

COMRADE CH'EN PO-TA'S SPEECH  
AT THE POLITICAL CONSULTATIVE AUDITORIUM

(Interpreted by Comrade Wang Li)

Volume **II**, pages 28-30

Foreword

At 8:30 in the evening of 25 September, Comrades Ch'en Po-ta and Wang Li received the "8.15" Combat Corps of the Chungking University and the revolutionary faculty and students of the Southwest and other areas in the Political Consultative Auditorium. When the students exposed the errors committed by the Chungking Municipal Commission and the Southwest Bureau in the great cultural revolution, Comrade Ch'en Po-ta made a speech. We have arranged the record of the speech as follows, and we will be responsible for the errors, if any.

Greetings to you all on behalf of the Central Cultural Revolution Small Team!

When you came here, you hoped that we could come and talk to you, but we are sorry that we often disappointed you due to the heavy work load and the lack of personnel!

The Central Cultural Revolution Small Team supports the revolutionary actions of the revolutionary faculty and students in all areas of the nation. This is the policy of Chairman Mao and the Party Central. Our Central Cultural Revolution Small Team can only follow it; we cannot act contrary to it.

We feel that the leadership of all areas, all units, and all levels must regard the revolutionary mass movement according to the instructions of Chairman Mao and the policy of the Party Central. In the great cultural revolution, the leadership of all levels must ob-

serve the 16 articles formulated under the sponsorship of Chairman Mao and the editorials of the People's Daily. They must not act contrary thereto. It would be an error if they did. We are very dissatisfied with those leaders who have failed to follow the directions of the Central. We express our sympathy to those students who suffered a wrong in the cultural revolution movement.

We just received a letter, and we completely agree with the problems brought up in it. (Comrade Wang Li reads the letter.)

The several demands are:

1. Immediately resume the activities of the cultural revolution small team elected by the workers themselves.

Comrade Ch'en Po-ta interrupts: Where this condition exists, it may be applied to the school. The following should be supplemented: Whether in the school, unit, cultural revolution small team, or cultural revolution committee, all those not elected by the people according to the 16 articles are invalid; all organizations which are appointed, maneuvered by some one backstage, or assigned are invalid, and must be re-elected.

2. Immediately withdraw organizations transferred from other units, and other organizations used for the purpose of suppressing the mass movement.

3. Immediately stop arresting the people and fighting among the people.

4. Our cultural revolution must be handled by our own units.

5. Immediately pay wages to the workers; the wages of those with dissenting or opposing opinions must not be withheld.

6. Immediately stop the suppression by the armed and public security personnel.

Comrade Ch'en Po-ta thereupon continues with his speech. The opinions expressed by the workers of the Nanking Hydroelectric Team are rational and correct, and compatible with the 16 articles. The comrades of the said team request the Party Central to solve the problems. Chairman Mao and the Party Central formulated the 16 articles for this purpose. We eagerly hope that the problems will be promptly solved by Nanking, so that they can return to Nanking on an early date in order to tackle the revolution and production simultaneously. The spirit of the solution of these problems is found in the 16 articles. Now, some people refuse to follow it, and others follow a contrary policy. Isn't it so? (Audience: Yes!)

I feel that our students can study, observe, and learn the 16 articles in Peking, master the 16 articles, and master the weapon of struggle. In the cultural revolution movement, we want to express ourselves vigorously by large-letter posters and debates, but we must not squabble. We must not form factions in the people. Some people organize factions in the people and make them fight one another. It is not right. Some among the people may have some factional senti-

ment, and there are those who incite the people to fight among themselves. How should we handle this problem? We can express ourselves by freely resorting to the large-letter poster and debates. Through discussions and debates, the different opinions are settled and an agreement reached. The differences may be reserved. If we are not in accord today, we may become so tomorrow.

Some one just passed me a note a while ago, disagreeing with the letter of the Nanking Hydroelectric Team. The matter can be discussed. The opinions of the Cultural Revolution Small Team are not necessarily completely correct, and doubts and criticisms are permissible, because what we talk about is the principle. The Central instructs us to struggle with words but not by force. Once factions are formed in the people, discussion and debate will become impossible, resulting in struggle by force, and making utilization by the evil spirits and monsters, by the bad people, and by the authoritarians following the capitalist road in the party possible. We must be alert against such. The letter discussed just now is a general principle. The individual units must base their solutions on the concrete conditions, mass discussions, and the people's opinions.

Some one else just passed me another note, asking about the current situation.

We maintain that, as a whole, the cultural revolution is in an excellent situation. Some areas, units, schools, and individuals are suffering setbacks, but it is a temporary matter, because we feel that all those suppressing the people will fail.

There are two lines in the cultural revolution. If you conscientiously study the 16 articles, you will realize the fact. During the first period, the Work Team, in its form, suppressed the people. While the majority of the members of the Work Team might be good, the situation arose because of the wrong line. The 16 articles formulated under the sponsorship of Chairman Mao corrected the error. However, as the wrong line is of the bourgeoisie, not of the proletariat, it continues to appear in different guises. It seems that the struggle situation of the past month or so has become more acute and complex. In other words, the struggle between the proletarian revolutionary line and the bourgeois reactionary line has become more acute and complex. Some people are unwilling to follow the proletarian revolutionary line, the party line pointed out by Chairman Mao. Though the Work Team has been withdrawn, they replace it in other forms, and form such organizations as the Cultural Revolution Preparatory Committee by pre-arrangement and backstage manipulation. Among you Red Guards, there are genuine Red Guards and revisionist Red Guards. You must beware. If we want to become Red Guards, we must become genuine ones -- Red Guards of Mao Tse-tung's thinking, and not revisionist ones following the bourgeois counter-revolution. The Red Guards following the counter-revolutionary revisionism are spurious. However,

if the spurious Red Guards realize their errors, they can become true Red Guards. If they free themselves from the authoritarians in the party following the capitalist road and join the masses, they can become true Red Guards.

I have a little suggestion which I wish to discuss with you. Are there any disciples of Kao Kan in the audience? Here is my personal opinion. Kao Kan's disciples who occupy leadership posts in the cultural revolution should yield such posts and let the children of the farmers, workers, and soldiers lead the cultural revolution. Does it imply that Kao Kan's disciples should not participate in the leadership of the cultural revolution? No, they can still become positive elements and participate in the cultural revolution. Some two months ago, I asked the leaders of some schools in a certain area about the general election system through full campaigning and discussion by the people, and dismissal of those unfit. They replied: Then we would not be elected! I asked: Why do you want to be elected? If you do not get elected, you still can serve as positive elements and produce an effect. The disciples of Kao Kan opposed me on the first day and wanted to chase me away. I say that it is detrimental for Kao Kan's disciples to monopolize the leadership -- detrimental to the movement, to the individuals themselves, and to the future. Many of you here probably object to my statement. I expect some people want me to step down. With the general election system and repeated campaigning, many of Kao Kan's disciples would not be elected. It would be a good thing, because it would serve as a lesson to them. Some people may be interested in Kao Kan's disciples, admiring their information and material foundation. They have bicycles, cameras... I say that it is better to be without such things! My information comes from the People's Daily, which supplies the information most promptly. Take no pictures. (Some one wanted to take a picture of Comrade Ch'en Po-ta earlier.) What's the use of taking pictures? But there are people whom we want to photograph, such as the people, Chairman Mao, heroes, and models. We ourselves do not want our pictures taken. We are neither capable nor handsome. We never want our pictures taken. If there are Kao Kan's disciples among you, they will want to expel me. I am not afraid. But do not feel bad. The truly revolutionary disciples of Kao Kan should know that they can prosecute the revolution even if they are not the leaders. Some of them are very good, and are truly supported by the people. I am not against them either. Maybe Kao Kan's disciples will not oppose me any more after these words.

Now you have come to Peking. You possess the proletarian revolutionary heroic bearing in undergoing struggle, overcoming difficulties, and encountering resistance. I salute you!

However, if we want to become true proletarian revolutionaries, true communists, we must know how to contact the people, learn their

language, and discuss matters with them. When the other party fails to understand us, we must know how to explain by all kinds of means. Why couldn't we explain clearly to our parents and family members? This point is not very easy. You are all young people. If you know how to contact and associate with the people, you may be able to learn their language and the work method. Only by so doing will we succeed in our enterprise. Is it right? Do you all agree? (Applause.) If you simply and crudely maintain that you will succeed if you revolutionize, I don't think it's possible. We must conscientiously study Chairman Mao's books, in order to discover how he led the people of China and how much difficulty he went through before attaining victory. We must draw our strength from his books, and learn the work method. Some people have not learned to speak mandarin. On many occasions, I need an interpreter to talk with the Chinese. Isn't it a great drawback when the Chinese cannot communicate with their own countrymen?

Today, what I have said so far may not necessarily be right, or helpful to you all. My purpose in coming here is to see you all and express our attitude. You people have all been enthusiastic in coming.

Let us advance on the highway of Mao Tse-tung's thinking! Please rest well and take care of your health.

Our great country has many jobs for us to do. The people of the nations in the world expect more from the Chinese people. We must know how to exert ourselves under Mao Tse-tung's banner!

I visited Szechwan in the winter of last year, and I may go there again! Goodbye!

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