

FOREVER PRESERVE THE REVOLUTIONARY COLOR OF THE PROLETARIAT

[Following is a translation of an article by Red Flag Brigade of Peking Clock and Watch Factory in the Chinese-language periodical Hung-ch'i (Red Flag), Peking, No 11, 9 July 1967, pp 47-48.]

In the world-shaking storm of the "January revolution," the proletarian revolutionaries of our factory seized the power from a handful of people in authority taking the capitalist road inside the factory. After the seizure of power, the political status of the proletarian revolutionaries has basically changed, and from the oppressed "nobodies" they have become people in power. As the revolution and production continue to win new victories, our prestige has soared higher and higher. Every word and deed of ours exerts an increasing influence among the broad masses. Under this new situation of struggle whether we can continue to preserve the revolutionary color of proletarians is a severe test to us.

The practice of the class struggle has made us deeply realize that, following the seizure of power, the struggle between the two classes, two roads and two lines, between the public and private interests is still continuing. The handful of power holders taking the capitalist road inside the factory vainly attempted to make us change the way they had, and the capitalists too came out to flatter us, nod their heads and bend their backs on seeing us, and even shamelessly called us "brigade leaders". Within the ranks of the proletarian revolutionaries, on the other hand, some comrades, entertaining non-proletarian ideas, failed to grasp the study of Chairman Mao's works firmly enough, nor did they struggle in a positive way. Instead they worked sluggishly and became arrogant in words. Under such a situation, if we did not take heed of the enemy's attack of sugar-coated bullets and prevent the corrosion of bourgeois ideology, that would be very dangerous indeed.

To check the corrosion of bourgeois ideology and hold and exercise power well, we must abide by Chairman Mao's teaching: "Serve the people wholeheartedly, and do not divorce yourself from the masses for a single moment."

After the seizure of power, we were very busy in work, but some comrades suggested that we have several more people detached from production. We did not do so, however. This was because we knew that participation in collective production labor was definitely not a small matter, but "a basic, important matter under the socialist system, for it is helpful to overcoming bureaucratism and the prevention of revisionism and dogmatism." In the factory, to be detached from production is tantamount to being detached from the front of struggle. Only by going deep among the broad masses and studying, struggling and working with the masses can we have more chance to hear the opinions of the masses, maintain constant and close ties with the masses, and preserve a high revolutionary spirit.

The responsible members of our Red Flag Brigade have basically not detached from production after seizing power. As regards the group in charge of the revolution, with the exception of one who is detached from production in order to attend to the daily routines and two who take part in labor for half day every day, the other four comrades do not detach themselves from production but are still working in the workshops as ordinary laborers. With regard to the group in charge of production, every week they devote half a day to study of production problems, and the rest of the time to production at the front. In this way, problems in production can be discovered in time and solved in good time. In the past, owing to the large number of cadres and the overlapping of organs, problems discovered were like "balls to be kicked around." Now the administrative machinery has been streamlined and the style of work changed. Offices have been moved to the workshops, and the triple combination of workers, leadership and technicians realized. Where problems could not be solved for a month in the past, now they can be solved in a few days. This has greatly promoted the development of production. For the past several months the volume of output has been increasing rather steeply. Between February and June this year, the average monthly output shows an increase of 26 per cent compared with the corresponding period of last year.

To preserve forever the revolutionary color of the proletariat, it is necessary to continuously develop the ideological struggle, to be good at listening to different opinions, and accept the criticism and supervision of the masses.

The responsible members of the Brigade have given constant attention to the development of criticism and self-criticism, to promoting the democratic style of work, and modestly listening to the criticism and opinions of the masses. After the seizure of power, in accordance with Chairman Mao's teaching of trusting, relying on and freely mobilizing the masses, we conducted an open-door rectification campaign. We mobilized the masses to past big-character posters to criticize us and we held discussion meetings to solicit the opinions of the masses. In the course of the rectification campaign, the masses raised many well-intentioned criticisms. Some old worker-masters said significantly: "You young people are daring in thinking and action, and have the courage to break through. We have no worry at all when we hand over the power to you. You must obey Chairman Mao's order. It is impermissible to drive away the old bureaucrats only to have the young bureaucrats."

However, some comrades found the sharp criticism of certain masses unacceptable. They said that these people who raised the opinions did not understand us or even that these people wanted to topple us. After finding out this problem, we immediately organized everyone to make a creative study and application of the "three constantly read articles," "On Correcting Mistaken Ideas in the Party," "Adjusting the Party's Style of Work," and other glorious works. Chairman Mao's teachings enabled us to understand that the fact that we dared not accept the criticism of the masses was, in the final analysis, accounted for by the trouble made by self-interest in our heads, and that it was necessary to wage a fierce struggle against self-interest. If we did not struggle against it fiercely, self-interest would not vanish, we would not dare to accept the sharp criticism of the masses, and the revolution would fail.

On the basis of unified understanding, the rectification campaign was developed smoothly. The masses criticized each and every one of us. By far the greater part of these criticisms was appropriate. And we all examined ourselves. The result was that the masses were very satisfied with this and got closer to us and united with us every more closely. Our ranks have swollen as never before. After the first rectification campaign, we issued a circular making the rectification campaign as an important system. Whenever problems are discovered, a rectification campaign will be set in motion. Moreover, discussion forums of old workers are to be called regularly so that the masses may exercise greater supervision and provide more assistance to us.

In order to preserve forever the revolutionary color of the proletariat, we must identify ourselves with the masses in the matter of livelihood, and we must not have any special privileges. The matter of livelihood is not a small one. A breach is always caused in the small matter of livelihood by corrosion of bourgeois ideology. In the past, the handful of power holders taking the capitalist road sat in their office, paid attention to nothing but their food and clothing, and obtained subsidies without working. 'Now we have come to power and we will, in strict accordance with Chairman Mao's teaching that "all our working cadres, whatever their ranks, are the servants of the people," put exacting demands on ourselves. We continue to work in the groups of workers as ordinary workers, and apply to the group leader for leave when we have to attend to personal affairs. We continue to perform night duties with the militiamen. We must be concerned for the masses and must not take advantage of the authority we hold. If we have theater tickets, we first let the masses have them. We will take a ticket only when there are enough tickets to go round, and let others have tickets that will give them good seats.

Having come to power, in order to strengthen our ties with the masses, we still sit with the masses as ordinary workers at a conference; normally we do not go to the rostrum. Meetings are presided over by the teams of the brigade by turn. This is more helpful to the broad masses of workers exercising their right as masters in their house and to giving full play to the enthusiasm of the masses. We believe that power must not be the "private property" of a few." It belongs to the masses of workers. Since the masses of workers want us to assume responsibilities, we should all the more serve the people better.

Public interest is the core of the proletarian world outlook. To preserve forever the revolutionary feature of the proletariat, in the final analysis we must devote ourselves to the public interest and wholeheartedly serve the people. Only by holding high the great red banner of the thought of Mao Tse-tung and by breaking self-interest and fostering devotion to public interests in the storms and waves of the class struggle can we insure that we shall go from victory to victory.

We proletarian revolutionaries must firmly bear in mind Chairman Mao's instruction: "Let us be modest, prudent, guard against conceit and rashness, and serve the Chinese people with heart and soul." We must never divorce ourselves from the masses and from labor. We must never for a moment relax our ideological remolding. We must insure that our proletarian country will never change color for ten thousand years.

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