

# THE NATURE OF THE RECTIFICATION MOVEMENT IN CHINA

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The *Rectification (Cheng Feng) Movement* carried on by the Yen-an Government between 1941 and 1945 is the archetype of the *Movements* of the present day. The *Rectification Movement* is carried out on the basis of the three necessities of (1) re-education of the Party member, (2) mobilizing everyone for production, and (3) overcoming "right" or "left" deviations within the Party, and is an intra-Party educational movement which spreads outwards from the Party among the masses who are not members of the Party. Although the *Rectification Movement* was an intra-Party movement it differed from a "purge," and had as its aim the re-education of the opposition.

## I. WHAT IS THE RECTIFICATION MOVEMENT?

1. The Rectification Movement is a political and ideological movement carried on in China, a great country which holds an important position in world politics. The directing force in this movement is the Chinese Communist Party, a Marxist-Leninist party, and up to the present none of the Marxist-Leninist parties other than the Chinese Communist Party has directed political and ideological movements comparable to the Rectification Movement. The Rectification Movement is a movement peculiar to modern China.

2. The Rectification Movement is shortly defined as being a self-educational movement carried on inside the revolutionary Chinese Communist Party.<sup>1</sup> Mr. Lu Ting-yi, the head of the Central Propaganda Office of the Chinese Communist Party, says in the article entitled "In Commemoration of Fifteen Years of the Rectification Movement" that the Rectification Movement is "a self-educational movement within the Party, a movement for ideological reconstruction." However, the Rectification Movement has not remained confined to the Chinese Communist Party itself, but as a matter of course has spread outside the Party among the masses. The Rectification Movement is a political and ideological movement which began as a self-educational movement inside the Chinese Communist Party and spread outside the Party among a certain section of the masses.

3. The Rectification Movement was begun by the Central Committee of

<sup>1</sup> Lu Ting-yi, "Chinien Cheng Feng Yüntung 15 Chounien (In Commemoration of Fifteen Years of the Rectification Movement)," *Jenmin Jihpao* (March 3, 1957), and Teng Hsiao-p'ing, "Kuan yü Cheng Feng Yüntung ti Paokao (Report on the Rectification Movement)," *Jenmin Jihpao* (September 9, 1957).

in 1942. At this period there was an important conflict of views at the Chinese Communist Party Centre, and the Rectification Movement was devised with the aim of overcoming this conflict. In orthodox history books of the present day it is stated that this conflict was between a majority group in the Central Committee of the Party, represented by Mao Tse-tung, and a certain section of Party members, represented by Ch'en Shao-yü (pen-name Wang Ming).<sup>2</sup> In the article by Lu Ting-yi which we have mentioned above it is also said that the Rectification Movement was carried out with the aim of overcoming the "mistaken" tendencies represented by Wang Ming. Hitherto, conflicts of view inside the Communist Party had been terminated by "purges" by one side or the other. However, at the Seventh National Congress of the Chinese Communist Party, held after the Rectification Movement initiated on this occasion, some of the persons criticized, including Wang Ming, were elected to the Central Committee of the Party, and none were deprived of their right to make pronouncements on political matters. Again, no one was "dealt with" (subjected to punitive measures) in the course of the Rectification Movement initiated at this time. This was an altogether new way of solving the contradictions (or struggles) within the Communist Party. In contradistinction to the Stalinist "purge," as well as to the leadership reshuffles at the party conferences of the modern political parties of Europe and America, and, further, to the factional group struggles in pre-modern political parties, this was a new formula for the solution of disputes within the Party.

4. As we have noted above, the Rectification Movement spread outwards from inside the Party. This spread took place not at the instructions or by the solicitation of the Party but by the spontaneous participation in the Rectification Movement of the masses outside the Party. The Rectification Movement was an "open" movement which permitted such participation by the masses outside the Party. The first participators in the movement were the staff of administrative organs (the political organs of the Liberated Areas), leaders of mass organizations and political parties, and teachers, students and other members of the intelligentsia, all of them "sympathizers" on the fringes of the Chinese Communist Party. By the participation of these persons in the Rectification Movement it became possible for the policies of the Chinese Communist Party to be transmitted to the masses with greater facility, and for these policies to reflect the opinions of the masses more easily. It became possible for mistakes in the policies of the Chinese Communist Party to be corrected more speedily, and for the demands of the masses to be taken up by the Party more speedily. In a word, the Rectification Movement may be said to have had the effect of opening up avenues of communication between

<sup>2</sup> Hu Hua, *Chungkuo Koming-shih Chiangyi* (Lectures on the History of the Chinese Revolution), Peking, Chinese People's University Publishing Company, 1962, and Ho Kan-chih, *Chungkuo Hsientai Koming-shih* (A History of the Revolution in Modern China), Peking, Higher Education Publishing Company, 1956.

the Party and the masses, and of bringing about "feedback" between the two. For a self-educational movement within the Party to develop in this way into the sphere of the relations between the Party and the masses is something which has not occurred in any of the other Communist Parties.

5. The Rectification Movement was carried on within the Chinese Communist Party and in the Liberated Areas which were strongly under its influence over a period extending from 1942 to 1945, during the Sino-Japanese War, and since that time Rectification Movements have been frequently carried out in China. In 1957 in particular an "encore performance" was staged on a national scale. The Rectification Movement of 1942-1945 may be described as the archetype of political and ideological movements in present-day China. Whenever a difficult situation arises in the political or ideological field in China the first Rectification Movement is recalled, and the difficulties are overcome by employing once again the methods used with success at that time. The Rectification Movement is a movement for solution of such political and ideological crises.

6. If we analyze the characteristics of the Rectification Movement, we may summarize the results as follows. (a) At first it is carried on in response to a call from the Central Committee of the Party. (b) Specified reading is prescribed for study, and the participants learn this material, either alone or collectively, within a stipulated period. (c) Within the Communist Party the Movement started among the higher ranks, and spread downwards to the lower ranks. Outside the Party it started among the cadre class, and spread gradually downwards to the subordinate general masses. (d) Cadres, intelligentsia, and others in supervisory or administrative posts are charged with the duty of engaging in labour (particularly manual labour). (e) After the prescribed reading has been learned the material is brought into combination with "practice" by going among "the masses" and practising productive labour, etc. In these cases ample time is set aside for "study," and "study hours" are allotted among such subjects as production, labour, combat, etc. Throughout this whole period the giving of orders is avoided, and "criticism and self-criticism" are the principal methods employed in education, self-education and the solution of disputes.

Such are the characteristics of the political and ideological movement known as the Rectification Movement.

7. The word "*Cheng Feng*" (Rectification) was already frequently in use at the time of the Peking war-lord government. The word *cheng* means "to set in order," while *feng* is used in the sense of 'style,' as in the words *feng-tu* (attitude or manner of behaving), *hsieh-feng* (style of study), or *feng-ko* (style or quality), and is used to refer to those characteristics of a thing which distinguish it from other things. We may note in passing that under the Peking war-lord government "the setting in order of the style of study" meant the prohibition of student movements. In these cases it was not the students themselves who were subject to the prohibition, the aim being

rather to change certain fashions or styles of behaviour among the students. The Rectification Movements, too, aimed at the emendation or correction of certain fashions or styles of behaviour among the Party members.

## II. THE NEED FOR THE RECTIFICATION MOVEMENT

1. The Rectification Movements were carried out on a planned basis, out of the necessity of overcoming various difficulties facing the Chinese Communist Party. These movements were necessitated first and foremost by the fact that many of the members of the Chinese Communist Party had not received education in Marxism-Leninism, and by mass intakes of uneducated members into the Party. It was during the process of preparing for the Seventh National Congress that these facts were recognized by the leaders of the Chinese Communist Party. At first the Chinese Communist Party had decided to hold its Seventh National Congress in 1938. The Sixth National Congress had been held in Moscow in 1928, ten years before. However, it was decided at the Sixth Plenary Session of the Sixth Central Committee held in November, 1938, that the National Congress should be postponed until 1939.<sup>3</sup> Delegates to the National Congress were chosen in all parts of the country, and they assembled in Yen-an. However, the country was in a state of war, and the Liberated Areas were virtually blockaded by the Kuomintang government's promulgation of its "Order for the Limitation of the Activities of Other Parties," with the result that it was 1940 before all the delegates arrived. It was then found, on examining the qualifications of the delegates, that 90% of the new Party members were intelligentsia or petty bourgeoisie.<sup>4</sup> For this reason the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party postponed the National Congress indefinitely. In 1940 the figures for Party membership reached 800,000,<sup>5</sup> a very rapid increase when one recalls that in 1937 Party members had numbered only 50,000. The majority of them were intelligentsia who had left the occupied great cities at the beginning of the war, motivated by patriotic passion, to come to the Liberated Areas, and such movement was impossible for poor workers or peasants tied to the land. Since the Chinese Communist Party lost 100% of its urban membership and 90% of the Red Army towards the end of the ten-years civil war period (particularly as a result of the fifth "encirclement and suppression" mounted by the Kuomintang against the central Soviet Base Area in the autumn of 1934),<sup>6</sup> it became necessary at the beginning of the period of the war with Japan to take some steps to increase the numbers of the

<sup>3</sup> Mao Tse-tung, "Lun Hsin-tuanchieh (On New Classes)," *Wen Hsien*, Nos. 3 and 4, 1938.

<sup>4</sup> Hu Hua, *op. cit.*, p. 422.

<sup>5</sup> *Chiehfang Jihpao* (June 5, 1942).

<sup>6</sup> Mao Tse-tung, "Chungkuo Koming Chancheng ti Chanlueh Went'i (Strategic Problems of the Chinese Revolutionary War)," in *Mao Tse-tung Hsianchi* (Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung), Vol. 2, Peking, People's Publishing Company, 1951.

Party membership, even at the expense of some sacrifice of quality. The prime reason for the Rectification Movement was none other than that of educating this large intake of new Party members.

2. Party schools and study classes were available for giving new members a general course of instruction in Marxism-Leninism, as in the Communist Parties of other countries. However, in the case of the Chinese Communist Party it was not possible to make use of these methods of instruction. This was because there was a conflict of views regarding concrete Party policy as to the content of the instruction to be given, and there were great problems on the side of the teaching staff of the schools and study classes, and on the side of the older cadres. The Rectification movement is a specific Chinese way to overcome the politico-ideological crises within the party and has developed later on a nation-wide scale. The situation had made it necessary to carry out instruction centred on the problems of practical policy itself, as opposed to the general theory of Marx-Leninism. In order to mobilize well the Party and people around it, not only the new members but also the old cadres and even members of the Central Committee had to be transformed and refreshed by the perfectly new way of schooling. Neither the school class mode of instruction for the new members of the Party nor campaigns led by the Centre of the Party were of use in this situation. From this point of view, too, the Rectification movement has been established as a new type of educational institution.

3. Next, the nature of the difference of views at the Party Centre determined the form which the Rectification Movement should take. This difference of views consisted in the conflict between the mode of thought called "dogmatism,"<sup>7</sup> or the mechanical application of articles of faith, and the mode of thought characteristic of Marxism-Leninism. There was, of course, conflict on grounds of concrete policies also. Wang Ming, who thought that the war with Japan could be won in a short time, opposed himself to Mao Tse-tung's theory of a war of attrition, and in the matter of war strategy he attached little importance to the arming of the people or to guerrilla warfare, thus opposing himself to Mao Tse-tung's view of the importance of the arming of the people and guerrilla warfare. Again, in the United Front Wang Ming held to a policy of "having everything done through the United Front," and opposed Mao Tse-tung's way of thinking, in which it was maintained that the Communist Party should retain its independence while participating in the United Front.<sup>8</sup> However, Mao Tse-tung and his associates believed that at the root of this conflict there lay a conflict between

<sup>7</sup> The work compiled and published under the name of Mao Tse-tung which was used as a textbook by the Rectification Movement at this time was entitled *Ssuhsiang Fafa Lun* (On Modes of Thought).

<sup>8</sup> For details see Atsuyoshi Nijima, "Enan Seifū Undō (The Rectification Movement at Yen-an)," in *Gendai Chūgoku no Kakumei Ninshiki* (The Understanding of the Revolution in Modern China), Tokyo, Ochanomizu-shobō, 1964.

a mode of thought characterized by a subjective style of study, a sectarianism in Party's style of work, stereotyped Party writing, and intra-Party liberalism, and the mode of thought characteristic of Marxism-Leninism. Consequently they believed that the problem could not be solved by the criticism of Wang Ming's theory alone, but could find its ultimate solution only in the complete eradication of the "mistaken" mode of thought from the Party. Mao Tse-tung and his associates sought not only to change the ideology of Wang Ming as an individual, but also to bring it about that there should be none of those "buyers" who accepted and responded to his ideology and "retailed" it to others. The fact was that at the Sixth Plenary Session of the Sixth Central Committee Mao Tse-tung had carried out a clear criticism of Wang Ming's ideology,<sup>9</sup> and if criticism of this ideology alone had been sufficient, this would appear to have met the requirements of the case in the Central Committee. It was necessary that the Rectification Movement should not be a movement for the criticism of "theory," but should be a movement involving *the whole Party membership* and aiming at criticism of "modes of thought" and the establishment of correct "modes of thought."

4. Another important characteristic of the Rectification Movement is that it was carried out by a party which had a partial grasp of political power and the possibility of seizing political power on a national scale in the near future. (The Second Rectification Movement was carried out by a party which had acquired political power on a national scale.) As was natural in a revolutionary party, the Chinese Communist Party had the immediate aim of seizing power. However, no stable local administrations had been established before the beginning of the Sino-Japanese War and the formation of the Anti-Japanese National United Front. Even in the case of the administration established in the Central Soviet Base Area, the centre of political authority was continually exposed to the threat of extinction by repeated "encirclement and suppression" by the Kuomintang. However, the government of the Shansi-Kansu-Ningsia Border Region, centred on Yen-an, was recognized by the Kuomintang régime, and while the administrations in the other Liberated Areas did not enjoy its formal recognition they all had the strong support of the local inhabitants and possessed the possibility of persisting for a long time. It was under such circumstances that the Chinese Communist Party was obliged to make its preparations for taking over power. In this situation the Party was not looking for legal knowledge of the kind required in operating the Civil Code in former days, nor administrative ability, nor the jugglings called for in manipulating deliberative assemblies, but was concerned with how to enter into combination with the masses in each region and how to prevent bureaucratic tendencies in government. In the terminology used by the Chinese Communist Party at the time, this meant that it was an urgent task to train personnel who could carry into action the Party's "mass line." If the rank and file of Party

\* Mao Tse-tung, "Lun Hsin-tuanchieh (On New Classes)," *Wen Hsien*, No. 4, 1938.

members did not possess this ability it might happen that political power would be lost again after having been gained, and it would also be a disadvantage in the coming struggle for the hegemony with the Kuomintang. The Rectification Movement was also required for the purposes of making the "mass line" type of political activity a part of the equipment of every Party member. (The term "mass line" is derived from a report made by Liu Shao-ch'i in 1939.)

5. As a further special circumstance surrounding the Rectification Movement we may mention the blockading of the Liberated Areas by the Kuomintang. In 1939 the lines of communication running south from Yen-an had been blocked by the Kuomintang armies, while in 1940 a large-scale economic blockade (known as "the second anti-communist upsurge") was put into effect, resulting in a severe economic crisis in 1941. In his *Economic Problems and Financial Problems*, Mao Tse-tung reports on the state of the Liberated Areas in 1940 and 1941 in the following terms:<sup>10</sup>

"We had almost nothing to wear, no oil, no paper, and no supplementary foods. It was so bad that the soldiers had no boots or socks, and the staff of the administrative organs had no quilts for the winter. The Kuomintang had stopped the payments made to cover our expenses and had subjected us to an economic blockade, hoping in this way to put an end to our régime. We were suffering very great difficulties."

The economic burdens laid on the people of the Shensi-Kansu-Ningsia Border Region assumed extraordinary proportions. Because the country was at war they were obliged to make deliveries of foodstuffs. In 1940 they delivered 90,000 piculs of foodstuffs, and in 1941 200,000 piculs, or double the amount within a year. (At this time the population of the Shensi-Kansu-Ningsia Border Region numbered 1,400,000.) In 1941 they absorbed bonds to the value of five million yüan issued by the Border Region government.<sup>11</sup> In addition to this, the conscription of the youth for military service caused a shortage of labour. Between 30 and 70% of the population of the Border Region was unproductive.<sup>12</sup> For this reason the figures for the area of uncultivated land reclaimed for the purposes of attaining self-sufficiency in food decreased sharply in 1940 and 1941. (1,002,774 *mou* in 1939, 618,980 *mou* in 1940, and 390,087 *mou* in 1941.)<sup>13</sup> In order to solve this problem it was necessary to throw into production all the unproductive population. That is to say, it was necessary to mobilize for productive labour the army, the staff

<sup>10</sup> Mao Tse-tung, "Chingchi Went'i yü Ts'aicheng Went'i (Economic Problems and Financial Problems)," in *Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung*, Vol. 4, Peking, Chin-Ch'a-Chi Jihpao Company, 1944, pp. 3-4.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 5.

<sup>12</sup> Yeh Huo-sheng, *Jenmin ti Shengli* (The People's Victory), Peking, People's Publishing Company, 1956, p. 69.

<sup>13</sup> Mao Tse-tung, "Chingchi Went'i yü Ts'aicheng Went'i," p. 10.

of government organs, the staff of mass organizations, and women. In this matter the leadership of the members of the Chinese Communist Party, and especially of the higher-ranking members, performed a decisive role, and the principal obstacle was the "book-reading" personalities of some of the Party members, and their "book-reading" ideology. The new intelligentsia of China differ from the "book-readers" of old China, but they share with them that attitude of mind which avoids and despises manual labour, and unless this were overcome it would scarcely be possible to overcome the economic crisis in the Liberated Areas. The Rectification Movement was also required for the purposes of breaking down these ideological barriers. Further, it was necessary that there should be no exceptions to "participation in productive labour" among the Party members (apart from the sick).

### III. THE CONDITIONS MAKING POSSIBLE THE RECTIFICATION MOVEMENT

1. Let us consider the conditions which made possible the carrying out of the Rectification Movement by the Chinese Communist Party. The first was a relatively stable military situation. It was impossible to carry on the Rectification Movement at the beginning of the anti-Japanese War—during the period of the Chinese strategic withdrawal, up to 1938—or towards the end of it—the period of the Chinese strategic counter-attack in the summer of 1945—or during the Third Chinese Revolutionary Civil War. This was because the stern demands of warfare did not permit the use of the considerable number of hours required in study, etc. The Rectification Movement could be carried only in the period during which the Chinese forces were ranged in strategic opposition vis-à-vis the Japanese. For Mao Tse-tung and his associates at the Party Centre to make up their minds to carry on the Rectification Movement over a fairly long period of time it was necessary that they should have some prospect of the stage of strategic confrontation continuing for some time. In "A War of Attrition" (May, 1938), Mao Tse-tung made a full-scale analysis of the anti-Japanese war, and proved at length that the anti-Japanese war had entered the stage of strategic confrontation and that this stage would continue for a long time.<sup>14</sup> In fact, by the time it had occupied Wuhan at the end of 1938 the Japanese army had become incapable of advancing any further into the interior of China because of its extended supply-lines, lack of fighting strength, and other reasons, while on the other side the inadequacy of the mobilization of the Chinese masses and shortages of military man-power, arms, etc., prevented the Chinese from going over to the counter-attack at short notice, and at the front fighting was continued in the form of struggles for the possession of local objectives, chiefly by guerrilla warfare. This situation of strategic confrontation was

<sup>14</sup> Mao Tse-tung, "Lun Ch'ihchiu-chan (A War of Attrition)," in *Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung*, Vol. 2, Peking, People's Publishing Company, 1952.



one of the conditions for the Rectification Movement.

2. The second condition was the existence of Liberated Areas possessing their own powers. The Rectification Movement was a self-educating movement carried on within the Communist Party, or, more strictly, was a self-educating movement within a Communist Party which had seized power. At the time when the Chinese Communist Party Centre was located in Shanghai and carrying on illegal underground activities it would probably have been impossible, or at least very difficult, for it to have carried on the Rectification Movement. The reason for this is that since the initiative in the class struggle is in the hands of the power-holding class it is to all intents and purposes impossible to carry out long-term programmes of study such as those required by the Rectification Movement. New and unexpected political situations and political crises result in the cutting-down of the hours devoted to study, and it becomes necessary to discontinue the movement. In contrast to this, in places such as the Shansi-Kansu-Ningsia Border Region where a people's régime has been established it is possible to secure a certain number of hours for study by making mutual accommodations of time. This condition was common to many of the "ideological reconstruction movements" carried out after the establishment of the people's régime. For example, in such movements as the Sanfan Wufan Movement workers and merchants frequently spent half a day or a whole day in "study."

3. Thirdly, the Rectification Movement was an educational movement carried out in a "blockaded" area. This condition of being "blockaded" is a very important condition, and one which must not be ignored when talking of the Rectification Movement. We have already said something about how the Shansi-Kansu-Ningsia Border Region and the other Liberated Areas were economically blockaded at this time by the Japanese army and the Kuomintang armies. Here we are principally concerned with the ideological effect of this condition. At that time not even a single copy of a newspaper came into the Shansi-Kansu-Ningsia Border Region from outside. Not only did none of the decadent culture of capitalism enter the Liberated Areas, but the Fascist publications of the Kuomintang—from newspapers, magazines, and books, down to propaganda leaflets—were also excluded. We need hardly say that since there was no radio in the Liberated Areas at this period, there was no ideological influence from the outside world on the Liberated Areas through this medium. The importance of these facts should be considered in relation to an intra-Party educational movement carried on in an unblockaded socialist régime or a Communist Party which has not yet seized power. In such a case it is necessary to establish the Marxist ideology and at the same time to maintain a constant struggle against a flood of capitalist, decadent, reactionary, fascist and colonial ideology and culture. Those who do not possess any systematic "ideology" but have a bourgeois attitude to living as a matter of custom and habit are, in a certain sense, a more dangerous "enemy" than "ideology." The fact that the Rectification Movement, if

imitated in other countries, would end inconclusively or would yield no great results is due to the fact that it would be defeated by such "enemies" as these. In contrast to this, the Rectification Movement in the Liberated Areas had to struggle against only such bourgeois ideology and culture as had been brought into the Liberated Areas up to that time. The case may be described as analogous to the capture or annihilation of a unit whose communications with its parent unit have been cut off.

4. If we take the stage of strategic confrontation in military matters, the existence of the people's régimes, the securing of study hours, and the ideological blockade to be the objective conditions, the constituent condition in the Rectification Movement is the ideology of Mao Tse-tung. However much need there might be for the Rectification Movement, and however well-provided the objective conditions might be, the Rectification Movement could not succeed without the constituent condition. The ideology of Mao Tse-tung provides this constituent condition. Since this is not the place for a full-scale treatment of Mao Tse-tung's ideology we shall content ourselves with listing the main points of Mao Tse-tung's ideology directly concerned with the Rectification Movement:

(a) Man has an intuitive capacity for action,<sup>15</sup> which can come into being only when correct practice is based on correct theory.<sup>16</sup> Consequently, before embarking upon practical action it is necessary to gain a grasp of correct theory by means of ideological struggle.

(b) Correct theory produces correct modes of thought. Dogmatism is an incorrect mode of thought, and it is necessary to fight against dogmatism and to acquire correct modes of thought. In order to acquire correct modes of thought (i) the attaching of importance to the intermediate or neutral category, (ii) the making of a distinction between point of view and method, and (iii) the attaching of importance to survey studies are required.

(c) It is wrong to divide everyone into enemies and friends, and the stage of 'fellow-traveller' should be brought under consideration.<sup>17</sup> A theory which treats only of friends and foes banishes transition and intermediacy from historical reality. Wang Ming, representing the principal opposition group at this time, had included fellow-travellers (the Kuomintang) among the Party's friends, while another opposition group, the Trotski-ites, had classified fellow-travellers as enemies.<sup>18</sup>

(d) By 'point of view' is meant recognizing intermediate categories such

<sup>15</sup> Mao Tse-tung, "A War of Attrition."

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> "Talks at the Yen-an Forum on Literature and Art," *Chiehfang Jihpao* (October 19, 1943) and "Tsui Shan-Kan-Ning Pien-ch'ü Ts'anyi-hui ti Yenshuo (Speech at the Assembly of Representatives of the Shansi-Kansu-Ningsia Border Region)," *Chiehfang Jihpao* (November 21, 1941), *Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung*, Vol. 3.

<sup>18</sup> The word here rendered as 'fellow-traveller' is replaced by the expression "allies within the framework of the United Front" in the current *Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung*. Here we follow the text of the *Chiehfang Jihpao* of October 19, 1943.

as 'fellow-traveller,' and carrying out analyses in a dialectical manner. The term 'method' refers to the ways used in transmitting to others the content selected in accordance with the 'point of view.' Dogmatism does not distinguish between these two, and imposes a fixed content by means of a 'method' which consists of external compulsion, directions, and orders. Since dogmatism lacks intuitive consciousness in matters of "method," it imposes fixed formulae, regardless of time or place.

(e) Marxism maintains that theory and objectively observable regularities should coincide. For this reason particular importance must be attached to survey studies, and the points which must be particularly emphasized when carrying out such surveys are that one should not lose sight of the political aims of the survey, and that the survey must have full-scale coverage. Dogmatism is characterized by the practice of making absolute a partial acquaintance with the matters in question, and in order to overcome this a full-scale acquaintance with the object of study is required.<sup>19</sup>

We may briefly describe Mao Tse-tung's theory regarding the Rectification Movement as being a theory for overcoming and destroying dogmatism. According to Mao Tse-tung, by overcoming dogmatism among the Party members the 'style' peculiar to the Chinese Communist Party (*tang-feng* 'Party's style of work,' *hsieh-feng* 'style of study,' *wen-feng* 'style of writing') is produced, the genesis and dissemination of mistaken ideology is prevented, the way is barred to bureaucratism and sectarianism, and close relations are established between the Party and the masses.

#### IV. THE HISTORY AND METHOD OF THE RECTIFICATION MOVEMENT

1. The course of the Rectification Movement may be broadly divided into three periods. The first period may be described as the prehistory of the Rectification Movement, and in the case of the Shensi-Kansu-Ningsia Border Region this period extends from the summer of 1941 to the third of April, 1942. The period begins with the call sent out in "Decisions on Strengthening Partisan Spirit" (June 7, 1941), and "study" began as a result of a series of decisions including the "Decisions Regarding the School for Cadres at Yen-an," issued at the end of the same year, the speech made by Mao Tse-tung on the first of February, 1942, entitled "Rectify the Style of Study, the Party's Style of Work, and the Style of Writing," the beginning of the publication of the journal *Hsieh-hsi* (Study), and the printing in it of the "Decisions Regarding the Education of Office-Holding Cadres" on the 28th of February, 1942.<sup>20</sup> It was on the 3rd of February, 1942, that committees for the direction of "study" were set up in government organs in

<sup>19</sup> Mao Tse-tung, *Nungts'un T'iaoch'a* (Rural Surveys), Shên-yang, Hsin Hua Bookshop, 1949.

<sup>20</sup> All these were prescribed reading for the Rectification Movement. They will be

the Shansi-Kansu-Ningsia Border Region. The special characteristic of this period is the criticism of the Chinese Communist Party levelled by the writers living in Yen-an. This was particularly severe in March, 1942. In the realm of literature and the arts such figures as Ting Ling, Wang Shih-wei, Lo Feng, Hsiao Chün, Ai Ch'ing, Ch'en Ch'i-hsia and Lei Chia published criticism of life and politics in the Liberated Areas.<sup>21</sup> At a three-days' exhibition of satirical art opened on the 15th of February the cartoonists Chang O, Hua Chün-wu, and others exhibited cartoons satirizing the Revolution and the Party. At the Central Research Institute (The Marx Lenin Institute), which was later called 'the headquarters of dogmatism,' a wall-newspaper called 'Light Cavalry' was published, and dissatisfaction with the Party and the Revolution was expressed in every issue.<sup>22</sup> Wang Shih-wei was the leader of the movement at the Central Research Institute. According to *Do Not Misunderstand the Meaning of 'Seek the Truth,'* written at this time by Ai Ssu-ch'i, the state of affairs at this time was as follows:<sup>23</sup>

"Some people think that the main aim of the Rectification Movement is entirely concerned with "exposures" of abuses.... They devote all their strength to exposing the faults of others, and make no attempt to assign suitable weights to both faults and progress.... Thus, if someone else is living even only a little better than others, they will describe Yen-an and the whole of the Border Area as being "sunk in corruption," and if members of the senior ranks reveal a lack of interest in their subordinates in only the slightest degree they say that it is a case of class exploitation and oppression.... They say that the distinctions in the allowances system in Yen-an are a revival of the class system, and even so slight a thing as going to the theatre in one's leisure time is described by them as 'corruption and decadence.'"

2. The second period dates from the publication of the so-called "3rd of April Decisions" on the 3rd of April, 1942, to the end of the process of "study." As a result of the decisions ("Decisions Regarding the Debating

found in the *Cheng Feng Wenhsien* (Literature for the Rectification Movement), enlarged and revised edition, Shanghai Hsin, Wenyi Publishing Company, 1949.

<sup>21</sup> The printing of these in the *Chiehfang Jihpao* was the responsibility of Ting Ling, the editor of the Literature and Arts Section of the *Chiehfang Jihpao*. The most important were Ting Ling, "Sanpa-chieh Yu Kan" (March 9, 1942), "Women Hsüyao Ts'awen" (October 23, 1941), "Tsai Yiyüanchung" (reprinted in the *Wenyipao*, second issue of 1958), Lo Feng, "Haishih Ts'awen te Shihtai" (March 12, 1942), Ma Chia, "Chienko" (December 15-17, 1941), Shu Ch'ün, "Ta Chio Se" (January 24, 1942), Lei Chia, "Shui Tsai Shafa te Jen" (March 18, 1942), Wang Shih-wei, "Ye Paiho Hua" (March 13, and March 23, 1942), "Chengchih-chia, Yishu-chia," *Kuyü*, Vol. I, No. 4.

<sup>22</sup> Yang Chün-chen, *Huiyi Yen-an Cheng Feng Yüntung* (Reminiscences of the Yen-an Rectification Movement), Changsha, Hunan People's Publishing Company, 1957.

<sup>23</sup> Ai Ssu Ch'i, "*Yu ti Fang Shih*" *Chi Ch'i T'a* ("Yu ti Fang Shih" and Other Pieces), Shanghai, Hsin Wenyi Publishing Company, 1952.

of the Decisions of the Central Committee of the Party and the Report on the Rectification Movement by Comrade Mao Tse-tung”), a change was made in the character of the movement as it had been carried on in the first period, during which it was a movement of criticism without “study,” and it became a study movement for which certain reading matter was prescribed. The *Decisions* prescribed 18 items of reading matter (augmented by four more on the 16th of April), and it was laid down that schools should complete their “study” between the 20th of April and the 20th of June, that government organs should do so between the 20th of April and the 20th of July (the completion of these studies to be followed by an examination), that mass discussion should take place in the course of these studies, and that the conclusions reached should be communicated for approval to the higher organs. The famous Yen-an Forum on literature and the arts was held between the 2nd and the 25th of May as being the “study” required by the Rectification Movement in the realm of literature and the arts. At this stage the Rectification Movement had already spread outside the Party, but the participation of non-members was on an entirely voluntary basis, and among the writers there were some, such as Hsiao Chün, who did not attend the study meetings. Again, in passing criticism the attitude of “fair breezes and gentle rain,” that is, restraining needless bellicosity and seeking to ‘cure the disease and save the patient,’ was adopted. The fact that Wang Shih-wei, who was the object of the severest criticism in the field of literature and the arts, was not arrested although he refused to perform “self-criticism,” and the fact that Wang Ming, the object of criticism, was elected as one of the important members of the Central Committee at the Seventh National Congress in 1945, show that this movement was of a markedly different kind from the “purges” of the Stalin era.

3. The third period was that in which the Party members and cadres, having reflected upon their dogmatic modes of behaviour and having attained an understanding of correct modes of thought, “went down” among the masses to take part in production. For example, in the autumn of 1942 village surveys were carried out by students, while the Lu Hsün Institute of Literature and the Arts organized literary working parties to go round the villages. In 1943 an improved version of the *Yang Ko* dance, a form of peasant folk-art, was staged in many places and was well received, and a beginning was made to large-scale visits to the countryside by practitioners of literature and the arts. Cadres (civil servants) and students participated on a grand scale, while “ample supplies of clothing and food” were won with the help of such efforts as the reclamation of Nanni Wan by the Yen-an Garrison. Self-sufficiency was attained in supplies of clothes, food, paper, petroleum oil, and weapons. This stage of the Rectification Movement continued up to 1945, when it ground to a halt with the beginning of the stage of strategic counter-attack against Japan.

4. The characteristic methods employed in the course of the Rectification

Movement were the following. (a) All the participants, both Party members and non-members, read the material prescribed for study. (b) An overwhelming proportion of the material prescribed for study was written by members of the Chinese Communist Party or by persons of Chinese nationality. (15 out of the 22 items were written by Chinese.) Marx and Engels were completely unrepresented. (c) Study consisted chiefly of individual study, and study in schools and at meetings was not carried on. (d) During the period of study time-off was granted from production, training, and normal instruction. (e) Criticism and self-criticism was carried on in discussion, and as a result "solidarity" was strengthened. (f) "Going down" among the masses, in association with manual labour, was carried out after study.

## V. THE SECOND RECTIFICATION MOVEMENT AND ITS RESEMBLANCES

1. Thereafter Rectification Movements were carried out on several occasions in the Chinese Communist Party. Rectification Movements were carried out in 1946, in the North-East Liberated Area, and, in the winter of 1949, in Peking and Tientsin, and again, on a larger scale, in 1957. The Rectification Movement of 1957 began with a *Directive Regarding the Rectification Movement* issued by the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party on the 27th of April. This Directive was similar to the "3rd of April Decisions," and laid it down that the directing ideology of the movement should be that of Mao Tse-tung's speeches entitled "On the Problem of Dealing Correctly with the Contradictions Among the People" made in February and March of the same year, that the aims of the movement should be those of overcoming bureaucratism and subjectivism, and that the principal methods employed should be those of "fair breezes and gentle rain," criticism and self-criticism. The position occupied by the 22 items of reading matter in the "3rd of April Decisions" corresponds to that of Mao Tse-tung's speeches in the present instance. However, we can perceive a difference in the course of this Rectification Movement when compared with the first Rectification Movement. This consists in the fact that the period corresponding to the first period of the first Rectification Movement was concentrated into the space of approximately one month following the decisions made on the 27th of April. In the case of the first Rectification Movement, the month preceding the "3rd of April Decisions" was the time when criticism of the Chinese Communist Party was at its most intense. This fact leads us to suspect that the Chinese Communist leadership may have desired to create, to some degree by artificial methods, an atmosphere of criticism of the Party. The Chinese Communists feared that criticism against the Chinese Communist Party might make inroads into the intelligentsia and the bourgeoisie. But they had (or appeared to have) a firm belief that if they were given full scope to express their criticism of the Chinese Communist Party the political order would not

be endangered. In the event, after the beginning of June, 1957, the "Anti-Right-Wing Struggle" was developed on a national scale. This corresponds to the criticism of Wang Shi-wei in the first Rectification Movement. It is the beginning of the second period. In 1958 there began the "going down" among the masses by the whole of the cadres, and the practice of "going down" among the masses for one to two months in every year and the participation of cadres in manual labour have become established institutions which have been maintained up to the present. This may be described as the third period. The second Rectification Movement is thus closely analogous to the first Rectification Movement in its aims, methods, and course of development.

2. It is now 25 years since 1941, and an interval of 16 years lies between the first and second Rectification Movements. Why is it that in spite of this, Rectification Movements have been repeatedly carried out in China and have produced certain results? We may suppose that it is because of a resemblance of conditions, or rather because the conditions required by the first Rectification Movement have been continuously reproduced in China. After the establishment of the People's Republic of China a sharp increase took place in the numbers of the Chinese Communist Party, which reached 12,720,000 in 1957. What is more, only 1,740,000 of these, or 13% of the total membership, were of working-class origin.<sup>24</sup> As for why this condition exists, we may suppose that it is because under Chinese socialism, unlike that of the Soviet Union, the Democratic Republic of Korea, or North Viet-Nam, a national bourgeoisie still persists, and exploitation still persists, and in addition there is (as in the case of the Soviet Union) a large peasant stratum in Chinese society. The situation was exactly the same in the Liberated Areas. In these Liberated Areas landlords were allowed to persist, in order to maintain the United Front. The condition in which remnants of an exploiting class persist alongside a powerful people's government is a condition which is peculiar to China, and this condition provides the reason for the Rectification Movement. We may thus say that it is natural that Rectification Movements should not be carried on in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam, or the Soviet Union. On the other hand, it is also natural that the Communist Parties in the capitalist countries should be unable to carry on Rectification Movements. In these cases the "requirement" exists, but not the "conditions." There is no people's government, and they are not "blockaded." It would appear to be certain that in the future Rectification Movements will be carried out in China during "stages of confrontation" with the enemy, as in 1942 and 1957. By these means the persistence in China of an exploiting class is utilized, and made a spring-board for development.

<sup>24</sup> Teng Hsiao-p'ing, *op. cit.*