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Factional Struggle in China

Kevin Bradley

FACTIONAL STRUGGLE IN CHINA

By Kevin Bradley

The recent campaign of denunciation against Lin Piao and Confucius has been accompanied by minor acts of violence in some Chinese provinces and veiled attacks in the Chinese press against Chou En-lai. To understand the current faction fight in the ruling Communist Party bureaucracy, it is necessary to examine the long-standing deep split in the party between the bureaucratic voluntarists and the bureaucratic moderates.

Bases of the Factions

This twenty-five year split in the Chinese Communist Party is a result of the particular contradiction facing China which prohibits its economic development. China's grain output per person is only one half the level Russia had in 1928 on the eve of the forced collectivization of agriculture. There is very little agricultural surplus in China. Virtually all easily cultivatable land is in use, and considerable capital investment would be needed to put marginal land into operation. Further yields can only be raised with large capital investments, particularly in fertilizer plants (animal and human wastes are almost totally utilized). Yet the sizeable capital investments needed to raise agricultural output, and especially to keep it ahead of the rising population, inevitably means cuts in capital investment in industry. The other alternative, the rapid development of industry means the stagnation of agriculture, which both cuts down the agricultural raw materials used as industrial inputs and brings the grain level per capita down to the nutritionally unsound or starvation level.¹

The bureaucratic moderate faction of the Party recognizes that it is impossible to have the rapid growth of both industry and agriculture at the same time and has opted for the balanced and therefore slow growth of both. The voluntarist* faction tries to accomplish the impossible - rapid growth of both sectors by superhuman effort. Inevitably, when it is in command of the economy, it leads it into a bureaucratically induced depression because of the vast disproportionalities between the sectors and the completely uneven growth of different industries. This is what happened in the Great Leap Forward when there was a great drop in industrial production, with thousands of factories operating at less than full production, the land deteriorated and agricultural output fell so that there were cases of starvation and malnutrition even affected the Army.

1. This contradiction is explained more fully in Nai-Ruenn Chen and Walter Galenson, The Chinese Economy Under Communism, Aldine, 1969.

* Voluntarism means the theory that will can conquer all. It comes from the Latin word for will and is used for philosophies like that of Fichte or Schopenhauer. It is used here instead of "leftist" or "radical" which the press usually uses for the Mao faction.

The differences between the two factions, however, go way beyond strategies for economic growth, but affect almost every area of political and economic life. The voluntarists include Mao Tse-tung, Lin Piao, Chen Po-ta, Chiang Ching (Mrs. Mao Tse-tung), and Yao Wen-yuan at the Politburo level. The moderates' leaders are Liu Shao-chi, Teng Hsiao-ping and Chou En-lai. The moderates emerged as the dominant force in the Party at the peak of the crisis caused by the Great Leap Forward. The voluntarists retrenched into the Peoples Liberation Army (PLA) when they were able to remove Peng Te-huai in 1959 and replace him with Lin Piao. They strengthened the Party branches at all levels of the Army with their men. The voluntarists also found a base in the Shanghai Party Committee. The bureaucratic moderate base was in the Peking Municipal Party Committee, the Peking military garrison, the municipal police force, and outside Peking in the Southwestern and Northwestern regional Party bureaus, and in some regional military commanders (Wang En-mao in Sinkiang and Ulanfu in Inner Mongolia).

The voluntarists' basic idea was that the masses could overcome almost any material obstacle if they put their minds to it. They were for mass mobilization and tremendous heroic efforts. It is this "reliance on the masses" which confuses so many foreign leftists. They take this for true concern for working people. In reality, the Maoist mass mobilizations are characteristic of all Stalinist societies, and are found today in Russia, Eastern Europe, Yugoslavia, and Cuba. It is a characteristic of totalitarian societies that everyone should be mobilized, everyone should be involved in mass campaign, so that no independent initiative is shown and opposition does not develop. The moderate Tan Chen-lin was supposed to have put the moderate position in the following way (according to the Mass Criticism Group which emerged during the Cultural Revolution in the Administrative Bureau of Agricultural Mechanization): "Leaders...must combine revolutionary enthusiasm with business-like sense. They must be able not only to put forward advanced targets, but to ensure realization of the targets. They must not indulge in empty talk and bluff. The targets we put forward must be those that can be reached with hard work. Do not tightly publicize as plan that which is not really attainable, lest failure dampen the enthusiasm of the masses and delight the conservatives."³

The voluntarists felt it more important to be Red than expert, that the masses were capable of great inventions, and that with Mao's thought,

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2. Jan Prybyla, The Political Economy of Communist China, Intext, 1970, p. 489.
 3. Agricultural Machinery and Technique (Peking), No. 9 (Sept. 8, 1968), in Union Research Service (Hong Kong) Vol. 53, Nos. 5, 6, 7 and 8.

they could solve anything. One result of this policy was the introduction of Mao's favorite double-wheel, double-share plow throughout the country without trials in each area. The result, as the Maoists themselves admitted, was that 230,000 of them were destroyed because the peasants found it worthless.⁴ The moderates wanted to develop experts who would also be Red. They would be responsible for innovations and would try them out first. Mass campaigns had to be handled carefully so they did not create chaos.

The voluntarists believed the class struggle continued in the socialist stage and it was necessary constantly to renew it. By this they meant that the old landlords and rich peasant who had been reduced to the level of poor peasants be kept from reasserting themselves, and also the voluntarists' struggle against the bureaucratic moderates. The moderates thought the class struggle was essentially attenuated in the socialist stage. The dangers of the restoration of capitalism were checked by the nationalization of property and the vigilance of the Communist Party and the State. Capitalist and scientific experts who may be of use to the state should be "united with" rather than suppressed. "They should be fed, should do farming and reform themselves through labor so that they will be made to change their thinking... Those who have not been executed should be considered as mankind."⁵

According to the Maoist voluntarists, poverty is a source of strength and even the aim of communism. According to the moderates, poverty is China's great weakness, it may be a necessity for a while, but the aim of socialism and communism is to overcome it through economic development.

The voluntarists believe in relying on moral incentives. Material incentives encourages selfishness and threatens the return to capitalism. In agriculture, this meant collective farms organized at the commune level with mess halls so that the product returning to the peasants was strictly regulated in advance. The private plots were eliminated. In industry, it meant the elimination of bonuses and incentive pay, voluntary overtime and weekend work and the general substitution of spiritual rewards (working for socialism, labor hero buttons) for material goods. Reliance on material incentives was denounced as "economism". For Lenin and the Russian Bolsheviks, economism meant concentrating only on trade union questions while ignoring the political struggle, but for the Maoists it meant being for the material advancement of the workers. The

4. Ibid, "Opinions Concerning the Problems of Disassembling and Destroying Some Double-Share Plows," May 1957.

5. Liu Shao-chi, "Talk to the August 1 Combat Corp.," (August 3, 1966) in Collected Works of Liu Shao-chi, 1958-1967, Hong Kong.

bureaucratic pragmatists want to mix material incentives and moral incentives, as long as the material incentives increase productivity and leave a sufficient surplus for state accumulation. In agriculture, peasants were to be remunerated at the production team (20 household) level which would reward initiative, or even at the individual household level.

The voluntarists believed China could fully collectivize agriculture before it was mechanized. In the course of socialist transformation of agriculture, every change in the relations of production inevitably promoted further growth in the productive forces.⁶ The moderates on the other hand knew that Russia had a considerable stock of tractors before Stalin undertook forced industrialization and believed it was impossible to make major gains in production by social reorganization alone. "We definitely recognize that the relations of production must suit the nature of the forces of production and we are against hasty advance which outruns the stage of historical development."⁷

The voluntarists thought that if the moderates were indissolubly in control and could do grave harm to China it was permissible to mobilize extra Party shock troops such as the Red Guards. The moderates believed the Party must be dominant, all disputes must be settled inside it in a Stalinist bureaucratic centralist manner and Party legality must not be violated.

The voluntarists relied solely on the Thought of Mao Tse-tung. It was the guide to politics, the economy, the military, culture, science and medicine. Liu Shao-chi on the other hand said the view was erroneous "that the Chinese revolution could be directed by relying on subjective imagination of the moment, or merely adducing isolated quotations from certain books."⁸

On population, Mao wrote in 1961: "Of all things in the world, people are the most precious. Under the leadership of the Communist Party, as long as there are people, every kind of miracle can be performed."⁹ The moderates say the Chinese population growth is a definite problem and advocated rigid birth control. "Promotion of planned child-

6. Tan Chen-lin, "Speeding Up Mechanization of China's Agriculture," Peking Review, Sept. 27, 1960.

7. Lo Keng-mo in Ta Keng-pao, Peking, Nov. 27, 1961.

8. Address at the Meeting in Celebration of the 40th Anniversary of the Founding of the Communist Party of China, (Peking: FLP 1961), p. 18.

9. Cited in Far Eastern Economic Review, Jan. 6, 1966.

birth is the established policy of our country during the socialist construction period."¹⁰

In the Army, the voluntarists thought man was more important than technique; politics must be in command and the army should take part in economic construction. The moderates wanted a professional army, with clear ranks and rewards for officers and the removal of the army from labor as much as possible. With nuclear weapons they felt there was little room for protracted war.¹¹

The differences between the two factions, as we have seen, are quite thorough going. The two groups have carried out their fight in the Party since the establishment of the Peoples Republic. Each faction fed off the other. The moderates could win over swing people at the highest Party level, the Central Committee, as a result of the economic chaos brought about as a result of the voluntarists' program. The moderates could produce order and a balanced growth, but also stagnation which impelled the voluntarists to start up the fight again.

Post Cultural Revolution

In the Cultural Revolution, the voluntarists went outside the normal party channels. They mobilized the Red Guards, who were middle school students, and also Red Rebels, who were labor heroes who accepted the Maoist program of self-abnegation. The government reorganization that followed the Cultural Revolution was that Revolutionary committees were built in each province and large cities to replace the old governmental organs. These committees were made up of rehabilitated Party cadres, Revolutionary Rebels and PLA members. The Army soon emerged dominant in the Three-In-One Combinations. At the Tenth Party Congress in August 1973, the leaders announced that Party membership had risen to 28 million, a 40% increase since the 17 million of 1961.¹² Probably millions of new activists mobilized by the Maoists during the Cultural Revolution as Red Guards and Red Rebels had been brought into the Party.

The PLA appeared to have come out on top by the end of the Cultural Revolution. This has led some commentators to refer to a military

10. Nan-fang Jih-pao (Canton) April 14, 1965.

11. This whole section follows closely Prybyla, pp. 324-332. It is stated here with references to make the differences between the factions readily available.

12. Byung-joon Ahn, "The Cultural Revolution and China's Search for Political Order," China Quarterly, No. 58, Apr.-June 1974, p. 82.

dictatorship. What they ignore is that the Maoists' faction was embedded in the military, and its victory meant the victory of the voluntarists. Apparently, though, the majority of forces favored the moderates headed by Chou En-lai. Since Lin Piao has been publicly denounced, it is now said that the disputes between the two factions broke out of the second session of the Ninth Central Committee in August and September 1970, a year before Lin Piao supposedly died in a plane crash in Mongolia.

Fall of Lin Piao

Lin Piao's Project 571 for an armed coup de-etat is completely fantastic. According to Chou En-lai, Lin Piao plotted with "a small handful of sworn conspirators" to assassinate Mao and try to take power. He was afraid to carry it out and so fled to Russia and crashed in Mongolia.¹³ However, when the Party's theoretical journal, Hung Chi, explained the plot for the first time to the Chinese people, it said "Among other things, the project called for gaining control of the mass media to start a political offensive." Three million copies of the pamphlet "Lin Piao During the War to Liberate Northeast China" were supposedly distributed in many provinces and municipalities.¹⁴

Not only did Lin Piao and his wife, Yeh Chun, a Politburo member, die in the supposed crash, but thirty high ranking commanders and political commissars disappeared. These included armed forces Chief of Staff Huang Yung-sheng, Air Force Commander Wu Fa-hsien, Navy Political Commissar Lo Tso-peng, head of the General Logistics Department Chiu Hui-tso, and Deputy Chief of Staff Yen Chung-chuan.¹⁵

The purge was not limited to the military, but also included the influential Politburo member Chen Po-ta, who often appeared next to Mao with the Red Book in his hand during the Cultural Revolution. At first, Lin Piao was attacked as an "ultra-leftist" who wrongly politicized various activities, but by the 10th Party Congress in the Summer of 1973, he was attacked as an "ultra-rightist."¹⁶ During July 1972, Lin Piao was

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13. Warren H. Phillips, "Chou's Tale of Lin Piao Rivals Exciting Fiction," Wall Street Journal, Oct. 12, 1972.
 14. "China Adds Data on Lin Piao Case," New York Times, Apr. 21, 1973.
 15. Tillman Durdin, "Top China Posts in Forces Vacant," New York Times, Aug. 6, 1972; and C. L. Sulzberger, "What Lies Behind the Purge," New York Times, Dec. 12, 1973.
 16. Richard Wich, "The Tenth Party Congress," China Quarterly, No. 58, Apr.-June, 1974, p. 233.

attacked for promoting "empty politics in the army and neglecting military techniques. The PLA Daily declared, "In order to win victories in a future war against aggression, we must exert great efforts to master highly developed modern military techniques.¹⁷ Mao Tse-tung has not appeared outside his study since January 1972.¹⁸ At the Tenth Party Congress, Chou En-lai made a mocking reference to those who always waved the Red Book. Since Lin Piao wrote the introduction, it is no longer circulated in China. Further, the references to Mao in the Chinese press are way down.

Return of the Moderate Order

According to Chou-En-lai, only 1% of the Party was purged during the Cultural Revolution.^{18a} Cadres that had been criticized during the Cultural Revolution are still in the plants in responsible posts to restore unity. Factory managers who were accused of taking the capitalist road were simply rotated to other plants where they hadn't been attacked. The Party remains the only organized force at the factory level. It passes on all nominations for worker representatives and is in charge of plant management. For individual factories there is a dual leadership of the Central Ministry and the local Party Committee. In the communes, the Party and administrative apparatus has been merged into one, with the Party again controlling all the decision making posts. In education, instead of the Central Government deciding curriculum, textbooks and length of study, this is now decided on a provincial level.

The pre-Cultural Revolution system of grading cadres is still in effect. A Grade 1 cadre gets 728 yuan per month and a Grade 30 cadre 20 yuan, the highest 36 times the lowest. (1956 Compendium of Financial Laws and Regulations of the Peoples Republic of China, Peking 1957, pp. 226-47). In Universities, senior professors get 340 yuan a month and beginning teachers 56 yuan. In factories, the highest paid employee gets five times the lowest. In the Chengchow Textile Machine Building Factory, technicians and cadres range from 33 to 170 yuan per month, while workers go from 106 to 33 yuan. In the Shanghai Diesel Engine Factory, the top technicians get 210 yuan and workers from 42 to 129 yuan. In the communes, there are also considerable differentials. In the Sino-Hungarian Friendship Commune, the most prosperous production team made 500 yuan a year, the poorest 200 yuan. The workpoint system is in general use in agriculture. This piecework system gives the farm worker points for so many

17. "Peking Stresses Training in Army," New York Times, July 2, 1972.

18. Wich, op. cit., p. 231.

18a. This whole section follows Frederick Teiwes, "Report from China. Before and After the Cultural Revolution," China Quarterly No. 52, who visited China with a delegation from the Research School of Pacific Studies of the Australian National University.

mu harvested of such and such a crop. After the state takes its compulsory deliveries at prices set by itself, after taxes are paid to the state and inputs of machinery and fertilizer are paid for at state established prices, the remainder of income is divided according to workpoints earned during the year. Today, more attention is paid to "political consciousness" and "work attitudes" in evaluating the points, but it is piecework nevertheless. From 7 to 8% of commune land is set aside for private plots where the farm workers raise pigs, poultry and vegetables. Production of these plots thrives, just like in Russia, for the communes are virtually the same as the Russian Kolkhozi which they were patterned after. In short, the entire old system on the Russian-East European model is back in operation in China, much to the disgust of the voluntarists.

Rehabilitation of Purged Bureaucrats

Along with purge of the leading members of the voluntarist faction in the Army, there has been the rehabilitation of members of the moderate faction who were purged during the Cultural Revolution. Chief among these is Teng Hsiao-ping, for twelve years secretary general of the Communist Party and now Vice Premier, second only to Chou En-lai. Teng had been denounced as the second man in authority taking the capitalist road, the number two villain next to Liu Shao-chi. During the Cultural Revolution, Mao had said that Teng had grown so confident in his power that he hadn't reported to him in seven years. "Teng Hsiao-ping is deaf, but whenever we are at a meeting together he sits far away from me." Red Guards attacked him for ordering "high class food and hors d'oeuvres" from a restaurant in Peking for his bridge games, employing private railroad cars and flying his bridge partners in from around the country. On the question of whether collective farming or private plots were better, he was quoted as saying, "It doesn't matter whether a cat is black or white as long as it catches mice." He confessed to Red Guards that he had been guilty of holding counter-revolutionary views.¹⁹

The most prominent rehabilitated military man was Yang Chen-wu, acting Chief of Staff of the PLA from 1966 to March 1968. Supposedly he had persecuted Mrs. Mao, bugged Mao's studio and passed the information on to the Russians. Also rehabilitated on August 1, 1974 was Yu Li-chin, former political commissar of the Air Force,²⁰ who was accused of trying to smuggle Liu Shao-chi to the Russians. Eleven other military men who had been purged were also rehabilitated.

19. John Burns, "Speculation Rises as Peking Rehabilitates a Victim of Purge," New York Times, Apr. 14, 1974; Tillman Durdin, "A Purged Chinese Listed in Top Ranks," New York Times, Jan. 12, 1974; Joseph Lelyveld, "Top Chinese Who Made Comeback," New York Times, Apr. 11, 1974, p. 12.

20. "China Rehabilitates 13 Officers Purged in Cultural Revolution," New York Times, Aug. 2, 1974.

Another notorious rightist who had been rehabilitated in August 1972 was Chen Tsai-tao, the military commander for central China. In 1967 in Wuhan, Chen and the Million Warriors opposed the Red Guards in the crucial Wuhan Incident. For weeks the large industrial city was in revolt against Peking, which was the center of Maoist influence. Wuhan industry was shut down. Peking had to send in the Air Force, troops and the Yangtze flotilla to subdue the revolt. The Million Warriors kidnapped Deputy Premier Hsieh Fu-eh and Wang Li of the Cultural Revolution Group. They almost kidnapped Chou En-lai, who managed to land elsewhere. At that time Chou, who for years had been a moderate but who was quick to change sides to stay on the top, was working with the Mao-Liu group. Chen later came to Peking, confessed and disappeared from public view.²¹ Other military men rehabilitated along with Chen were Chung Han-hua, former political commissar of the Wuhan command, Yang Yung, former commander of the Peking military region, and Chen Yun formerly a top economist and Politburo member.²² In July 1974, Kuo Lin-hsiang was made political commissar of the PLA general logistics department. In 1967, he had been denounced as an obstinate follower of Liu Shao-chi. The acting President of the Chinese Republic until October 1974 was Tung Po-wu, who had been deputy chairman of the Republic under Liu.²³ Perhaps if Liu Shao-chi hadn't died of cancer a few years ago, he too would have been rehabilitated.

The Criticize Confucius Campaign

This campaign is obviously not aimed so much at Confucius' thinking as it is part of the ongoing faction fight. The first attack on Confucius and on Western culture and cultural exchange with the West appeared in a Shanghai magazine, Study and Criticism, in September 1973, right after the Tenth Party Congress. The magazine was said to be put out by editors at Fudan University in Shanghai, but it was speculated that Yao Wen-yuan was behind it. He initiated the Cultural Revolution by his writings from Shanghai. He is allied with Chiang Ching (Mrs. Mao) and Wang Hung-wen from Shanghai, formerly a young textile worker who broke several strikes there during the Cultural Revolution. Study and Criticism said it wanted to "carry through the principle of a hundred schools contending and promoting discussion between different opinions in the academic field." It said it would "criticize the bourgeoisie". Its size and format was almost exactly the same as Hung Chi, the party theoretical journal and it was circulated in bookstores in Canton and Peking until it disappeared in March 1974. It aimed for national influ-

21. Tillman Durdin, "Purged Army Men at Fete in Peking," New York Times, Aug. 2, 1972.

22. "China Rehabilitates 13 Officers....," loc. cit.

23. "Chinese Official Returns to Favor," New York Times, July 12, 1974.

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Study and Criticism analyzed the French Revolution where it saw the balance of power held by Robespierre who "raised his left hand to strike down the right," and then "his right hand to strike down the left." He was guillotined, the article says, because he feared to carry the Revolution through to the end.²⁴ At this time, Western reporters in Hong Kong reported Chou was being attacked, though not by name, for offering material incentives to workers, reinstating obscure party officials who had been purged, trying to achieve family planning by decree and using exams instead of politics as a basis for admission to universities.

Allegory

The Chinese press in early 1974 had several stories about ancient premiers who tried to stage a coup against their emperors and then denied responsibility for it. Confucius was said to have backed a coup attempt in the state of Lu in 501 B.C. Hearing of the coup "he danced with joy and shouted that he would revive the system of Chou dynasty". When the coup was discovered, he covered up his involvement and denounced its leader. Having deceived the emperor, he was named head of police and acting premier, which he used to implement his "reactionary political line." Another premier, Lu Pu-wei, secretly backed a coup by one of his friends against the Chin dynasty, which had always been known for its despotism until these writings reversed it. The coup failed and its leader was "dragged out," but it was another year until Lu Pu-wei was discovered and ousted.²⁵

Political Illness

Ten days before Chou En-lai missed his first banquet because of supposed illness, an article appeared in the English language. Peking Review had a story about a prime minister in the state of Chin in the 3rd Century B.C. He realized "he was actually sitting on top of a volcano that could erupt at any time" and "asked to return the seal of prime minister because of illness." In advising the ruler he criticized the old policy of "attacking the distant states and keeping friendly relations with nearby states." Instead, he was for "keeping friendly relations with distant states and attacking the nearby states." Lin Piao was known for his advocacy of Peoples War and opposition to U.S. imperialism; Chou for his policy of friendship with the U.S. This premier's

24. Joseph Lelyveld, "Chinese Oil Output Figures are a Puzzle," New York Times, Jan. 8, 1974.

25. Joseph Lelyveld, "China's Ideological Drive Drive Identifies First Live Targets," New York Times, April 15, 1974.

successor, Tsai Tse (Teng Hsiao-ping?) stayed in office for only several months and voluntarily resigned for fear of attack by the aristocratic slave-owning class."²⁶

In July 1974, Peoples Daily had an article on the death of the emperor Han Kao-tsu who founded the Han dynasty in 206 B.C. The article said his widow took over and carried on firm of purpose. Travelers in Chekiang province reported seeing powers referring to instructions from Chiang Ching (Mrs. Mao) and Wang Hung-wen, the young leader from Shanghai. This was very unusual since normally instructions were from Mao and the Politburo. In Chekiang, the once prominent Red Guard leader Chang Yung-shing who had disappeared into obscurity was back leading rallies sponsored by the provincial party committee. The party leaders in the province were under attack in posters.²⁷

Denunciations

From March to June 1974, a number of wall posters appeared in Peking and a number of provincial cities. Li Teh-sheng, one of five deputy chairmen of the Communist Party was denounced in Anhwei Province, his home province and power base where he was the military leader until transferred to Shenyang Military Region in Manchuria in January 1974. Other military commanders attacked were Hsieh Chen-hua in Shansi for allowing an opera to attack Mao and Chiang Ching, and two of reshuffled regional commanders, Tseng Ssu-yu of Wuhan and Han Hsien-lu of the Lanchow Military Region.²⁸

Another Politburo member, Wu Teh, chairman of the Party Committee in Peking, was attacked indirectly as he was too strong to be attacked openly. The Municipal Revolutionary Committee was accused of trying to rehabilitate the reputations of Liu Shao-chi and former Mayor Peng Chen of Peking, both of whom were major Cultural Revolution targets. The posters attacking them were signed by six factory workers who had been on the Municipal Revolutionary Committee during the Cultural Revolution. They accused the Committee of trying to "keep the lid" on the drive to criticize Confucius and Lin Piao and of ousting and discrediting a number of Revolutionary Rebels like themselves.²⁹ The same week a Peking

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26. Joseph Lelyveld, "Peking Uses Round of Banquets to Show New Political Line-Up," New York Times, May 27, 1974.
 27. Joseph Lelyveld, "New Riddle in China: The Golden Monkey," New York Times, July 18, 1974.
 28. "Key Figure in China Assailed on Poster," New York Times, Apr. 12, 1974; "China's Ideological Drive...", loc. cit.
 29. "Posters in Peking Cite Shortcomings of City's Leaders," New York Times, June 14, 1974; "Peking Prohibits Interference with Posters Attacking Aides," New York Times, June 15, 1975.

poster attacked another Politburo member by name, Hua Kuo-feng, secretary of the Party in Hunan province.³⁰

It would appear the campaign against Lin Piao was started by the moderates to attack the voluntarists, while the campaign against Confucius was initiated by the Maoists to attack the moderates. Both sides pretended to carry out the others campaign, but for their own purposes and with little enthusiasm. Provincial party heads have been denounced as well as national figures. Wang Chia-tao was attacked as "Lin Piao's sworn follower" and the "incarnation of the rightist trend." "Smash Wang Chia-tao's head" a poster said.³¹ In Shansi province posters called for the removal of Hsieh Chen-hua, first party secretary and military commander, and Tsao Chung-nan, deputy political commissar of the province.³² At the end of July 1974, posters attacked the deputy mayor of Peking, Yang Shou-shan, for cracking down on the poster writers. He was accused of telling a meeting that he wasn't in a hurry to rehabilitate the revolutionary committee because of factionalism. The posters attacked this as an error because the committees were the positive product of the Cultural Revolution.³³

Strikes and Sabotage

By June and July 1974, the conflicts had led to some violent clashes, and more importantly, there were reports of strikes and slow-downs in production. A poster appeared in Peking put up by a group of tractor workers from Kiangsi province. Apparently, someone had financed their train ticket, which is quite beyond a worker's salary. They accused the factory manager of "sabotage activities," of fomenting strife and cutting off electrical power to undermine the campaign to criticize Lin Piao.³⁴ During the Cultural Revolution, factory managers had indeed locked workers out or tried to mobilize them against the voluntarists. This simply wetted the workers' appetites for demands of

30. Paul Strauss, "Peking Posters Outline Chaos, Output Decline," Journal of Commerce, June 25, 1974.

31. "Peking Posters..." loc. cit.

32. "Two Officials in China Criticized By Posters in Provincial Capital," New York Times, March 29, 1974.

33. "New Wall Posters in Peking Criticize a Deputy Mayor," New York Times, August 1, 1974.

34. "Peking Posters Assail Factory Chiefs," New York Times, June 23, 1974.

their own and showed them their potential power, which they were quick to utilize. The posters from the Kiangsi workers said some blood was shed and some people were jailed. The "rightwingers" armed themselves with wooden clubs and iron bars and commandeered ten trucks. They were accused of planning a coup and of oppressing the workers.³⁵

In Hunan, Mao's home province, posters that attacked Politburo member Hua Kuo-feng for crushing leftist organizations reported that "production has frequently been stopped."³⁶ The most serious reports came from Kiangsu province. Here, a radio broadcast said that gangsters and other "bad elements" had "seriously sabotaged social order and disrupted production." Fighting was reported between groups in Nanking. The radio broadcast the following: "A handful of class enemies are undermining the movement - sabotaging industrial and agricultural production, communications and transport. They must never be allowed to stir up disorder, carry out sabotage and make trouble. It is necessary to exercise dictatorship over all thieves, swindlers, murderers, arsonists, hooligan gangs and various bad elements who have seriously sabotaged social order."³⁷

In Shantung province, an editorial said, "it is necessary to protect the property of the state and collectives and to struggle against all actions to sabotage such property." The press uses phrases such as "Masses and cadres, stick to your tasks" and "educate the workers - to persist in the eight-hour workday system."³⁸

The Journal of Commerce reporter, Robert Strauss, wrote from Hong Kong that Chinese workers have been staging a slowdown strike during June to September 1974 to get wage increases. Although China had practically no inflation for many years, recently with some goods in short supply as a result of production and transportation slowdowns, there has been the equivalent of inflation. Workers have managed to win a four to five yuan a month increase, an 8 to 10% amount.³⁹ Strauss cites only travelers and diplomatic sources as his references, so until this can be verified in the Chinese press, it must be considered with caution.

35. "Posters in Peking Tell of Bloodshed in Rightist Uprising," New York Times, June 24, 1974.

36. "Peking Posters Outline Chaos...", loc. cit.

37. Paul Strauss, "Peking See Dangers in Stress Put on Output," Journal of Commerce.

38. Ibid.

39. Journal of Commerce, Sept. 6, 1974.

Recent Developments

The posters that appeared in June and July were apparently approved by the Politburo since a document was circulated in the apparatus a month before they appeared authorizing them. The moderates decided to attack Chen Po-ta, who was supposedly the head of the May 16 corps. This group under Chi Pen-yu, Wang Li and Kuan Feng called for "dragging out a handful of capitalist roaders within the Army" and the removal of Chou En-lai. The posters of the moderates during June and July 1974 accused various party leaders of being followers of Chen Po-ta. As a response, various provincial groups that had been linked to the May 16 Corps claimed that they were being repressed and wanted those responsible removed from power.⁴⁰

In September, Mao was named Defense Minister and Chairman of the Peoples Republic, posts that had long been open and subject to speculation as to who would fill them.⁴¹ Mao's taking them would seem to be a demand on the part of the voluntarists for important posts, using Mao's prestige as the bargaining ploy.

Robert English, the Los Angeles Times China reporter, claims that the moderates made unmistakable attacks on Mao's supposed infallibility in Peoples Daily and on the radio.⁴² Chou's political heart attack, Mao's elevation to the highest state posts and a possible attack on Mao, show that the faction fight is near bursting out into the open. Perhaps the moderates tried to postpone the showdown during the crucial harvest season or both sides are marshalling their forces. Both Mao and Chou are quite old and no one would be surprised if one of them died suddenly, perhaps secretly helped on by a little poison. The London Daily Telegraph reported a Chinese leak that Mao had a stroke in September 1974. Mao promptly appeared for photos with the Danish prime minister. Analysts speculated the moderates were trying to discredit Chiang Ching.⁴³ The most important thing for revolutionary socialists, however, is that the bureaucratic factional struggle seems about to burst into the open again, and already the working class is asserting its power over economic demands.*

40. Paul Strauss, "China Facing Severe Internal Struggles," Journal of Commerce, July 8, 1974.

41. "China Said to Name Mao Defense Head," New York Times, Sept. 21, 1974.

42. Los Angeles Times, July 28, 1974.

43. "Peking Denounces Report that Mao Suffered Stroke," New York Times, Oct. 18, 1974; Joseph Lelyveld, "China Watchers Ponder Basis of Report on Mao," New York Times, Oct. 21, 1974.

*Robert English writing in the November 2 Los Angeles Times claims the Peking Kwangming Daily attacked Mao, Chou and Teng, and said Mao had allowed a pro-capitalist group to come to power. If Mao is in the moderate faction, this would in no way change the basic argument presented here of the factions.

The Cultural Revolution left the bureaucratic state in disarray and led the working class to test its independent might in a massive way for the first time since 1927-29. The memories of the Cultural Revolution are so recent, and the working class not defeated like 35 years ago, so that if the factional struggle opens things up, all China might be shaken.