

SALUTE TO CHIANG CH'ING

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[Full text of an article entitled, "Salute to Chiang Ch'ing, the Great Standard-Bearer of the Cultural Revolution", by the Editorial Department of Tien-ying P'i-p'an and by the Red Flag Corps of the China Drama Research Institute.]

In the growing shades of dusk stand sturdy pines,
Scattered clouds drift past, swift but tranquil.
Nature has excelled herself in the Fairy Cave.
On perilous peaks dwells beauty in her infinite variety.

This is a famous poem written by Chairman Mao on 9 September 1961, for a picture of the Fairy Cave in Lushan taken by Comrade Chiang Ch'ing. Forceful, magnificent and inspiring, it reveals the grand ambitions of a proletarian revolutionary and, in our view, presents the most comprehensive, most perfect, most impressive and most graphic portrait of Comrade Chiang Ch'ing. Today, in re-reading the powerful lines of the poem, one is filled with unbounded emotion and infinite admiration for Comrade Chiang Ch'ing.

If it is said that the salvos of the aurora declared to the world the beginning of a new era of world proletarian revolution, then the first wave of the world-shaking beats of drums and gongs of China's Peking operas on contemporary revolutionary themes has lifted the curtain of the 20th century's great proletarian cultural revolution, pronouncing the birth of a new fighting literature and art of the proletariat in the present century, and ushering in the spring when all kinds of flowers are in full bloom both in literature and art and on stage dominated by workers, peasants and soldiers in our country.

The great leader Chairman Mao is the supreme commander of this world cultural revolution. Our respected and beloved Comrade Chiang Ch'ing is a proletarian heroine resourceful and brave on the revolutionary front of literature and art. She fearlessly blazes the trail for the revolution in Peking opera! She is the great standard-bearer of the great proletarian cultural revolution who fights her way to the front!

On Perilous Peaks Dwells Beauty in Her Infinite Variety

Do you still remember how the stage and screen of the proletariat was like in the past more than ten years since the liberation? They were controlled and utilized by the bourgeoisie. Both on the stage and the screen devils danced wildly and ghosts and wolves wailed and howled. They were pervaded with an evil atmosphere of cherishing the past but belittling the present, of worshipping what is foreign and slighting what is Chinese, and cherishing the dead but despising the living! The stage was ruled by the ancients, the dead and foreigners. "Story of Chi Kung" and "Eight Magicians in Yangchow" appeared on the screen. "Othello" was adapted into a Peking opera and staged. Traitors were dressed up as heroes. Lords and ladies and their pampered sons and daughters became the "leading characters." The socialist stage was dismantled, the economic base of socialism was undermined, and the revolutionary fighting will of the proletariat was sapped. Judgments passed on anti-Party elements were reversed. Appeals were made on behalf of those rightist opportunists who had been dismissed from office. A monument was erected to the big ambitionist and big schemer Liu Shao-ch'i, whose name was perpetuated in history books.... All these things were evil.

Yet the proletarian revolutionaries found it hard even to have the right to criticize. The article criticizing "Hai Jui Dismissed from Office" organized by Comrade Chiang Ch'ing was scrutinized and withheld from publication for eight months. This was utterly ridiculous, and was too much for the proletariat to bear!

They could set aside the good operas on contemporary revolutionary themes and stage on a grand scale such plays as "Madam Chao's Orphan" and "The Dream of the Red Chamber." In the three years of economic difficulties they shot the big poisoned arrows "Hai Jui Dismissed from Office" and "Hsieh Yao-huan" at the Party, and even brought plays about emperors, kings, generals, prime ministers, scholars and beauties to the Fukien front for performance with the intention of poisoning the minds of the fighters guarding

our coasts. What was even more intolerable, they went so far as to move these big poisonous weeds to Chungnanhai and audaciously performed them in front of Chairman Mao. All this passed the limit of endurance!

But proletarian revolutionaries persisting in Chairman Mao's revolutionary line on literature and art were rejected, attacked, and encircled from all sides, and persecuted in many ways. When Comrade Chiang Ch'ing was recuperating in Shanghai, they organized theatrical troupes and sent them to that city, where they staged a large number of pernicious plays as a means of attacking Comrade Chiang Ch'ing. When she was organizing the festival of revolutionary plays on contemporary themes, they despatched agents to follow and spy on her in secret. Supported by their backstage boss, the counter-revolutionary revisionists of the Peking Opera Institute openly resisted and criticized Comrade Chiang Ch'ing. The struggle seriously impaired her health This was indeed a black and thick bourgeois line resulting in brutal dictatorship over us.

Just as Chairman Mao pointed out: "They allow all ghosts and monsters out of the cages and, for many years, let them fill our newspapers, broadcasting stations, publications, books, textbooks, lectures, literary and art works, films, operas, ballads, fine arts, music, and dancing. They have never mentioned the need to accept proletarian dictatorship and have never approved it either." In all this the chief culprit is none other than the top Party person in authority taking the capitalist road, Liu Shao-ch'i.

With Liu Shao-ch'i's connivance, a tiny handful of counter-revolutionary revisionists, Chou Yang and others, in the literary and art circles desperately tried to disparage Chairman Mao's glorious work "Talks at the Yanan Forum on Literature and Art," and audaciously blocked, tampered with, distorted and even openly resisted Chairman Mao's directives concerning the criticism of reactionary theories on literature and art and reactionary works of literature and art. The original face of history was thus smeared. It may be asked: Should such an inversion of history not be corrected immediately? Should we allow such brutal bourgeois dictatorship to continue to exist? Should we, in the socialist society of today, permit feudalism, capitalist and revisionist poisonous weeds to spread unchecked? No. We absolutely cannot do that.

Comrade Chiang Ch'ing once said with great pride: "In the past the proletariat was dominated by revisionist, bourgeois ideas in the educational and cultural fields. Now we have recaptured control!"

Entrusted by Chairman Mao with a great mission, Comrade Chiang Ch'ing is holding high the great red banner of the thought of Mao Tse-tung, the great banner of the great proletarian cultural revolution. Afraid of neither the heaven nor of the earth, fearing no ghosts and spirits, and in disregard for personal danger and illness, she challenged the devils, did not concede an inch to the tyrant, and mounted the most violent attack against Peking opera -- the most stubborn fortress.

The Party power-holders taking the capitalist road once sneered at us and said: "You want to storm a strong fortress, don't you?"

Yes, we did! "Aware of the tigers in the mountain, we insist on going to it." With such heroism, such proletarian revolutionary spirit of fearlessness, we traversed a long and tortuous road of struggle and went through many spectacular battles, and finally made the ancient Peking opera to radiate a dazzling new light! Our respected and beloved Comrade Chiang Ch'ing may report the victory to Chairman Mao on behalf of us proletarian revolutionaries! This so-called high pinnacle of literature and art we proletarian fighters for literature and art have taken. This most reactionary and most stubborn fortress has been totally conquered. We reached the summit and looked down on many small hills. Is there any pinnacle of literature and art which is not at the feet of the proletarians? The proletarians have completely liberated themselves culturally, and the day when they could raise their heads and breathe freely has come at long last!

With a sigh Premier Chou recalled: "Although the arduous struggle impaired the health of Comrade Chiang Ch'ing, yet the spiritual consolation and encouragement will compensate for these losses."

Scattered Clouds Drift Past, Swift But Tranquil

Comrade Ch'en Po-ta put it aptly: Comrade Chiang Ch'ing is a good comrade-in-arms and good pupil of Chairman Mao, and is a good Party member. 35 years have elapsed since she first participated in the revolution at the time of the "18 September" incident. What a heart-stirring 35 years! In 35 years she had done much for the Party, yet she had never appeared in public. When the Hu Tsung-nan bandit clique was frantically launching its attack, Comrade Chiang Ch'ing kept Chairman Mao's company and was in the last group to leave Yen-an. During the most critical period she closely followed Chairman Mao in marching and fighting in the south and the north, routing the several million troops of the Chiang family. After the nation-wide liberation, Comrade Chiang Ch'ing has all along been the Chairman's secretary and followed his thought. During the numerous challenges of the bourgeoisie, Comrade Chiang Ch'ing rose to the occasion and resolutely defended the Chairman's revolutionary line.

In 1949, Comrade Chiang Ch'ing had already organized articles criticizing Mei Lan-fang's erroneous views opposing the reform of Peking opera, thus taking the first step in the revolution of Peking opera. In direct opposition to Liu Shao-ch'i, she insisted on banning such bad plays as "Picking Up a Jade Bracelet" and "The Emperor and the Waitress," plays to which Liu Shao-ch'i had given the green light. She enthusiastically beat the drums and gongs for plays on contemporary revolutionary themes.

In 1963, in Shanghai, together with K'o Ch'ing-shih she organized under the white terror criticisms against the big poisonous weeds "Li Hui-niang" and "Having Ghosts Is Harmless," thus raising the curtain of the battle to sweep away the ghosts and monsters.

In 1950 Comrade Chiang Ch'ing resolutely implemented Chairman Mao's directives and time and again proposed to criticize the traitorous film "Inside Story of the Ch'ing Court." However, counter-revolutionaries in Ting-i, Hu Ch'iao-mu, Chou Yang and their like desperately resisted and quoted the black words of the top Party person in authority taking the capitalist road. Yet Comrade Chiang Ch'ing was not frightened by the arrogance of the reactionaries and upheld the principle throughout. She argued forcefully and sternly refuted their fallacies.

Shortly afterwards, the reactionary film, "The Life of Wu Hsun," which was praised by Chou Yang as "a banner of the cultural liberation of the working people," was released. Chairman Mao sharply pointed out: "To what an extent has the ideological confusion in the cultural circles been created?" He sternly asked the leaders of the counter-revolutionary black line on literature and art who sung the praises of "The Life of Wu Hsun": "Isn't it a fact that the bourgeois reactionary ideas have infiltrated into the militant Communist Party?"

Then Chairman Mao himself started a mass criticism movement against "The Life of Wu Hsun." Comrade Chiang Ch'ing fully executed the Chairman Mao's directives by personally organizing a special investigation team which went to Shantung, crossing mountains and rivers in carrying out an extensive investigation. However, Chou Yang and his like ignored all this and even refused to listen to the Chairman's directive which were relayed to them. They overtly obeyed the Chairman Mao's words while violating them in secret. This could not but arouse our anger! At the time, Comrade Chiang Ch'ing waged an uncompromising struggle against this group of counter-revolutionary revisionists, thereby greatly boosting the morale of the proletariat and deflating the arrogance of the bourgeoisie! For this Chou Yang cherished hatred against her, saying with malicious intent that where Comrade Chiang Ch'ing was present, "work becomes difficult."

In 1952, the investigation team, following a struggle against the big rightists despatched by Chou Yang and company, victoriously fulfilled its tasks and returned to Peking from Shantung. Comrade Chiang Ch'ing then instructed: Taking the material gained from the investigation, let us immediately proceed to write and stage the Peking opera "Sung Ching Shih." But this young shoot in the reform of Peking opera was killed by Chou Yang and company not long after it was born!

Confronted with all decadent culture of the exploiting classes and with the class enemies, Comrade Chiang Ch'ing is always a tough and revolutionary path finder for the proletariat. She holds the enemy in utter contempt. Yet she is full of enthusiasm and love for the new culture of the proletariat and the masses of the workers, peasants and soldiers. She does her best to support the Left and enthusiastically backs up the actions of the proletarian revolutionaries.

In 1954 Comrade Chiang Ch'ing herself went to Jen-min Jih-pao in accordance with the Chairman Mao's directive, requesting the newspaper to reproduce "the lively critical articles by nobodies." In 1963, she wholeheartedly supported the good article by Ch'i Pen-yu which exposed traitor Li Hsiuch'eng, and recommended the article to the Chairman, who commented: "It is all very clear that we should not learn from this man who failed to preserve his integrity in his later years." This greatly boosted the morale of the Leftists but smashed the reactionary encirclement and attack by the old devils against the Leftists, and as a result the revolutionary new things developed with vigor and a new situation of growing prosperity was created.

In 1964, in the midst of the sharp struggle, a festival of Peking operas on revolutionary contemporary themes was held. Comrade Chiang Ch'ing delivered a glorious speech filled with the thought of Mao Tse-tung, entitled "On the Revolution in Peking Opera." In February 1966, Comrade Lin Piao asked her to convene a forum on the work of literature and art in the armed forces. Holding high the great red banner of the thought of Mao Tse-tung, she made sharp Marxist-Leninist analysis of many problems on the literary and art front at the time.

Of far-reaching historical significance, the "summary" of the forum is an important document for the international communist movement. Applying the thought of Mao Tse-tung, the "summary" answers many major problems of the cultural revolution during the socialist period, resolutely defends the proletarian line on literature and art, thoroughly exposes the bourgeois line on literary and art represented by Chou Yang in the 1930's, exposes and criticizes Chou Yang's plot of tampering with history and attacking Lu Hsun, and uncovers the slogan "literature of national defense" as bearing the reactionary nature of the bourgeoisie.

On 28 November of the same year, at a mass meeting of proletarian revolutionaries in the literary and art circles, Comrade Chiang Ch'ing, demonstrating incomparable heroism, made another important speech in which she sounded the clarion call for the destruction of the "three olds" and thorough demolition of the counter-revolutionary line on literature and art. All this has greatly enriched the treasure-store of proletarian theories of literature and art.

As we look back to the past, the history of heroic struggle records the exploits of Comrade Chiang Ch'ing. Combat songs of revolutionary rebellion are shaking the mountains and inspiring the comrades to march forward!

The Great Path Finder for the Revolution in Opera

As early as the 1930's, Comrade Chiang Ch'ing had firmly stood on the side of Chairman Mao's revolutionary line and fought shoulder to shoulder with Chairman Mao's great comrade-in-arms Lu Hsun. She carried out an uncompromising struggle against those ghosts and dogs of the literary garden like Chou Yang and Wang Shih-wei and against the capitulationist line headed by Wang Ming.

While in Yen-an, Comrade Chiang Ch'ing had made a bold attempt to revolutionize Peking opera (which was then called P'ing opera,) and had "P'ing Hsing Kuan" staged. However, from that time on, the Party power-holders taking the capitalist road began to hate her. In 1956, counter-revolutionary revisionist T'ien Han malignantly said: "In the old liberated areas, some people in Yen-an had made an inappropriate attempt. That is a strange thing. For instance, Peking opera performed during the struggle against Japan had dramatized the Japanese and the common Chinese folk.... It was of course wrong on the stage to raise a big knife to attack the Japanese. This must be negated." In his view, lords and ladies and their pampered sons and daughters were the natural masters of the stage and could not be touched! However, our great leader Chairman Mao as early as 1944 had given a very high evaluation to and lavished praise on the revolutionary Peking opera (then called P'ing opera). He said: "History is made by the people. Yet on the old theatrical stage (and in all old literature and arts divorced from the people) the people have become the scum. The stage is dominated by lords and ladies and their pampered sons and daughters. Now you must reverse such an inversion of history and restore the original features of history. From now on, the old opera shall be renewed. This is cause for rejoicing." How impressive were Chairman Mao's remarks!

However, on the eve of the nation-wide liberation in 1949 Liu Shao-ch'i was still shouting: "It does no harm to preach feudalism." He advocated performances of the play "General Yang Visits His Mother" which preached the traitor's philosophy and "Meilung Town" which described the dissipated life of feudal emperors and kings. "These plays can be staged," he said nonsensically.

In 1962, in compliance with Chairman Mao's directives, Comrade Chiang Ch'ing, after detailed investigation and research, stated that confusion was created in the repertoire at the time and poisonous weeds had flourished. She sharply pointed out the grave political mistakes of "Hai Jui Dismissed from Office" and demanded a ban on it. With the support of Comrade K'o Ch'ing-shih, she personally organized a critical article about it, strongly calling for a revolution in Peking opera. It may be asked: At that moment, who, assuming the posture of the big scholar tyrant, opposed the "dogmatism in art" in order to intimidate Comrade Chiang Ch'ing? Who called for performing plays about "emperors, kings, generals and prime ministers" and said that "the artistic level of modern operas is too low"? None but Liu Shao-ch'i!

Faced with the frantic encirclement and attack by the reactionaries, K'ang Sheng, Chiang Ch'ing and other comrades refused to budge. Liu Shao-ch'i said: "It is necessary to retain two types of operas. One is to use the ancient to serve the present; the other is to sum up historical experience." Teng Hsiao-p'ing said: "To represent the wisdom of the people, the wisdom of generals and prime ministers may also be portrayed on the stage." With an ulterior motive P'eng Chen proposed: "Walk on two legs." Despairingly Chou Yang shouted: "We can't discard historical traditions."

But Comrade Chiang Ch'ing sternly refuted them in a tit-for-tat manner: "Capitalism is even more rude to our things. It arbitrarily refuses to allow a small shoot of ours to exist." "New plays do not represent half of the total number, yet some people have already called for walking on two legs!"

P'eng Chen smeared the modern play as wearing "a baby's trousers," "sucking fingers," and "dogmatic." "It means imposing a thing on others by making use of proletarian authority, with the result that the thing is strange and useless!" Comrade Chiang Ch'ing immediately rebuked him angrily and said: "We must permit what you call strange and useless things to exist." Liu Shao-ch'i vigorously claimed that "classical plays have a great educational significance." He highly praised as "a play well adapted" the "Tiger's Village" which prettified the big running dog of the feudal landlord class, Huang T'ien-pa and the like. Up to March 1966, he still "directed" the Peking Opera Institute to allow the reactionary authorities to stage "Wild Boars' Forest" for foreigners. Mincing no words, Comrade Chiang Ch'ing said: "We can't stage the classical plays," and "I have broken away from these plays."

However, Teng Hsiao-p'ing, playing counter-revolutionary dualist tactics, said: "New plays which are good are few. Let us continue to perform classical plays... I am all for reforming the opera, but I do not want to hear any more about it." Up to March 1966 P'eng Chen still asked the actors and actresses to his house to produce recordings of more than 20 classical plays from afternoon till mid-night. Comrade Chiang Ch'ing sharply pointed out: "More than ten years have passed since the liberation, and do we not feel ashamed that we still perform plays about landlords?" "For the past ten years and more we still devoted efforts to promoting classical sentiments. This is the question of stand." Moreover, she asked sternly: "What is the conscience of an artist which you have so often talked about?"

Comrades, please think of this: Can it be that there is merely a question of reforming one or two classical plays? Can it be that this is only an academic controversy in the theatrical circles? No! This is a declaration of war on the old world and old culture, an unprecedentedly violent battle between two classes and two lines in the literary and art spheres. It was precisely in the midst of the great tempests of the revolution that the classical plays were smashed and proletarian plays "Taking the Bandits' Stronghold," "Harbor," "Red Lantern" "Shachiapang" and "Raid on the White-Tiger Regiment" were born. And accompanying the birth of every model play was an awe-inspiring combat song.

Pearl of Proletarian Literature and Art

However, those power-holders taking the capitalist road highly resented Comrade Chiang Ch'ing, yet they were terribly afraid of her. They desperately withheld the news about Comrade Chiang Ch'ing activities, and in the name of State secrets refused to relay her directives, or even made no mention of her name when writing articles or summing up.

Comrade Chiang Ch'ing worked tirelessly, to such an extent that she even forgot to eat and sleep, leaving her footprints everywhere. However, that black gang did not even permit taking pictures of her in an attempt to obliterate the glorious image of this heroic fighter for the proletarian revolution. Now that we proletarian revolutionaries have seized power, we must extensively publicize the literature and art of the proletariat, the workers, peasants and soldiers, and establish its absolute authority.

Several years ago, when Comrade Chiang Ch'ing was recuperating in Shanghai, a doctor suggested that the functions of her ears and eyes might be restored through living a cultural life. However, as a close comrade-in-arms of Chairman Mao and a Communist Party member, how could she see ghosts and spirits dominate literature and art and the stage and see the poisonous weeds spread unchecked!

Risking her own health, a high sense of political responsibility and deep proletarian sentiments she systematically studied a part of literature and art. It was then that she discovered that the "old literature and art do not fit in with the socialist economic base and the classical art forms do not entirely fit in with the ideological content of socialism. Do we need a revolution? Do we need reform?" Yes, we needed both, and urgently. However, just as Comrade Chiang Ch'ing in a speech on 28 November pointed out: "This is a grave class struggle and a piece of extremely delicate and rather difficult work." "If you don't go into the tiger's lair, how can you get the cub?" Comrade Chiang Ch'ing first selected Peking opera Troupe No. 1 as a starting point. Thus she kindled the raging fire of the revolution in Peking opera and started the first fierce battle in the revolution of Peking opera!

The moment Comrade Chiang Ch'ing arrived, P'eng Chen became frightened and trembled. Immediately he set up barricades and laid lines of defense. Besides resorting to the means of cheating their superiors and deceiving those below and imposing a blackout on news, they [P'eng Chen and his associates] even despatched their henchmen to watch every move and word of Comrade Chiang Ch'ing.

When Comrade Chiang Ch'ing wanted to use Troupe No. 1 as an experimental plot, P'eng the scab tried to prevent her from doing so -- by refusing to supply her with actors and actresses and a theater and by bringing more pressure to bear on her. They even used their power to ban the performance of "Fire in a Sea of Reeds" on the ground that it was "crudely produced" as a demonstration against Comrade Chiang Ch'ing. It was at such a vital moment that the great leader Chairman Mao saw the performance of this revolutionary Peking opera and gave an important instruction: It is necessary to give prominence to armed struggle and change the title of the opera into "Shachiapang."

This great directive of Chairman Mao dealt a fatal blow at P'eng Chen and his company of counter-revolutionary revisionists. However, they refused to take the defeat lying down; instead they stepped up their effort to prepare a more frenzied counter-attack! P'eng Chen himself stretched his black

hands into Peking Opera Troupe No. 1 and said to its players: "Why don't you perform traditional plays? Do we not still have history courses in universities and colleges?" This was a vain attempt to divide our ranks and dismantle the stage of the proletariat. On the other hand, he kept a tight control of Experimental Peking Opera Troupe and carried out black experiments on a large scale. He himself edited "Elimination of Three Evils" and "Generals and Prime Ministers," and collected more than 180 old plays, which he forced the Troupe to stage in the name of "political tasks" and "economic tasks".

Seeing through this scheme, Comrade Chiang Ch'ing resisted the adverse current and once again sternly refuted them: "Don't work purely for several cents!" In addition, she presented the members of the Troupe with copies of Mao's selected works with the author's autograph, and educated them in these words: "Don't think that I am just here promoting theatrical performance. I am here engaged in a battle against feudalism, capitalism and revisionism." She taught them to study carefully such glorious works as "Talks at the Yenan Forum on Literature and Art" and "On Practice," to arm their heads with the ever brilliant thought of Mao Tse-tung. This enabled them to make sure the direction of advance and gather more courage.

Under Comrade Chiang Ch'ing's guidance, "Shachiapang" gained increasing popularity and continued to expose P'eng Chen's plot to stage the sham modern opera "Hait'angyu" to counteract "Shachiapang." The control of P'eng Chen and company was broken. In Shanghai, with the support of Comrade Chang Ch'un-ch'iao, the play was revised 12 times by Comrade Chiang Ch'ing. This model of Peking opera on contemporary themes finally gained the approval of the broad masses of workers, peasants and soldiers.

However, the revisionist lords of the former Peking Municipal Party Committee were infuriated, and ranted and raved: "Whether it is a model or not we just do not know!" What a frightening posture of a scholar-tyrant. Could it be that our proletarian model plays require the approval and recognition by you bourgeois lords? When were those ghostly plays which you promoted approved by the proletariat?

In her speech delivered at the 1964 festival of Peking operas on contemporary revolutionary themes, which was taken as a declaration on the revolution of Peking opera -- "On the Revolution in Peking Opera," she had cited two striking figures with the aim of rousing the revolutionary literary and art workers of the 3,000 theatrical troupes in the nation to throw themselves into the great torrent of the operatic revolution. Now, instead of one flower blooming, a hundred flowers are in full bloom in literature and art and on the stage of the proletariat. In the theatrical world of Shanghai, red flowers of art which have shone ever so brightly are represented by "Taking the Bandits' Stronghold," "The Harbor" and "The White-Haired Girl." They too testify to the diligent labor and heroic struggle of Comrade Chiang Ch'ing and other comrades in Shanghai!

In 1964, under the personal guidance of Comrade Chiang Ch'ing, Shanghai Peking Opera Institute rehearsed "Taking the Bandits' Stronghold." Comrade Chiang Ch'ing unswervingly suppressed the arrogance of the negative characters and successfully established the lofty, heroic images of revolutionary fighters armed with the thought of Mao Tse-tung such as Shao Chien-po and Yang Tzu-jung. As soon as this play "fought its way" to the stage, counter-revolutionary revisionist Lin Mo-han could not wait to jump out and let his henchmen publish articles which with ulterior motives proposed to give prominence to the negative images of local bandit chiefs such as Tso Shantiao on the stage and viciously attacked Comrade Chiang Ch'ing. Comrade Chiang Ch'ing lost no time in rebuking them. In her speech filled with the thought of Mao Tse-tung in July, "On the Revolution in Peking Opera," she strongly condemned those who "oppose writing about positive characters" and "take the side of the negative characters."

Thus another attempt of the counter-revolutionary revisionists to undermine plays on contemporary revolutionary themes failed. Peking opera "Taking the Bandits' Stronghold" became the best opera in human history! It reached the summit of the proletarian art!

Exactly that same year, at a time when big poisonous weeds such as "Hai Jui Submits His Memorial" dominated the theatrical stage of Shanghai, Comrade Chiang Ch'ing went forward and enthusiastically confirmed the Huai opera on a revolutionary contemporary theme "Morning at a Harbor." Moreover, she asked Shanghai Peking Opera Institute to adapt it into a Peking opera so that the heroic masses of the working class might mount the stage.

At that time, those revisionists who said that "When workers go to the stage, they can neither sing nor act," acted on a black directive of Liu Shao-ch'i and carried out a plot of the so-called "training successors." They vainly attempted to change the theme, wrote a great deal about the complex personality and mental disorder of the "middle characters" so as to replace the proletarian heroes with "middle characters."

In 1965 Comrade Chiang Ch'ing exposed their plot and re-organized the writing of the play, in addition to personally directing the adaptation work. Not only that, but afterward, saboteurs who again sneaked into the writing group were ferreted out. Finally, the lofty, heroic images of the Chinese working class appeared on the stage for the first time.

Did not those small clowns complain thus: "When shall we stop reciting Shan Hai classics"? ("Shan" refers to "Taking the Bandits' Stronghold" and "Hei" to "Harbor.") We may clearly tell you this: We shall go on forever doing so. Because this is a product of the new proletarian literature and art, and represents a direction indicated by Chairman Mao in his "Talks at the Yen'an Forum on Literature and Art." From now on, we proletarian fighters in literature and art will not recite any more classics about ghosts and monsters and emperors, kings, generals, prime ministers! The stage of the proletariat will forever establish the glorious images of the working class and revolutionary heroes.

In November 1963, after Comrade Chiang Ch'ing carefully studied the 12 versions of the play "Red Lantern," she selected the best one and personally delivered it to the China Peking Opera Institute, asking it to adapt the play into Peking opera. She explicitly requested them to bring to the fore the role of Li Yu-ho, the heroic image of the working class. She encouraged them all by saying: "To act is to fight. We must let the younger generation know that it has not been easy to acquire the power of the proletariat." "It is necessary to stimulate the fighting will of the oppressed people of the world." Thus she provided the Peking Opera Institute with a red lantern which will guide them to advance victoriously amid fog.

However, the counter-revolutionary revisionists of the Peking Opera Institute refused to carry out this directive but viciously cursed Comrade Chiang Ch'ing instead. They withheld from the masses the hundred precious suggestions raised by Comrade Chiang Ch'ing; refused to use the lines of the play personally revised by Comrade Chiang Ch'ing; and ignored the dozen requests from Comrade Chiang Ch'ing to sum up their work, saying nonsensically that "there is nothing to be summed up!" What was even more intolerable, they even dared to resist Comrade Chiang Ch'ing's directive on giving prominence to the image of Li Yu-ho, and deliberately struck out the act "Chu P'eng" which brought out the heroism of Li Yu-ho. Moreover, in the scene of the "execution" they vigorously publicized the "love between mother and daughter" of the exploiting classes while uglifying the heroic image.

Strongly refuting their fallacy of preserving the so-called integrity of the artistic structure of the play of "female roles" as a practical means of rejecting the heroic images of the working class, Comrade Chiang Ch'ing angrily denounced them: "Without revolutionary predecessors, how can there be revolutionary successors?" Only after prolonged, complicated and formidable struggle were they forced to revise the play in accordance with Comrade Chiang Ch'ing's correct suggestions.

To see to it that the lofty images of the working class were established Comrade Chiang Ch'ing, though sometimes suffering from poor health, still insisted on going to see the rehearsals. Moreover, she personally attended to all things from the adaptation of the play to the direction and acting, from every action to every word of singing and phonetic symbol. These were improved again and again. She never let a single word which was harmful to the presentation of a hero slip by.

In order to conquer this stubborn fortress, Peking opera, in order to revise the play in great detail, she worked nights tirelessly. In order to light the red lantern of the revolution on the local stage of Peking opera and in order to make this red lantern guide the future revolution in Peking opera, our respected and beloved Comrade Chiang Ch'ing displayed the spirit of "taking utter responsibility toward work and being utterly enthusiastic in dealing with the comrades and the people" and "serving the Chinese people heart and soul." She was devoted without any reservation whatsoever to her work.

After the revolution in Peking opera was initiated, Comrade Chiang Ch'ing, in accordance with Chairman Mao's policy of "making what is foreign to serve what is Chinese" and "weeding out the old to let the new emerge," again successively kindled the flame of revolution in ballet and symphonic music in addition to sowing seeds of revolution in such areas as movie production, P'ing opera and balladry. A single spark can start a prairie fire. A red lantern on the stage of Peking opera illuminates the whole of the world of literature and art.

Toward the end of 1963, Comrade Chiang Ch'ing suggested that the Peking and Shanghai Ballet Troupes jointly rehearse the "Red Detachment of Women" and "White-haired Girl."

However, Liu Shao-ch'i, China's Khrushchev, an old counter-revolutionary, a butcher who suppresses the new-born things of the revolution, again jumped out at this time and said: "We can't have forced reflection of contemporary life, which can't be necessarily reflected by ballet and foreign operas!"

Refusing to budge, Comrade Chiang Ch'ing, backed by her own practice of struggle and art, rebuked Liu Shao-ch'i and his jackals. She excitedly told us: "Let us not be slaves of foreigners. We must walk our own road." "We must have revolutionary zeal, national pride, and establish a sense of responsibility toward the African, Asian and Latin American countries."

In the course of creative work, Comrade Chiang Ch'ing has put forward hundreds of valuable suggestions regarding the plays, acting, costumes, and the stage setting, and she personally revised the sub-titles. She repulsed the adverse current with undauntedness and projected the images of the workers, peasants and soldiers on the ballet stage.

8 July 1964 was an unforgettable day. The red sun rose from the stage of ballet. Our great leader Chairman Mao saw the performance of "Red Detachment of Women" and enthusiastically encouraged us by saying: "The orientation is right, the revolution is successful, and artistically it is also good." On 24 April this year, Chairman Mao also saw the performance of the ballet "White-Haired Girl." This was a major event on the ballet stage and a big happy event in the world of literature and art! Our revolutionary ballet has gained the endorsement of our most respected and beloved leader of the world revolution, Chairman Mao. Ballet has gained a new life! Let those revisionist lords say whatever they want to say against us. They will go to hell with the old ballet!

One battle was followed by another, and one victory was followed by another!

In January 1965 Comrade Chiang Ch'ing came to the Central Music Troupe, bringing to it an atmosphere of fascinating spring. After listening to a concerto, she encouraged us in these words: "These weapons are good, aren't they? As I see it, they can be used to serve the people and the revolution!"

Meeting face to face with counter-revolutionary revisionists such as Lin Mo-han, she told them: "The capitalist symphony is dead. Why are you going to hell with the foreigners?" These words were like a thunderbolt, dispelling the dark clouds and kindling the angry fire in the hearts of the comrades of the troupe! "Right! We must beat out our own road. We must not go to hell with the foreigners!"

And so, in compliance with Comrade Chiang Ch'ing's suggestions, it was decided to process and adapt the revolutionary contemporary drama "Shachiapang" in symphonic form! They cast to the wind the view that "singing Peking opera harms your voice" and "the foreign method of singing should be promoted." After a day and a night of fierce fighting by the side of Comrade Chiang Ch'ing, the first proletarian symphony was performed on the occasion of the 1965 National Day under the personal guidance of Comrade Chiang Ch'ing, and began to serve the workers, peasants and soldiers as well as the revolution!

Standard-Bearer of the Cultural Revolution

The great standard-bearer on the cultural front of the 1930's was Mr. Lu Hsun. On the cultural front of new democracy of the 1930's under the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party, Mr. Lu Hsun's pen, sharp as a spear, was thrust right into the heart of the enemy. "On the cultural front [Lu Hsun] representing the majority of the nation, fought against the enemy and was the most correct, most courageous, most resolute, most faithful and most ardent national hero, a hero without parallel in history." What he defended was Chairman Mao's revolutionary line on literature and art. Lu Hsun was a cultural giant in China.

In the 1960's, the great standard-bearer of the cultural revolution is Comrade Chiang Ch'ing. Acting in accordance with Chairman Mao's instructions, she fears no danger and fights persistently in the world of literature and art dominated by the counter-revolutionary revisionists. Breaking the counter-revolutionary barricades, she has opened up a road. On the theatrical stage of the proletariat, the "Red Lantern" shines radiantly. The magnificent view of "Harbor" like the rising sun unfolds before our eyes. Images of workers, peasants and soldiers brilliantly represented in the unyielding "White-haired Girl," "Red Detachment of Women," "Raid on the White Tiger Regiment," and "Taking the Bandits' Stronghold" appear on the stage. The symphony "Shachiapang" plays the spectacular song of triumph for the revolution of the Chinese people. Comrade Chiang Ch'ing has defended Chairman Mao's revolutionary line on literature and art, righted the inversion of history, opened up a broad road for the development of proletarian literature and art, and performed miraculous services in the struggle to seize power from the top Party person in authority taking the capitalist road!

Our respected and beloved Comrade Chiang Ch'ing is not only a courageous pathfinder in the great proletarian cultural revolution but also the most outstanding commander in the great cultural revolution.

The operatic revolution directly guided by Comrade Chiang Ch'ing has shaken the stage of the world class struggle.

A playwright from Guatemala said with passion: "There is no reason to impede the revolution in opera. We should substitute the socialist content for the feudalist and capitalist content, and let the new characters of the socialist, contemporary era mount the stage."

A delegate of Swaziland attending the emergency conference of Asian and African writers said with a sigh: "This play (White-Haired Girl) makes me realize how the Chinese people were exploited and oppressed in the past. Now they have stood up! However, such a thing has not yet occurred in Swaziland. After seeing this play, I feel a kind of strength which propels us to strive for liberation. This play has supplied us with a weapon."

How ardently the oppressed people of the world cherish our revolutionary operas!

How inspired they are to see the dazzling light of the proletarian new literature and art in the east when they themselves are suffering under the yoke of the dirty feudalist, capitalist and revisionist literature and art!

The revolutionary model plays are not only models for the Chinese people, they also are a precious asset belonging to the world proletariat. They are models for the world revolutionary people.

The revolutionary model operas are models of the great victory of the thought of Mao Tse-tung, the great victory for Chairman Mao's "Talks at the Yanan Forum on Literature and Art."

The revolutionary model plays have righted the inversion of history, so that for the first time literature and art are given the models for serving the workers, peasants and soldiers.

The revolutionary model plays are models for repulsing the plot of the bourgeoisie for restoration in the ideological sphere and for the consolidation of proletarian dictatorship.

Revolutionary model plays are models for making the superstructure really conform to the economic base of socialism.

Revolutionary model plays point out the direction for the advance of the world's revolutionary literature and art and for opening a new era of world's proletarian literature and art!

They are shining pearls of proletarian literature and art -- fostered personally by Comrade Chiang Ch'ing -- and they sparkle with the thought of Mao Tse-tung. They are a splendid product of Comrade Chiang Ch'ing's personal participation in the practice of struggle and art!

Holding high the great red banner of the thought of Mao Tse-tung, Comrade Chiang Ch'ing has traversed a road never attempted by our predecessors and scaled the peak never scaled before. She has taken the most stubborn fortress of the old literature and art and ushered in a clear spring of new proletarian literature and art. When we stand on the summit of the proletarian literature and art and turn around and take a look at the summit of the bourgeois literature and art, we see that the latter is only a heap of sand dunes. Right before our eyes is the resplendent new era of proletarian culture!

For many years arduous struggle has undermined Comrade Chiang Ch'ing's health. Yet she has grown ever stronger in fighting will. Recently she again uttered these proud words: "My ambition is: As long as I live, I'll work on 20 operas, 20 films. I hope that comrades will work hard..."

Respected and beloved Comrade Chiang Ch'ing, we the people of the whole country and the revolutionary people of the whole world wholeheartedly wish you good health for many, many years to come! We wish you to hold the great banner of Chairman Mao's cultural revolution higher and higher!