

Inheriting Confucius' reactionary warning that "want of patience in small matters confounds great plans," Lin Piao formed a clique for his own selfish purpose and engaged in conspiracy and intrigues. He "never showed up without a copy of *Quotations* in hand and never opened his mouth without shouting 'Long Live.' " He told himself to be "patient," follow the "stratagem of concealment," and wait for the opportunity to realize his big plot of subverting the dictatorship of the proletariat. More than 2,000 years earlier, Liuhsia Chih had denounced Confucius as a "crafty hypocrite" who "lied in words and deceived in deeds." Lin Piao was just such a hypocrite who mouthed all the fine words but stopped at no evil deed.

The renegade and careerist Lin Piao invoked the spectre of Confucius in his plot to usurp supreme power in the Party and the state and capitulate to Soviet revisionist social-imperialism. He was an

out-and-out traitor and the crime-laden "robber Confucius" of present-day China. **"Mayflies vainly plot to topple the giant tree."** Confucius' criminal aim of restoring the slave system failed ignominiously more than 2,000 years ago and Lin Piao's plot to restore capitalism went down to even more shameful defeat. He crashed with his plane at Undur Khan in the People's Republic of Mongolia. All those who try to hold back the wheel of history come to a bad end!

Since the time when Liuhsia Chih sharply denounced Confucius, the working people of China have waged incessant and protracted struggles against the doctrines of Confucius and Mencius. But the slaves in slave society and the peasants in feudal society were not representatives of an advanced mode of production. And under the limitations imposed by historical conditions, they lacked the scientific revolutionary theory to use for the thorough defeat of the doctrines of Confucius and Mencius. Today, a political and ideological struggle to criticize Lin Piao and Confucius is deepening throughout China. In the van of this struggle are the masses of workers, peasants and soldiers, who are its main force. Led by the proletariat, the Chinese working people have become masters of the country and are fighting at the forefront of the three great revolutionary movements

— class struggle, the struggle for production and scientific experiment. With Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought as their weapon, they are the ones who can best discern the essence of Confucius' reactionary thought and hit it hard, who can best display proletarian revolutionary spirit of going against the tide and most thoroughly criticize the ultra-Rightist essence of Lin Piao's counter-revolutionary revisionist line.

Tang Hsiao

On Liuhsia Chih's Refutation of Confucius

Towards the end of the Spring and Autumn Period (770-476 B.C.) when China was moving from the slave system to the feudal system, the slaves rose in a life-and-death struggle against the slave-owners. Chih of Liuhsia (commonly called Liuhsia Chih) was an outstanding leader of a slave revolt that burst out in the states of Chi and Lu (present-day Shantung Province). He led his army in mobile warfare, striking fiercely at the ruling class and the decadent slave system. He also indignantly denounced Confucius, a representative of the ideology of the declining slave-owning aristocracy. The essay "Chih the Robber" in the book *Chuang Tzu* (a Taoist classic of 4th-3rd century B.C.) is

a valuable historical record of Liuhsia Chih's struggle against Confucius.

However, over a long period of history, most of the commentators on *Chuang Tzu* were devotees of Confucius. Proceeding from their class prejudices, they denied that there had ever been a man by the name of Liuhsia Chih, and that he had sharply condemned Confucius. Thus they vainly attempted to whitewash Confucius' crimes. This was a distortion of the facts of history.

That Liuhsia Chih actually lived at the time is amply proved by reference to documents. His name was mentioned in nineteen chapters in five works written prior to the Chin Dynasty (221-207 B.C.), namely *Chuang Tzu*, *Mencius* (4th-3rd century B.C.), *Hsun Tzu* (4th-3rd century B.C.), *Han Fei Tzu* (3rd century B.C.) and *Lu Shih Chun Chiu* (3rd century B.C.). Later Szuma Chien of the Western Han Dynasty (206 B.C.-A.D. 8), of whom it was said that he had "mastered all literature and events of the past," recorded Liuhsia Chih's revolutionary activities in two essays in his *Historical Records*. Wang Chung (A.D. 27-c. 97), an ancient materialist thinker imbued with critical spirit, also took note of Chih's revolutionary activities in his *Lun Heng* (*Discourses Weighed in the Balance*). Both books were generally in accord with "Chih the Robber" in *Chuang Tzu*. The fact

that Liuhsia Chih's story was told in the works of so many authors proves that his deeds were widely known, and that he was a historical figure of some consequence.

We cannot now verify when Liuhsia Chih was born and died. But some pre-Chin writers described him as an adversary of Tseng Shen and Shih Chiu, who were contemporary with Confucius. So he must have been as well. Moreover, in those writings, he was dubbed "Chih the Robber (盜跖)." The Chinese character 盜 (for "robber") first appeared in the Spring and Autumn Period. In *Mo Tzu* (5th-4th century B.C.) "robber" and "bandit rebellion" were mentioned in the same breath. The exploiting classes of the time referred to all armed groups of the revolutionary people as "robbers." The use of the character also testifies to Chih's having lived in the Spring and Autumn Period.

Liuhsia Chih's refutation of Confucius, as specifically narrated in "Chih the Robber" in *Chuang Tzu*, is corroborated by other writings. *Lu Shih Chun Chiu* says that Liuhsia Chih asked people to put an iron cudgel in his coffin after his death, so that when he saw King Tang of the Shang Dynasty, and King Wen of the Chou Dynasty and other ringleaders of the slave-owning class in the nether world, he could smash in their heads. Here

we see to the full Chih's implacable hatred towards the "ancient kings" and "sages" whom Confucius adored. The book also recounts Chih's interpretation of such moral concepts as courage, righteousness, wisdom and benevolence, in which he put forward the ethic of the slave class diametrically opposed to "filial piety" and "brotherly duty" as preached by Confucius. This demonstrates that Chih had a political theory of his own. Szuma Chien in *Historical Records* wrote that Liuhsia Chih was active in propagating revolutionary theory. And the author of *Hsun Tzu* described Chih as skilled and convincing in debate, striking awe into his antagonists. In *Discourses on the State Control of Salt and Iron* Sang Hung-yang the Legalist is cited as pointing out that "Confucius tried to convince Chih by rites" but failed. These works conform with the account of "Chih the Robber" in *Chuang Tzu* telling of how Liuhsia Chih frustrated Confucius' effort to induce him to surrender and denounced the crimes of the "ancient kings" with dauntless militancy, eloquently refuting and utterly disconcerting Confucius. They bear out and confirm each other.

"Chih the Robber" was written in a later generation on the basis of the many stories about his activities, popular among the working people. It must be pointed out that the author of the essay

also directed some slanders at Chih, and in some places went so far as to preach passive and decadent Taoist thinking in his name. Such works must be examined from the viewpoint of class and class struggle, using the method of class analysis. Reactionary rulers all through history have maintained that only their official "classics" and "biographies" constitute authentic and reliable history. In fact, most of those writings twisted history and reversed right and wrong in the interest of their own class. History is created by the working people. Therefore, it is the stories about Chih circulating among them that are the best and most worthy of trust as a reflection of historical facts. Works written on the basis of such stories may err in some details, such as dates, certain episodes and the infusion of the ideas and language of later times. But it is possible to derive historical truth from them if we grasp at their core and put aside the minor branchings and discard the false while retaining the true.

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