

**Between Destruction and Construction:
The First Year of the Cultural Revolution**

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Fall of "Peng, Luo, Lu and Yang Clique"

On November 11, 1965, a Shanghai daily, Wenhuibao, published an article entitled "Comments on the Newly Written Historical Opera, Hai Jui Dismissed from Office," under the name of Yao Wenyuan. On the same day, the director of the General Office of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) Central Committee, Yang Shangkun, was discharged from his post.¹ The two seemingly unrelated events were in fact arranged behind the scenes by Mao Zedong. One may wonder why Mao initiated the criticism of Wu Han in Shanghai rather than in Beijing, why Wu Han and Yang Shangkun were chosen as targets, and if there was any relationship between the two events? In order to answer those questions, it is necessary to know how Mao viewed the general political situation of China and his own position in the power structure at that time.

In 1962, Mao made an appeal to the people of China "never to forget class struggle!" In Mao's view, class struggle was very acute indeed. In the countryside, he estimated, leadership in one-third of the local authorities had been usurped by class enemies.² The situation in industry was no better. He believed that a great proportion of enterprises were not in the hands of Marxists. Mao especially worried about the state of politics in literary and art circles. He asserted that a "black line" had been dominating this realm and that as a result the Party's policies had not really been applied there since the liberation in 1949. Finally, educational institutions, from elementary school to university level, were regarded as being reigned by bourgeois intellectuals.³

Facing such an evidently dangerous situation, Mao determined to fight back. He launched in 1963 the "Socialist Education Movement," the purpose of which was "to struggle against power holders taking the capitalist road." He hoped that the campaign would help purge corrupted cadres at the grass-roots level.⁴ In addition, Mao initiated the campaign against "bourgeois academic authorities." In the summer of 1964, a so-called Cultural Revolution Group, headed by Peng Zhen (the Group of Five), was formed to lead the nationwide criticism. In the meantime, Mao selected 39 samples of "poisonous weeds," including Wu Han's Hai Jui Dismissed from Office and Deng Tuo's Evening Chats at Yanshan, and distributed them down to the county level to be criticized and rebutted.⁵

Mao soon found that his efforts were being impeded by certain top leaders. Although studying Mao's Thought was becoming a mass movement throughout society at the time, Mao felt that he was losing control of the center of power. For one thing, the Secretary General of the Party, Deng Xiaoping, had never once consulted with Mao since 1959.⁶ Even when Deng made important decisions, he rarely informed the Chairman.⁷ The First Vice Chairman of the Party, Liu Shaoqi, in Mao's view, also showed less respect for him than before.⁸

Mao's distrust of Liu and Deng was heightened at the end of 1964. In December 1964, Deng Xiaoping called a working conference of the Central Committee to discuss the issues concerning the ongoing Socialist Education Movement. Because Mao had decided in 1963 that he would, in the future, consider only strategic matters of the Party and state and not deal with the daily routine of political operations, and because Mao had not been present at many previous meetings, Deng suggested that Mao did not have to attend the meeting. Mao did attend the meeting, however, and actively led the discussion.⁹ In his expressed view, the main contradiction of the movement was between socialism and capitalism. But just when he began to elaborate his analysis, Liu Shaoqi chimed in with a different opinion. "There may be more than one contradiction," said Liu.

For one, there is the contradiction between the 'four goods' (politics, economics, organization, and ideology) and the 'four evils'. And for another, there is the contradiction between Party members and non-Party members. Those contradictions are interwoven with each other so that it is hard to tell one from the other. It may be better to go about resolving concrete problems, regardless of the fundamental nature of the contradictions involved.¹⁰

Liu's interruption enraged Mao. The next day, Mao carried two pamphlets to the meeting. He said to Liu and Deng:

Here are two booklets. One is China's Constitution. As a citizen, I have the right to express my opinion. The other is the Party Constitution. As the Party Chairman, I am entitled to attend the meeting. Now, one of you (i.e. Deng) tried to prevent me from taking

part in the meeting. And the other (i.e. Liu) interrupted my speech.
Do I have any rights at all?

Then he criticized the Politburo directed by Liu and the Central Secretariat headed by Deng as two "independent kingdoms."¹¹ Liu and Deng's self-criticisms did not relieve Mao from anxiety. Later Mao acknowledged that it was this meeting that had alerted him to the real danger of losing control.¹² He then decided that Liu had to go.¹³ To retain power, he also decided to take some unusual measures.

Mao chose Wu Han's Hai Jui Dismissed from Office as the first target of attack for good reason.¹⁴ Wu Han was not only a well-known historian but also a vice-mayor of the Beijing Municipal Government headed by Peng Zhen, who in turn played a crucial role in Deng Xiaoping's Central Secretariat.¹⁵ The criticism of Wu Han thus might function to kill two birds with one stone. It might work both to accelerate general criticism of "bourgeois academic authorities" and to test the loyalty of top leaders in Beijing, such as Peng Zhen.

In the spring of 1965, Mao instructed his wife, Jiang Qing, and her informal advisory group to prepare a critique of Wu Han's play in secret. By the end of August, Yao Wenyuan had completed his final version of "Comments on the Newly Written Historical Opera, Hai Jui Dismissed from Office." At the CCP work conference held the next month, Mao proposed "thoroughly to criticize the reactionary ideology of bourgeoisie" in general and to criticize Wu Han in particular. But his suggestion was ignored by most of the participants in the conference. Even when Mao tried to sound Peng Zhen out by directly asking him, "Could we criticize Wu Han?" Peng responded frigidly, "Some aspects of him can of course be criticized."¹⁶ In the following month, however, no action was taken in Beijing. Thus Mao finally decided to publish Yao's article in Shanghai.¹⁷

Mao's sense of losing control over Beijing led him seriously to consider taking measures against a possible coup. Following Mao's directive, a so-called Beijing Work Team was set up under the supervision of Lin Biao in the second half of 1965. The team conducted a secret investigation of "underground activities" in Beijing, especially in Zhongnanhai, the compound where top central leaders worked and lived. The first victim of the investigation was Yang Shangkun, the director of the General Office, who was

accused of spying on Mao.¹⁸ Luo Ruiqing, the chief of the General Staff of the PLA, soon became the second victim. Luo was essentially a rival to Lin Biao for power within the PLA. Lin Biao successfully convinced Mao that Luo was not only an ambitious careerist but also a dangerous schemer against Mao's Thought.¹⁹ At a meeting of the Politburo held in Shanghai in December 1965, Luo was discharged from his post and prosecuted.²⁰ Yang and Luo both had long been in charge of Mao's safety, with the former taking care of Zhongnanhai and the latter assigned to accompany Mao wherever he went outside Beijing. The exposure of the two key persons as "conspirators" suggested to Mao that Beijing was not merely out of his control but was fraught with political danger. Therefore he decided not to return to Beijing until it proved secure.²¹

Yao Wen Yuan's article in Wenhuibao immediately shook Beijing. There had been a rule that newspapers were generally not allowed to criticize anyone by name publicly unless they got permission from the Central Propaganda Department. But the department was uninformed when Yao's article appeared. On November 13, the Beijing Municipal Party Committee and Renmin Ribao asked Wenhuibao about the background of Yao's article. They decided to reprint the article if it had been approved by Mao. But the Shanghai paper refused to provide any background information, because Jiang Qing had specifically instructed Wenhuibao to block the passage of information to Beijing. Then the Beijing Municipal Party Committee turned to its first secretary, and Renmin Ribao to the head of the Group of Five, Peng Zhen, who was incidentally traveling outside of Beijing at the moment. Lacking clearance concerning the background of Yao's article, Peng directed Beijing to wait until he came back. On November 20, disappointed because no newspaper in the nation except another in Shanghai, Jiefeng Ribao, had reprinted Yao's articles, Mao ordered Shanghai to turn the article into a pamphlet and distribute it throughout the nation.²²

In the following four months, Peng's position within the Party seemed to be as secure as ever.²³ Peng did one thing wrong, however, which was to ruin his political life. On March 11, 1966, under the orders of Peng, Xu Liqun, the deputy director of the Central Propaganda Department, questioned by phone Yang Yongzhi, the head of the Propaganda Department of the Shanghai Municipal Party Committee, why Shanghai had published Yao's article without authorization from Beijing. On March 28, Kang Sheng informed Mao of this episode and provocatively added: "It indicates that their spearhead of attack

is directed at you, our Party Chairman." Kang's account infuriated Mao. He could never tolerate anyone who, in his view, was playing underhanded tricks against him. Therefore he determined to destroy Peng Zhen politically and everything related with Peng: the Group of Five, the Central Department of Propaganda, and the Beijing Municipal Party Committee.²⁴

April 1966 was an unusually busy month for top Chinese leaders. The Secretariat met from the ninth to the twelfth, and then the Standing Committee of the Politburo held a meeting from the sixteenth to the twenty fourth. The two sessions decided to oust Peng Zhen from office, disband the Group of Five, and reorganize the Beijing Municipal Party Committee. On April 24, the final draft of what would later be called the "May 16 Notice" was passed.²⁵

Ten days later, the Politburo started to hold a twenty-three-day enlarged meeting chaired by Liu Shaoqi in Beijing.²⁶ At the meeting, Lu Dingyi, the head of the Central Department of Propaganda, was "ferreted out" and criticized as the fourth conspirator along with Peng Zhen, Luo Ruiqing, and Yang Shangkun.²⁷

Now, Peng, Luo, Lu, and Yang were accused of having formed an anti-Party clique, but, as a matter of fact, they came to grief for different reasons. There was no evidence whatsoever suggesting that they had ever colluded with each other in a conspiracy against Mao.²⁸ On May 18, Lin Biao explained why Mao had taken such an action against this so-called clique:

In the past several months, Chairman Mao has paid special attention to the possibility of a counter-revolutionary coup and has taken many necessary measures to prevent it from happening. Last winter, when Luo Ruiqing was exposed, the Chairman discussed the possibility of a coup with some of us. This time, when Peng Zhen's problems were brought to light, he even deployed forces to guard crucial such places and departments as broadcasting stations, army depots, and public security stations against a possible coup...It is of the first importance for us to maintain sharp vigilance against subversion from within, about which Chairman Mao had been so anxious that he often could not sleep soundly.²⁹

A purge was not Mao's purpose, but removal of the immediate threat was nevertheless the necessary condition of realizing his goals. What were his

goals at that moment? The May 16 Notice made them clear: First, "the whole Party must thoroughly expose the reactionary bourgeois stand of those so-called 'academic authorities' who oppose the Party and socialism." Second, to achieve the first goal, "it is necessary at the same time to criticize and repudiate the representatives of the bourgeoisie who have sneaked into the Party, the government, the Army, and all spheres of culture, and to clear them out or to transfer some of them to other positions."³⁰

Starting from April, 1966, criticism of bourgeois academic authorities had been intensified. Newspapers had carried numerous critical articles. On April 18, the Jiefang Junbao (The PLA Daily) published an editorial entitled "Hold High the Great Banner of Mao Zedong Thought and Take Active Part in the Great Socialist Cultural Revolution." This editorial was reprinted in all major national and local newspapers the next day. The use of the term "cultural revolution," however, surprised nobody, for the term had been popular since 1958.³¹

May 1966 saw a high tide of criticism, which shifted focus from Wu Han to a so-called "Three-Family Village"--Deng Tuo, Wu Han, and Liao Mosha, all of whom were powerful figures in the Beijing Municipal Party Committee and the Beijing Municipal Government.³² Orchestrated by Mao from behind the scenes, a group of young theorists spearheaded the attack, which aimed to undermine Peng Zhen's power base--the Beijing Party Committee and Government.³³ The masses then were mobilized to take part in the fight against the "black gang" and "blackline." Criticism meetings were held throughout the country. Even students of elementary schools were required to demonstrate their resentment against the "Three Family Village."³⁴ Big-character posters containing accusations and denunciations of revisionists appeared in every unit. Newspapers were full of critical essays.

As Mao sadly noted, however, such a massive media campaign did not arouse much real interest among ordinary Chinese.³⁵ Superficially, people appeared to be extremely enthusiastic in throwing themselves into the movement, but most people in their heart believed that the cultural revolution was essentially the business of the cultural and educational circle, having little to do with them. Viewing the campaign simply as a response to the alleged attacks from a handful of "anti-Party and anti-socialism elements," they took part in the movement only to show their support of the Party. Since in their understanding, the target of the movement was the "anti-Party and anti-

socialism black gang" who had attacked the establishment from outside,³⁶ the power position of political elites at all levels was actually strengthened during the campaign, which obviously was contrary to Mao's expectations.³⁷ To make a political breakthrough, he had to do something extraordinary.

On May 28, a new Cultural Revolution Small Group (hereinafter CRSG) was set up to replace the old one. Three days later, taking orders directly from Mao, a work team, led by the head of the CRSG, Chen Boda, entered the offices of Renmin Ribao (People's Daily) and took over control of the organ of the Party without giving notice to Liu Shaoqi and other top leaders in Beijing.³⁸ The next day, Renmin Ribao carried a provocative editorial: "Sweep away all of the Monsters and Ghosts." That night, Mao personally instructed the nation's radio network to broadcast the contents of a poster written by seven teachers and graduate students of the Department of Philosophy at Beijing University. What differed this poster from millions of others was that its main target was the Party committee of the university rather than academic authorities. Mao later acknowledged that this was the time he finally decided to launch an all-out counterattack against the bourgeoisie within the Party.³⁹ June 1, 1966 thus has since been considered the mark of the beginning of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution.

The Fall of Liu and Deng

Nie's big-character poster of June 1 was meant to turn the focus of the movement from the criticism of bourgeois academic authorities to the criticism of "representatives of the bourgeoisie within the Party who sheltered the bourgeois authorities." Mao wanted the broadcasting of the Nie's poster to convey an important message to millions of Chinese: it was not necessarily illegitimate to attack local Party authorities.⁴⁰ The signal became ever stronger as it was announced that Peng Zhen had been dismissed and the Beijing Municipal Party Committee had been reorganized on June 3. As Mao had expected, the publication of Nie's poster "stirred up the whole world."

However, after having kindled the flames of the Cultural Revolution at the beginning of June, Mao still stayed in South China, moving from Hangzhou to his birthplace--Shaoshan of Hunan, and then to Wuhan, until July 18. During the period, he gave no clear directive to central leaders in Beijing about how to carry the movement forward. Thus the leaders who were doing the

day-to-day work, among them were Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping, were left with the discretion of directing the movement in accordance with their understanding of what Mao intended to do.

Since the day when Mao took offense at them in December 1964, Liu and Deng had made self-criticism for several times and had tried hard to keep in line with Mao. Liu concurred in Mao's appraisal that over one-third of local authorities had been usurped by nonproletarians.⁴¹ And he had sympathy with neither "bourgeois academic authorities" who were under attack or the "Peng, Luo, Lu, Yang clique" who were purged.⁴² But Liu did not really understand what Mao was up to.

The most pressing challenge Liu and Deng were facing at the moment was an authority crisis in the education sector, particularly in Beijing. Because the old Beijing Municipal Party Committee was accused of having carried out a revisionist line, especially in education, school Party committees in the city became very vulnerable to students' criticism. In the first few days of June, the school authorities found themselves almost losing control over students.⁴³

Confronted with the rebellious students, the school authorities urgently asked their superiors to send work teams. Distrusting their current leaders, students also appealed to the new Municipal Party Committee to send work teams to their schools. The former hoped that the teams would calm the students, while the latter expected that the work teams would replace the old leaders. Although the motivations were different or even opposing, messages reaching Liu Shaoqi were the same: work teams were needed. Liu strongly inclined to the suggestion, for it had been a standard practice in past political campaigns to dispatch work teams to grass-roots units; and Mao had recently set an example by sending work teams to Renmin Ribao and Beijing University. But with the lesson learned from the December 1964 meeting in mind, Liu decided to move with caution.⁴⁴ At first, Liu convened a Politburo meeting on June 6, which formulated a document called "Eight Regulations" to arrest the deteriorating situation.⁴⁵ Then Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping flew to Hangzhou to invite Mao back to Beijing to take charge of the overall movement. But Mao preferred to stay in south China, probably because the Beijing Work Team had not yet completed its safety arrangements.⁴⁶ At a meeting held in Hangzhou on June 9, the issue of work teams was discussed. Although Mao advised "not to send them out so hastily," he did not explicitly oppose the idea of dispatching work teams to schools.⁴⁷ In the view of Liu, Deng, and others

attending the meeting, Mao's equivocal attitude amounted to a tacit consent. It was this understanding that led them finally to approve the dispatch of work teams.⁴⁸

Liu and Deng felt somehow reassured with the work teams garrisoned on campuses. The chaotic situation in the first few days of June reminded them of the spring of 1957 when a handful of rightists openly attacked the Party after the Party announced that it was going to rectify itself.⁴⁹ Now again some people seemed to have seized the Cultural Revolution as a chance to make trouble. They must be rightists in the guise of revolutionaries.⁵⁰ By drawing an analogy between the current movement and the anti-rightist campaign of 1957, Liu asserted at a central meeting that one of the purposes of the Cultural Revolution was to "fetter out" hidden rightists.⁵¹ For a moment, the Cultural Revolution was seen by many as just another anti-rightist campaign.⁵²

On June 18, some students at Beijing University took violent action to humiliate some sixty "black gang elements" without consulting the work team. This activity obviously ran counter to the "Eight Regulations."⁵³ More seriously, around this time, the work teams in 39 of the 55 institutions of higher learning in Beijing were in real danger of being driven out by the students. And some students even openly attacked the "Eight Regulations" as "dogma" and "a rope that tied the hands and feet of the revolutionary masses." This situation led the top leaders in Beijing to conclude:

In a relaxing political climate, rightists have come out one after another. Collided with "black gang elements" and "royalists," the rightists are so savage that in many units, it is monsters and ghosts who are assaulting others rather than the other way around. Facing the challenge from those sham leftists, real rightists, we shall prepare to strike back in due course.⁵⁴

On June 20, Liu Shaoqi endorsed a set of repressive measures that the work team of Beijing University proposed to use in dealing with rebellious students, and introduced them to the nation as a way to overcome what he called "interference." The movement then was turned into an "anti-interference campaign." In the following thirty days, about 10,000 college students and several thousand teachers in Beijing were labeled "rightists" or

"counter-revolutionaries."⁵⁵ The situation in other parts of the country was about the same.⁵⁶

As pointed out above, when Mao determined to initiate the CR, he had two purposes in mind: to deflate the arrogant "the bourgeois academic authorities" and to purge "the representatives of the bourgeoisie within the Party." As it turned out, however, the movement only criticized the former and left the latter almost entirely untouched in the first two months. Moreover, thousands of students became the new targets. If the deviation was not to be corrected, Mao had reason to fear that the movement might abort. He therefore decided to make the work team the starting point of rectifying the deviation.⁵⁷

On July 18, Mao finally returned Beijing after absence from the national capital for more than ten months. He first read reports prepared by Chen Boda and Kang Sheng and read the materials about the situation of Beijing University, Qinghua University, People's University, and Beijing Normal University prepared by the CRSG.⁵⁸ In the next few days, he called a series of meetings at which he condemned the work team for hindering the development of the CR and said the policy of dispatching work teams had resulted in "suppressing the student movement." He believed that this policy had led the movement "astray."⁵⁹ On July 20, Mao's wife, Jiang Qing, returned to Beijing from Shanghai to join the battle. The next day, arranged by Chen Boda and Kang Sheng, Wang Li and Guan Feng, two members of the CRSG, went to Qinghua University to see Kuai Dafu, a student who had been labeled "reactionary" by the work team. In the following nine days, the whole CRSG turned out to mobilize an anti-work-team force in a dozen colleges and high schools in Beijing.⁶⁰ According to them, Mao had never approved the decision of dispatching the work team. This statement no doubt undermined the legitimacy of the work team. More important, however, it was tantamount to declaring that those central leaders who had decided to dispatch the work team made a serious mistake, though most ordinary people might not be able to take the hint.

But Liu Shaoqi understood. At first, he tried to retrieve the defeat by arguing that work teams were necessary when they were sent out. On July 24, at a central meeting, after soliciting other top leaders' opinions on the issue, Liu concluded that although some work teams might have been "divorced from the masses," the work team as a form of Party leadership was imperative

in such a massive political movement. The next day, however, Mao issued an order: all work teams must be "driven out."⁶¹ On July 29, as a symbol of the anti-work-team force, Kuai Dafu was invited to attend a meeting of CR activists from Beijing's institutions of higher learning and high schools held in the Great Hall of the People. At this mass rally, Liu Shaoqi, Deng Xiaoping, and Zhou Enlai were forced to make self-criticism on the issue of the work teams. Liu reportedly said:

How to carry the CR forward? You do not know, then come to ask us. To be honest with you, I do not know either. I believe that many comrades at the Center, and most of work term members have no ready answer about this question...It seems that we old revolutionaries now are encountering new problems so that sometimes we are criticized for having made mistakes. But we are baffled by not knowing what we have done wrong.⁶²

But Mao would not leave the matter at that. He decided that not only should Liu's policy be condemned but the policy makers should be denounced. He therefore decided that to cripple Liu's position in the Party, his criticism of Liu's mistakes must reach a broader audience. The Eleventh Plenum of the Central Committee provided him with such an opportunity.

At a meeting to prepare for the plenum held from July 27 to 30, the participants, who included the chief leaders of the provinces, discussed Mao's criticisms of the work team and the draft of the "Sixteen Articles."⁶³ Although all endorsed Mao's decision to withdraw work teams, most thought that the initial decision of dispatching work teams had been right, only now did this form of leadership become obsolete. Some then were wondering, "After work teams are withdrawn, in what form may the Party's leadership be embodied?"⁶⁴ Obviously, the preparatory meeting fell far short of what Mao meant to achieve.

In the first three days of the plenum (August 1 to 3), Liu, Deng, and Zhou made speeches as scheduled. Liu's report on developments since the Tenth Plenum of 1962 was endorsed by the participants. Mao tried hard to draw attention to his view that the dispatching of the work team had been wrong, but his effort resulted at best in some timid participants' self-criticism. The participants still seemed not able to follow Mao's clues to track down

Liu.⁶⁵ The plenum was originally scheduled to end by August 5. Obviously, unless Mao made his point clear soon, the chance might be lost.

On August 4, Mao surprised most of the participants by launching a direct attack on Liu by saying: "The terror of suppressing the student movement is the manifestation of a wrong political line, which derived from the Center." The next day, Mao wrote his famous *dazibao* "Bombard the Headquarters," stating that "some leading comrades from the Center down to the local level" had "enforced a bourgeois dictatorship and struck down the surging movement of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution in the last fifty days or so."⁶⁶ The conference thus was prolonged. On August 6, Mao called back Lin Biao from Dalian of Liaoning province, who originally had no plan to attend the plenum, to reinforce his attack. The next day, his *dazibao* was distributed to the participants of the meeting. August 8 was a turning point. On that day, "the Sixteen Articles" was passed. From the day on, the plenum focused its attention on the criticism of Liu.⁶⁷ On August 12, Mao reshuffled the Party Center.⁶⁸ Both Mao and Lin believed that the reorganization would ensure the implementation of the decisions of the plenum, namely, the Sixteen Articles.⁶⁹

The Rise of the Red Guards

Although no decision was made at the Eleventh Plenum to dismiss Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping from their posts, the two vice chairmen of the Party essentially lost power and influence henceforth.

After the plenum ended, work teams withdrew from the schools. The withdrawal of work teams created a power vacuum in many schools. Even if the Party organizations remained intact, according to the Sixteen Articles, they were not supposed to lead the movement directly.⁷⁰ Now the question was who would have the right to lead the movement. It was then that the class line was pushed to extremes.

Previously, although those from bad family origins had been discriminated against, the official line was that no one was born red and people could become red only through ideological remolding.⁷¹ Especially after Peng Zheng's talk on the class line in January 1965, while the youth of exploitative families had been encouraged to forsake their own original classes, many students of good origins had also been criticized for having thought themselves "born red."⁷² The latter, of course, felt uncomfortable

with the criticism. In late 1965 and early 1966, a rumor started to spread among some high-level cadres' children of Beijing. Allegedly, Mao, disappointed because some cadres' children were not doing very well in their work and study while many from the exploitative classes were very active, had said that political power should not go to the latter for he believed "a hero's child is a brave man, and a reactionary's child is a bastard." Heartened by such a rumor, high-level cadres' children in some high schools of Beijing began to align with each other in informal ways.⁷³ On May 29, 1966, the first formal group, which called itself "red guards," took shape in the middle school attached to Qinghua University. Soon similar organizations emerged in other schools.⁷⁴ Nevertheless, before the work teams left, these groups remained largely secret, for any voluntary group had been regarded as a threat to the communists' control in the pre-CR China.⁷⁵

The withdrawal of work teams provided an opportunity for students of good class origins to come to the fore to claim the leadership, for now few school leaders would dare to restrain them at the risk of being condemned for "suppressing the revolutionary masses," and no other group had enough political resources to compete with them. Their claim was based on so-called "theory of blood lineage (*xuetonglun*)." Immediately after the work team lost legitimacy, the phrase "a hero's child is a brave man, a reactionary's child is a bastard" was displayed on the walls of many buildings in Beijing and quickly attracted nationwide attention, despite the CRSG's criticism.⁷⁶ It amounted to a public declaration that those from bad class origins were second-class citizens who had no chance to become "revolutionaries" through excellent political performance. Moreover, the phrase implied that the more contributions to the revolution one's parents had made, the more revolutionary one oneself was. In other words, among the offspring of the five red categories (revolutionary army men, revolutionary cadres, revolutionary martyrs, workers, and poor and lower-middle peasants), those from the first three had the priority to claim leadership. Influenced by the slogan, good origin students in more schools set up exclusive associations in late July and early August.

On July 28, when Jiang Qing interviewed the representatives of high school students of Haidian district of Beijing, the red guards of the middle school attached to Qinghua University presented her with two *dazibao* and asked her to pass them to Mao. Written in late June and early July, the two *dazibao*

had been denounced as "reactionary" by the work team, because they claimed "it is right to rebel." The red guards supported their point by citing a quotation from Mao which they found in Renmin Ribao of June 5, but the work team insisted that in a socialist country led by the Communist Party, it was no longer right to rebel. Now the red guards hoped to have the two *dazibao* endorsed by Mao himself. Four days later, Mao wrote a letter of support for the red guards and distributed it along with the two *dazibao* to the participants in the Eleventh Plenum. The next day, the CRSG formally recognized the red guards and similar student voluntary groups as legal organization. On August 3, upon receiving a copy of Mao's letter, the red guards of the middle school attached to Qinghua University promptly spread the good news to the city of Beijing.⁷⁷ Mao's praise of the red guards evoked wide repercussions among Beijing's students. In the following days organizations calling themselves "red guards" sprung up like mushrooms. Even the existing student groups changed their names to red guards. On August 18, Mao received over one million of the "revolutionary masses" in Tiananmen Square. Among them the red guards were most conspicuous. Fifteen hundred student representatives were invited to seat on the rostrum of Tiananmen, which had never happened before. More significant, Mao accepted and wore an armband of the red guards.⁷⁸

The signal seemed unmistakable. Inspired by the stirring news, students of the other parts of China set up thousands of organizations calling themselves "red guards" overnight. Thus the Red Guards as a new form of mass organization rose abruptly and quickly swept all over China.

Right after Mao's first meeting with the Red Guards, Red Guards set out to smash the Four Olds (old ideas, old culture, old customs, and old habits).⁷⁹ The drama of the Smashing of the Four Olds was probably not in anybody's plan. Although the Sixteen Articles and Lin Biao's speech at the mass rally of August 18 mentioned the necessity of eradicating the Four Olds of the exploiting classes, it meant a general task that might take a long time to accomplish. But students wanted immediate action to demonstrate their determination to be the vanguard of the CR movement. As in other revolutionary circumstances, the logic of "change a name and you change the thing" once again worked.⁸⁰ Indeed, nothing was more simple and more conspicuous than a change in outward appearances in a so-called revolution.

Started in Beijing on August 20, the storm of the Smashing of the Four Olds soon swept the nation. In no time, thousand of store, streets, factories, schools, hospitals, newspapers, and persons had changed their "non-revolutionary" names to "revolutionary names. The students did not confine their efforts to the names of places. Since 1964, tight-fitting jeans, pointed shoes, high-heeled shoes, Western-style coats and ties, and long hair had been regarded as symbols of a bourgeois lifestyle, and the people had been advised to avoid them. Now they were prohibited outright. Students ordered barbershops, tailors', and photo studios not to do any work that was inconsistent with a proletarian style.⁸¹ They also set up checkpoints on the streets. Long hair was cut, tight pants slit, and inappropriate shoes gashed. In a few days, all traces of the Four Olds disappeared from the streets. To wipe out the Four Olds, the students then began to search the houses of black elements and to confiscate or smash any items that did not appear to conform with the socialist value system.⁸² Hardly any family with a problematical record escaped being searched.⁸³

Although the Smashing of the Four Olds was not on their original agenda, Mao and the CRSG did not want to dampen the enthusiasm of the Red Guards. After hesitating for three days, they decided to applaud the Red Guards' activities on August 23.⁸⁴ With the connivance of the central authorities, the campaign became even more violent. Red Guards held accusation meetings against "monsters and ghosts," paraded them through the streets, and even forced them to move to the countryside. In the end, physical punishment became a common practice. In extreme cases, so-called "monsters and ghosts" were beat to death.⁸⁵ Driven to the wall, some victims put up a desperate fight. There were reports that Red Guards were stabbed and wounded.⁸⁶ By the end of August, it had become apparent that without some restrictions on the Red Guards' excesses, public order would collapse. Moreover, Mao and the CRSG were worried that the Red Guards were missing the main targets of the CR---the capitalist roaders. After watching the situation for a week, at the end of August, the Center stepped in to cool down Red Guards.⁸⁷ Because the local social control apparatus remained fairly effective, the massive violence was soon brought under control. But this period set a precedent for the use of violence. When the social control apparatus became paralyzed, violence would become a prominent feature of the CR.

The rise of the Red Guards and the campaign to smash the Four Olds were significant in two senses.

First, the Red Guards set a precedent for people with the same interests to organize themselves into groups against others. Although in August and September only good origin students were allowed to do so and only one Red Guard organization was supposed to be set up in each school to represent the student body, the Red Guards were the first real mass organization not subject to direct control of the political hierarchy in China since 1949. Unlike the Trade Union, Youth League, and Women's Association, which, as vassal organizations of the Party, could not act contrary to the guidelines imposed by the Party authorities, the Red Guards were independent from the outset. Their establishment, recruitment, composition, program, strategy, and activities were decided by the members themselves rather than through the official political hierarchy. Because of their independence, they were more likely to confront than to cooperate with the authorities. Moreover, the principle of the Party leadership now was interpreted as "the leadership of the Party Center headed by Chairman Mao,"⁸⁸ which seemed to justify not blindly obeying the local authorities.

Second, individuals now might reach out their units to take part the movement on a much broader basis. In the past, all social forces had been vertically segmented in the sense that political activities had been largely confined to each individual unit. Only the Party had had the capability to mobilize cross-unit actions through its hierarchical system. Here again the Red Guards set a precedent for people with the same interests to form cross-unit allies to pursue their common goals.

These breakthroughs made a spontaneous mass movement possible of which even Mao---a master of mass movement---might find it difficult to take the reins.

Mao acknowledged that he had not anticipated at first that the Red Guards would become a national phenomenon.⁸⁹ Nor did he expect that the Red Guards would take a direction he had tried to avoid. From late July to mid-August, Mao worked hard to redirect the movement. But the Red Guards, whom he and the CRSG inflamed and agitated, once again struck a blow against "wrong targets."⁹⁰ It was the earliest sign that a massive movement involving millions of people had its own logic. But Mao was so amazed by Red Guards'

enthusiasms in responding to his call that he did not realize that he was riding a tiger that would be hard to tame.

The Fall of the Public Authorities

The mighty campaign of the Smashing of the Four Olds overshadowed another important development in August---the growing flow of people traveling between Beijing and the provinces "to exchange revolutionary experiences," which was called in Chinese "*chuanlian*." As early as June and July, there had already been some people who hoped to go to Beijing to lodge complaints with the Party Center against the work teams or leaders in their units because they thought they had been unjustly treated. But the local authorities prohibited them from doing so.⁹¹ On July 21, Mao declared it wrong to prevent those people from coming to Beijing. In early August, thousands of students and even workers began to arrive in Beijing. By August 16, there had already been so many visitors in the nation's capital that the CRSG had to hold a welcome meeting for them in a large stadium.⁹² Two days later, when Mao for the first time received Red Guards in Tiananmen Square, the official media reported that among those in the square were students from other parts of the country.⁹³ The two events then were taken as a sign that the Center had given tacit consent to *chuanlian*. Moreover, the rumor that Chairman Mao would receive more Red Guards attracted a large number of students to Beijing from the provinces. At the same time, the desire to kindle the flames of the CR in the stagnant provinces drove many Beijing students to leave the capital for the provinces. In late August, the first Beijing students began to arrive in the provinces.⁹⁴

The Beijing students had two experiences which students in the other parts of China did not share. First, the highest local authorities, the Beijing Municipal Party Committee and Government, had collapsed and had been replaced. Second, since late July the CRSG members had repeatedly asserted that the policy of dispatching the work team was a "line mistake" and had tried to agitate students to criticize the policy and the work team. In addition, the Beijing students were in a position to get the latest information about the Center's new policies.⁹⁵ Thus, when Beijing students arrived in other places, their first sense was that the CR in the provinces

was rather stale. They therefore often took the lead in "bombarding" local governments.

As soon as Beijing students arrived in provincial capitals, local governments began to feel the pressure. In Hefei, about a thousand Beijing and local students surrounded the building of the Anhui Provincial Party Committee, shouting "Down with Li Baohua [the first party secretary]" and "Disband the Provincial Party Committee." In Shanghai, the Municipal Party Committee was forced to hold two mass rallies demanded by Beijing students, and the chief leaders attending the rallies were publicly humiliated. Similarly, the authorities of Hubei, Xinjiang, Guangxi, Jiangxi, Jiangsu, Guangdong, and other provinces were facing serious challenges. In some places, the situation seemed almost out of control. For instance, the tension between *chuanlian* students on one hand, and local workers, peasants, and cadres on the other broke out into open conflict in such cities as Qingdao, Xian, Guilin, Lanzhou, Baotou, Harbin, Chongqing, and Changsha.⁹⁶

On September 7, Mao severely criticized those local leaders who had allegedly incited workers and peasants against rebellious students.⁹⁷ By deterring local governments from inhibiting the rebellious behavior of the *chuanlian* students, Mao's criticism further inspired the latter's fighting will.

The *chuanlian* students at first could not find many local sympathizers. But the radical ideas they brought with them nevertheless exerted a growing influence on some local people's thinking, and their fearless attack against local governments set an example for local residents to follow.⁹⁸ By late September, first local radical student groups began to emerge in the provinces.

In Mao's view, however, the situation was far from satisfactory. For one thing, there appeared to be some central leaders who were trying to take the steam out of the Cultural Revolution. After the close of the Eleventh Plenum and the central work conference that followed, Mao and the CRSG were not very active. The daily routine of the Center was handled by Zhou Enlai and Tao Zhu.⁹⁹ Following a decision made at a Politburo meeting held on September 5, Chen Boda drafted a Renmin Ribao editorial entitled "Grasping Revolution and Promoting Production,"¹⁰⁰ which prohibited the Red Guards from meddling in the internal affairs of industrial, construction, and commercial enterprises, scientific research institutes, and agricultural production units. On

September 14, the Center issued "Circular on Grasping Revolution and Promoting Production," and "Regulation on the CR in Agricultural Production Units below County Level." Both were efforts to confine the CR within educational and cultural circles. The Red Guards were not allowed to go into factories or communes, and the workers, peasants, and cadres were ordered to stand fast at their posts. No official could be dismissed without approval from superior authorities.¹⁰¹ All these decisions were restrictive in nature. At a meeting of the heads of the central ministries, Zhou Enlai even told the participants that the movement was about to end and it was time to shift attention from the CR to production. He was reportedly cheered by the ministers.¹⁰² In the provinces, although local leaders no longer dared to play the bully against rebellious students, they were still trying to resist challenges from below in every possible way.

Facing such a situation, Mao found that he had to change his appraisal of the CR. After the Eleventh Plenum, Mao might have once expected that once Liu Shaoqi's policy of dispatching the work team was criticized, the masses would unite to fight against the main targets of the CR---the capitalist roaders and bourgeois authorities. In the contrary, however, tensions became apparent among the masses after the withdrawal of work teams. At first, Mao thought that such conflicts were caused by minor misunderstandings that could be easily cleared up in no time. But he soon found it very difficult, if not impossible, to reconcile such disputes. He then ordered the CRSG to conduct an intensive investigation in Beijing and in the provinces with the help of a group of journalists from Jiefang Junbao, Renmin Ribao, Guangming Ribao, and Hongqi.¹⁰³ The investigation led the CRSG to the conclusion that the disputes among the masses reflected a struggle between two different political lines: the revolutionary line of Chairman Mao and the reactionary line of the bourgeoisie. The former was represented by those who had dared to challenge the authorities in general and the work teams in particular, whereas the latter was personified by people in power and supporters of power-holders who had suppressed the rebels. Since it was believed that there was no room for compromise on such an issue of "two-line struggle" and that the rebels were in danger, Mao and the CRSG finally decided openly to side with the former group and to denounce the latter.¹⁰⁴

The rebellious students then were in very difficult position even in Beijing, not to mention in the provinces. That they were called a "minority"

revealed that they were isolated from the student body at large in their respective schools.¹⁰⁵ It was at this time (around September 20) that the CRSG held a secret meeting of the "minorities" of Beijing's higher learning institutions for four consecutive days to instruct them on the line of action to pursue. Zhang Chungqiao told them:

After the Eleventh Plenum, the suppression of revolutionaries in some places had taken a turn for the worse. So the CR should not be hastily wound up and we should not give up halfway. No matter what will happen in the future, we, the members of the CRSG, will always be with you in the course of the Cultural Revolution.¹⁰⁶

On September 24, Chen Boda formally put forward the concept of the two-line struggle in the CR for the first time but did not elaborate it.¹⁰⁷

The turning point was marked by a speech delivered by Zhou Enlai when he received the representatives of the Third Headquarters of Beijing Red Guards on September 26. Established on September 6, the Third Headquarters was mostly composed of "minorities. At first, the Center seemed to have ignored its existence. Jiang Qing and Zhou Enlai had met several times with the Red Guards of the First and Second Headquarters and even high school Red Guards but had never before publicly received the representatives of the Third Headquarters. Now, Zhou Enlai took a clear-cut stand to support the minorities. He announced at the meeting that all wrong documents must be annulled, all wrong labels must be abolished, all wrong classifications must be declared invalid, and all the people who had been wrongly treated in the first few months of the CR must be rehabilitated. The "oppressed revolutionary minorities" cheered this announcement, for it met the main demands they had put forward since the close of the Eleventh Plenum. Zhou's remark got to the heart of the matter.¹⁰⁸

One of the most significant turning points in the CR occurred in October 1966. Before October, having been somewhat challenged, the local authorities in the provinces still could direct the course of the movement. This month, however, there would be an earth-shaking change. In his speech delivered at the Celebration Rally of the National Day on October 1, Lin Biao pointed out: "The struggle continues between the proletarian revolutionary line represented by Chairman Mao and the bourgeois reactionary line."¹⁰⁹ Two days later, Hongqi

in its 13th issue published a strongly worded editorial "Forward on the Great Road of Mao Zedong Thought," which declared: "The struggle between the two lines have not yet ended (after the publication of the Sixteen Articles)." "Whether or not we criticize the bourgeois reactionary line," it continued, "is the key to whether or not we can implement the Sixteen Articles of the CR, and whether or not we can correctly promote extensive struggle, criticism, and reform (dou-pi-gai). There is no room for a compromise between the two lines." It went on to appeal for an all-out attack on "the bourgeois reactionary line."¹¹⁰

On October 6, some 120,000 students from all over the country attended a mass rally of "Open Fire at the Bourgeois Reactionary Line" sponsored by the Third Headquarters of Beijing. This was a spectacular event. First, Zhou Enlai and all chief members of the CRSG showed up, which unmistakably demonstrated the Center's support of the Third Headquarters and such activity. Second, at the rally, Zhang Chungqiao read a new instruction issued by the Central Committee the day before, according to which all those who had been branded "counter-revolutionaries," "anti-Party elements," and "rightists" in the early stage of the movement by Party committees or work teams must be allowed to redeem their good names, and the black material detrimental to their honor must be destroyed in public.¹¹¹ Third, the rally published an open telegram to the nation, which was read by Kuai Dafu, a symbol of the victims under the reactionary line; and many on the rostrum had also been branded as counter-revolutionaries in the previous months. Finally, the live-recording of the rally was immediately distributed throughout the country.¹¹² In a sense, this was a national mobilization meeting for "open fire at the reactionary line," the effects of which were soon felt by the entire nation.

On the motion of Mao, a central work conference was convened on October 9, which was designed to straighten out the thinking of provincial leaders. At the meeting, Lin Biao remarked critically that after the Eleventh Plenum the majority of local leaders had been still passive, defensive, and restrictive in dealing with rebellious students. Worse, some of them had borne strong resentments against the movement.¹¹³ Chen Boda charged that many had made "line mistakes" in handling the issues of the *chuanlian*, of the relationship between the majority and minority, and of conflicts between students on one hand and workers, peasants, and cadres on the other.

Initially the conference was planned for only three days. That proved to be too short for convincing the confused provincial chiefs so that it was extended to seven days. Chen Boda's report "Summing up the Experiences of the Movement of the Last Two Months" on the final day, however, caused a new controversy¹¹⁴ and the conference then was again extended.

The conference continued in a tense atmosphere. Mao Zedong, Lin Biao, and Chen Boda took turns putting pressure on the participants.¹¹⁵ As the concocters of the reactionary line, Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping were forced to make self-criticism.¹¹⁶ The provincial chiefs were also on tenterhooks. Accused of having implemented Liu's "wrong political line," they were apprehensive for their future and destiny.¹¹⁷

At the last session of the central work conference, Zhou Enlai elaborated the Center's future plans.¹¹⁸ At that time, the Center still wanted to confine the movement mainly to the education sector and to keep students' activities within bounds, though it also tried to force the provincial leaders to make some concessions to the rebellious students.

When the conference was still going on, the CRSG intentionally disclosed the information about the conference to the radical Red Guards of Beijing. Before the conference came to an end on October 28, Chen Boda's report had already become the talk of the town.¹¹⁹ The situation in Beijing now evidently favored the rebels.¹²⁰

Chen Boda's report struck a vital blow at the authority of the provincial governments, for they were accused of having followed Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping' "bourgeois reactionary line" rather than Chairman Mao's "revolutionary line." The power structure of the Chinese political system was in some way like a pyramid, in which officials of any level derived their legitimacy not from below but from above, and the personality cult of Mao made him the ultimate source of all power. Thus in dealing with threats from below, power holders were confident, powerful, and effective as long as they had their superiors' blessing. As soon as the support from above was withdrawn, however, they would become vulnerable to attacks from any sides. In the first few months of the CR, local leaders felt largely secure about, and confident of, themselves. Now the Center began to support their challengers. Without backing from above, the local leaders could not parry a single blow from below, to say nothing of being able to hit back. From that point on, local governments lost their authority.

Early October saw the emergence of innumerable rebel groups in every school throughout the country.¹²¹ To compete with the original conservative Red Guards, those new groups quickly found it necessary to form loose coalitions among themselves. As such coalitions were gradually solidified, by the middle of October, each school had usually had a pair of core organizations, one conservative and the other rebel. Since the conservative Red Guards had already set up their city-wide headquarters in September,¹²² rebel organizations also made efforts to coordinate their activities.¹²³ In late October, city-wide rebel Red Guards organizations began to emerge in the provinces.¹²⁴

The most significant development in November and December was that the movement went beyond the bounds of cultural and educational institutions to enter virtually every quarter of the society. Since the end of the Eleventh Plenum, the situation in factories had been dull in comparison with what students had done in schools and in the society at large.¹²⁵ Workers did participate in the movement but only in the sense that they had studied important documents, speeches, and editorials about the CR in their spare time. Regular production had not been disturbed. Most of the workers never imagined that they would be allowed to act like riotous students.¹²⁶ In October, some rebellious students raised the issue of how to carry out the CR in factories. For instance, the Red Banner Combat Team of Beijing Aeronautical Institute, one of the most radical organizations in Beijing, entered several factories to mobilize workers. But at the moment, even the radical members of the CRSG dissuaded them from doing that. On November 10, Renmin Ribao published its second editorial on "grasping revolution and promoting production," which, like the first editorial on the same topic that appeared on September 7, was drafted at the suggestion of the Politburo. It reiterated that production should not be disturbed and that political activities in industrial and commercial enterprises should be arranged only in people's spare time.¹²⁷ On the same day, however, the CRSG learned that a so-called Revolutionary Rebellious Headquarters of Beijing Workers had been established. Up to that point, the leading group of the CR still had no idea about how to deal with workers' organizations.¹²⁸ Beijing in fact was not the first city in which workers' organizations had emerged. On November 9, the Headquarters of Rebellious Workers (*Gongzhao zongsi*) had been formally set up in Shanghai¹²⁹ and Wuhan's Workers' Headquarters (*Gongzong*) had also come into

being on the same day.¹³⁰ But the CRSG was not yet ready to recognize their legitimacy.

On November 13, a dramatic change took place. In Shanghai, Zhang Chunqiao recognized the Headquarters of Rebellious Workers as a legal organization. The next day, Mao called a meeting of the Politburo at which he endorsed Zhang's decision on the ground that policy should always be adapted to the changing situation.¹³¹ Thus Mao lifted the ban on the mass organizations of workers. Of course, when Mao and the CRSG said that the workers had the constitutional right of association, they did not expect that the workers would split.¹³² In reality, however, their recognition of the legal position of workers' organizations quickly brought about innumerable antagonistic organizations in the political arena.¹³³

The legalization of workers' organizations was a fatal move during the course of the CR for two reasons. First, if the workers were allowed to set up their organizations, no other group could be denied the right to do the same. For the first time, the Chinese were free to organize themselves into whatever groups they wanted, as long as they claimed that their purpose was to make revolution under the guidance of Mao Zedong Thought. Multifarious mass organizations thus sprang up like mushrooms in the following weeks.¹³⁴ The freedom, however limited it might be, ironically awakened people's consciousness of self interests or group interests which had long been suppressed, and provided the possibility to pursue such interests. The released desires could be destructive.

Second, the emergence of mass organizations inevitably further undermined the authority of the Party leadership down to the basic level. In the first seventeen years of the People's Republic, the Chinese political cadres had become used to unified, unchecked leadership. They had no idea how to deal with real mass organizations, even conservative ones. The inexperience might lead to overcaution, which in turn would hamper the exercise of their authority. Worse still, the legitimacy of the leadership at the provincial level had been fatally damaged by the central leadership. In the pyramid of power structure, the leadership at lower levels could hardly withstand a single blow on its own. Third, with the release of long suppressed forces and the collapse of the social control system, the situation could go out of control at any moment, no matter how powerful the central authorities might be.

Mao's Plan for 1967

The removal of the boundary between the campus and the rest of the society was one of the most daring decisions Mao had made since 1949. If only the students had been allowed to mobilized freely, civil order might be disturbed but could be easily restored as long as social production continued. Once the workers were given the right to revolt, however, the very roots of the society were at stake. Mao determined to bring the entire society into the CR because he thought that it was not enough to fight the bourgeoisie here and there, as the past political campaigns had done. He considered the CR a mass movement that should launch an all-out attack on all fronts against the bourgeoisie. Accordingly, at a secret meeting of the CRSG held on December 25, 1966, Mao set the tune for the CR for the coming year: "1967 will be a year of all-round class struggle throughout the entire society."¹³⁵ This statement became the theme of the 1967 New Year editorials in Renmin Ribao and Hongqi.¹³⁶

Hoping that the CR would revolutionize China, Mao of course wished that it would be done in a reasonably manageable way. If some price must be paid, he hoped that the cost would be as low as possible. Thus at the same time he called for the workers, peasants, government functionaries, and others to join the students in revolt, he adopted measures to prevent the movement from running out of hand.

First, he ordered the CRSG to prepare a series of concrete regulations for the people in different walks of life on how to behave themselves in the course of the movement.¹³⁷ Second, Mao suggested that all students in colleges and middle schools should go through a military training session by the PLA.¹³⁸ Lin Biao elaborated on the plan the purpose of which was to strengthen "the revolutionary spirit, scientific attitude, and discipline" of the students. Revolutionary spirit meant a fearless, rebellious spirit. Scientific attitude was an attitude of "seeking truth from facts." And discipline was self-explanatory. By requiring the ruleless students to take part in military training and encouraging them to combine the revolutionary spirit with the scientific attitude and discipline, Mao hoped to restrain them from going to extremes.¹³⁹

Third, Mao directed that special attention should be paid to Beijing, Shanghai, Tianjin, and the three provinces in the Northeast Region in the coming year.¹⁴⁰ It was a clever decision. The three cities and three provinces in question were the most important industrial bases of China, where about one-third of China's production was concentrated.¹⁴¹ It was therefore vital to make sure that the situation in those areas was under control. Moreover, "drawing experience from selected units to promote overall work" had been Mao's long-standing method for coping with complicated situations. By focusing on work at those selected localities, Mao hoped that a set of guidelines would be worked out to direct the movement in the country at large.

Those measures might have worked if they had been put forward before the massive movement was set in motion. After millions of people had been allowed to "liberate themselves" and the public authority had been paralyzed, however, these efforts were totally inadequate to bring the insurgent masses into line with the balanced development Mao desired. With such a great uncertainty, the CR entered its second year.

Conclusion

This paper presents a historical narrative of main events during the first year of the Chinese Cultural Revolution. By tracing the sequence of such events, it hopes to shed light on three questions that have puzzled the students of the CR.

First, what motivated Mao to launch the CR? Some view the CR as simply a power struggle between Mao and his rivalries. According to them, the CR was in essence "Mao's great purge."¹⁴² Indeed, the first year of the CR saw the purge of many top officials. But, if purge had been Mao's main purpose, he would not have had to unleash a great upheaval like the CR. Given the absolute power he possessed in the Party, it would be as easy as falling off a log for him to remove his political adversaries. This was confirmed by the relegation of "the Peng, Luo, Lu, and Yang Clique" and the fall of Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping. By October 1966, Mao had managed to do away with all those who were in position to pose a potential threat to him. However, the CR did not stop there. Rather, it moved on. For Mao, the purpose of the CR was not merely to purge, but to remodel China's social, economic, and political system

according to his egalitarian ideal.¹⁴³ Purge was just one of his instruments for breaking through all kinds of obstructions to the CR movement.

Second, why was Mao able singlehanded to bring China's whole state apparatus to ruin? At the beginning of 1966, the Chinese political system appeared to be as monolithic and stable as ever. By the end of the year, however, all pillars of the state, except the armed forces, had toppled down. How do we explain the vulnerability of China's once-seemingly mighty state machinery? The answer lies in the nature of power structure of the Chinese political system. In China, power elites at every level derived their legitimacy from higher levels of power, and ultimately from Mao. With the support from Mao, the system had been characterized by unity, might, efficacy, and stability. Facing such a monolithic construction, challengers from below looked like ants trying to topple a giant tree. For power elites, as long as they had the blessing from their superiors, they would be able to act resolutely with great confidence.

The problem with this kind of system was that power elites had no experience in independently dealing with challengers. Once the paramount leader withheld his support and thus deprived them of their legitimacy, they would become very vulnerable to attack. Indeed, this was exactly what Mao did to them during the first year of the CR. Thanks to Mao's personal intervention, China's power structure foundered in a peculiar top-down fashion: key central leaders fell in disgrace first, then provincial governments crumbled, and finally officials at the grass-roots level lost their authority. Obviously, without backing from above, communist officials had no ability to put up a last-ditch struggle as the ruling class usually does when it faces the danger of being overthrown.

Third, why did Mao have to divert so much his effort into "emergency salvage" during the CR? As pointed out above, Mao's purpose in launching the CR was to remodel China's political system. At first, he hoped that personnel changes, policy changes, and institutional changes within the system would be sufficient for fulfilling this goal. By the autumn of 1966, however, he reached a conclusion that the only way to remodel the system was to destroy it and build a new one in its place. His decision to dismantle the existing state apparatus proved to be a fatal strategic mistake. With the collapse of social control system, Mao would find it difficult, if not impossible, for his

will to be realized even though millions of Chinese were sincerely faithful to his personal leadership.

In the past, the local authorities had served as 'gatekeepers' monitoring the communication between the center and the grass-roots, and enforcers executing Mao's directives. The hierarchical structure of power could minimize the possibility of deviations among the masses by standardizing the interpretation of message from Beijing, and by punishing non-compliant behaviors. Of course there was a danger in this model that the local authorities might deliberately or unintentionally misrepresent messages from the center, as had happened in the first few months of the CR. It nevertheless was much easier for the center directly to deal with a few gatekeepers than with millions of people. Now, the old authority structure became disintegrated, and no new structure was in sight to replace it. What was left was only Mao's personal authority. There was no doubt that the cult of personality could serve as a tool of popular mobilization. But, the cult as such could not substitute the mechanisms of social control. An effective leadership is supposed to have two functions: energizing and directing.¹⁴⁴ If a leader succeeds only in energizing but not in directing, he would see the followers he has energized to move in direction other than what he intends. That was Mao's tragedy: he destroyed the social control mechanisms that were necessary for him to dictate and to coordinate popular forces. As a result, despite his charisma, the CR eventually failed.¹⁴⁵

Mao's purpose in launching the CR was to construct something new. He was right in believing "without destruction there can be no construction." And the first year of the CR demonstrated he was in a unique position to destroy the system he had helped to build up and presided over in the first 17 years of the People's Republic. However, there was no guarantee that destruction would necessarily result in desirable construction. This was a bitter lesson Mao learned in the following years of the CR, and this should be a treasured lesson for future generations to bear in mind when they set out to destroy something.

ENDNOTES

- ¹. Wang Nianyi, "Shilun wenhua dageming di zhunbei," in Dangshi tongxun (hereinafter DSTX), No. 18 (1983).
- ². Xiao Decheng, "Dui siqingyundong sange wenjian di fenxi," in Dangshi yanjiu (hereinafter DSYJ), No. 1 (1984).
- ³. Mao Zedong shixiang wansui (hereinafter Wansui), version 2, pp. 295, 329. I possess three different versions of Wansui.
- ⁴. Ibid., p. 342; and Xinshuiyun, November 1967. Unless otherwise noted, the Cultural Revolution tabloid publications cited in this study were published in Wuhan.
- ⁵. Tan Zongji: "Guanyu jige wenhuadageming di wenti," in The Party History Department of Zhejiang Provincial Party School, Wenhua dagemin shiqi ziliao xuanji (hereinafter WGZL) (Hangzhou: 1984)
- ⁶. Wansui, version 2, pp. 337, 339.
- ⁷. For instance, in 1961, Deng divided the nation into "Three Southern Regions" and "Three Northern Regions" in preparing the Regulations on People's Communes without Mao's authorization. Mao was very indignant about this. At a meeting, he scolded Deng: "Which emperor made such a decision?" See Zhongyang fuzhe tongzhi jianghua chaolu (hereinafter JHCL) (Wuhan, 1966), 2: 276; and He Mengbi and Duan Haoran, Zhongguo gongchangdang liushinian (hereinafter LSN) (Beijing: PLA Press, 1984), pp. 526-27.
- ⁸. In a letter to Jiang Weiqing, then the First Party Secretary of Jiangsu province, Liu said that the old rural survey methods were out of date and that now the only way for cadres to improve their work and gain first hand experience for guiding overall work was to stay at a selected grass-roots unit. Mao interpreted Liu's advice as a sign of challenge to his authority, for the rural survey methods had been his own favorite for decades. Zhang Chunqiao later condemned Liu's letter to Jiang as the Chinese equivalent of Khrushchev's secret report. Mao seems to have accepted Zhang's analysis, and criticised Liu's letter time and again. See He Yuan and Zhang Tuosheng, "Dang di bajieshiyizhong quanwei pingshu," in DSYJ, No. 6 (1982); and Wansui, version 2, p. 336.
- ⁹. Wansui, version 3, pp. 578-602.
- ¹⁰. Jin Chunming, "Guanyu Liu Shaoqi tongzhi di wenti," in WGZL, p. 155.
- ¹¹. Tan Zhongji, "Guanyu jige wenhua dageming di wenti," in WGZL.

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- ¹². Wansui, version 2, p. 338. Moreover, two other things reminded Mao that his influence in Beijing had weakened. The 39 samples of "poisonous weeds" issued in 1964 seemed to have received no adequate attention. And even worse, although Mao had sent work teams twice to People's Daily, he found that the newspaper still followed a line other than what he wished. See Wansui, version 2, p. 342.
- ¹³. Wang Li, Xianchang lishi: wenhua dageming jishi (Hong Kong: Oxford University Press, 1993), p. 147.
- ¹⁴. From 1962 on, Jiang Qing and Kang Sheng had suggested to Mao several times that the play was a veiled political attack on Mao's 1959 dismissal of Peng Dehuai. Lin Biao even warned Mao that the play might be a part of a counter-revolutionary coup plot. Mao seemed to have been convinced by those arguments. Having led a criticism of Peng Dehuai's attempt to reverse the verdict against him at the 1962 Tenth Plenum of the Central Committee, Mao of course could not tolerate leaving such a politically dangerous play uncriticized. See Communist Monthly Editorial Board, ed., Wenhua dagemin ruogan dashijian zhenxiang (hereinafter WGZX) (Shengyang: 1985) p. 15; and LSN, p. 546.
- ¹⁵. Wansui, version 2, p. 340.
- ¹⁶. Gao Gao and Yan Jiaqi, Wenhua dagemin shinianshi (hereinafter SNS) (Tianjin: Tianjin People's Press, 1986), p. 7.
- ¹⁷. Later, he explained: "In September and October of 1965, I realized that my directive could not be carried out in Beijing. Why was the criticism of Wu Han initiated in Shanghai rather than in Beijing? Because no one in Beijing was willing to do it." Wansui, version 2, p. 338.
- ¹⁸. WGZX, p. 17; Zhongyang fuzhe tongzhi jianghua chaolu (hereinafter JHCL) (Wuhan: 1967), Vol. 3, p. 185; and Lin Biao wenxuan (Wuhan, 1967), p. 234.
- ¹⁹. Zhao Cong: Wenge yundong licheng shulue (hereinafter WGSL) (Hong Kong: Union Research Institute, 1971), Vol. 1, pp. 156-164.
- ²⁰. The Party History Research Group under the CCP Central Committee, Zhonggong dangshi dashi nianbiao (Hereinafter DSNB) (Beijing: People's Press, 1981), p. 145.
- ²¹. Mao's anxiety over a possible coup was so intense that in 1965 and 1966 he constantly exhorted local Party and army leaders that if a coup would occur in Beijing, they should join hands to put it down. See JHCL, Vol. 3, p.

185; Wang Nianyi: "Guanyu wuchan jieji zhuanzheng xia jixu geming lilun di jige wenti," in DSYJ, no. 1 (1984).

- ²². In the following days, provincial newspapers within the East China jurisdiction such as Zhejiang, Fujian, Jiangsu, Shandong, Anhui, and Jiangxi, did reprint Yao's article. At about this time, Peng Zhen returned to Beijing. On November 29, Beijing Ribao and Jiefeng Junbao finally carried Yao's article. Later, major newspapers in Beijing and in the other provinces printed it one after another. See WGSL, Vol. 1, p. 130; Zheng Oian, "Cong 'ping xinbian lishiju HaiJui baguan' dao 'eryue tigang,'" in DSTX, no. 6 (1984). Mao's accusation that only Beijing and Hunan failed to immediately reprint Yao's article is groundless.
- ²³. At the end of December 1965, Mao interviewed several of his right-hand men such as Chen Boda and Kang Sheng in Hangzhou. Peng was one of them. In February of the next year, Peng went to Wuhan to see Mao and persuaded Mao to accept an outline on the cultural revolution prepared by the Group of Five (the so-called "February Outline"). Even at the Politburo conference held in Hangzhou between March 7 and March 20, 1966, Peng was very active. See Wansui, version 2, pp. 323-25; Wansui, version 3, pp. 634-40.
- ²⁴. Tan Zongji, "Guanyu jige wenhua dageming di wenti;" Wansui, version 2, pp. 329, 337.
- ²⁵. Tan Zongji, "Guanyu jige wenhua dageming di wenti."
- ²⁶. Mao was still in Hangzhou, and Kang Sheng went back and forth between Beijing and Hangzhou as a liaison man. SNS, p, 15.
- ²⁷. Lu's wife, Yan Weibing, was a mental patient, who had since 1960 written numerous anonymous letters against Lin Biao and his wife, Ye Qun. In April, Yan had been arrested as a counter-revolutionary. Lin Biao then charged Lu with manipulating Yan's activities behind the scenes. Mao did not like Lu either. He had described the Department of Propaganda as the Palace of Hell and Lu as King of Hell. In March, he had expressed the hope of "bringing down the King of Hell and liberating all the imps." Thus Lin's effort to vent his personal spite coincided with Mao's desire to overcome an obstacle in the way of criticizing bourgeois authorities. As a result, Lu was ousted. See LSN, p. 579; Wansui, version 2, p. 329.
- ²⁸. WGZX, p. 19.

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- ²⁹. Lin Biao wenxuan, p. 234. Later Qi Benyu, Zhou Enlai, and Mao himself confirmed that Lin did not exaggerate Mao's anxiety. Mao said: "Peng, Luo, Lu, and Yang were all involved in clandestine activities, so that they came to no good end." The May meeting was devoted to removing those whom Mao (and Lin) thought the most dangerous enemies. In addition to Peng, Luo, Lu, and Yang, more than one hundred high officials, who were believed to have close relations with the four, were suspended from their duties and subjected to investigation. See JHCL, Vol. 3, p. 68; Wansui, version 2, pp. 337, 341; Yu Nan, "Dang he renmin tong Lin Biao fangeming jituan di douzheng," in WGZL, pp. 173-74.
- ³⁰. Peking Review, No. 21 (May 19, 1967), pp. 6-9.
- ³¹. For instance, a 1958 Renmin Ribao editorial was titled "A Cultural Revolution has Begun." It defined the cultural revolution as a movement to raise the educational level of the whole body of laboring people and to train and bring up proletarian intellectuals. Jin Chunming, Chedi fouding wenhua dageming shijiang (Beijing: PLA Press, 1985), pp. 8-9.
- ³². Deng was one of the Party Secretaries of the Party committee, Wu a deputy mayor, and Liao the head of the Department of United Front of the Party committee. See WGZX, p. 23.
- ³³. In January, Jiang Qing interviewed with Guan Feng, Qi Banyu, and others in Shanghai and told them that the criticism of Wu Han was not merely a matter of academic discussion but a political struggle. Previously, Guan and Qi had been suppressed by the Beijing Party Committee in the Socialist Education Movement. In May 1966, Guan Fang, Qi Benyu, Yao Wen yuan, and Lin Jie trotted out their critical articles one after another. See JHCL, Vol. 2, p. 229; Zheng Qian, "Cong 'ping xinbian lishiju Hai Jui baguan' dao 'eryue tigong,'" DXTX, No. 6 (1984).
- ³⁴. Hongqi, No. 6 (1966). As a fifth grade student, the author delievered a critical article at an all-school criticism meeting.
- ³⁵. Wansui, version 2, p. 339.
- ³⁶. Typical critical essays' titles were "We Allow No One to Harm a Single Hair of Our Socialism," "Drive the Party out of Power? No! No! No!" "Attacking the Party is Equal to Breaking Our Hearts," and the like. See Renmin ribao, Hubei ribao, and Wuhan wanbao, in May 1966.

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- ³⁷. It must be noted that since 1957, the meaning of "the Party" and "socialism" had been extended. The local Party leader was explicitly or implicitly regarded as the Party incarnate. The criticism of a Party secretary in a particular unit might be interpreted as an anti-Party activity, and a complaint about a specific matter could be interpreted as the manifestation of one's discontent with the socialist system in general.
- ³⁸. Tie Zhuwei, Shuangranyegenghong (Beijing: PLA Literature Press, 1986). Most of the team members were from Jiefeng Junbao recommended by Liu Zhijian, the director of the Political Department of PLA. See JHCL, Vol. 3, p. 142.
- ³⁹. Kang Sheng later divulged that it was his wife, Cao Diou, who encouraged Nie Yuanzi, one of the seven, to write the poster. See JHCL, Vol. 3, pp. 2, 193.
- ⁴⁰. Renmin Ribao declared that if Party leaders were judged to have behaved against Mao's Thought, it was legitimate to challenge them, no matter how high their positions might be and how long they had been Party members. Renmin ribao, June 2, 1966.
- ⁴¹. Taoyuan jingyan di jicheng yu fazhan, March 1968.
- ⁴². In fact, it was Liu who chaired the May meeting which passed the "May 16 Notice" and formally dismissed Peng, Luo, Lu, and Yang.
- ⁴³. Renmin ribao, June 4, 1966.
- ⁴⁴. Since the day when Mao took offense at them in December 1964, Liu and Deng had made self-criticisms several times and had tried hard to keep in line with Mao.
- ⁴⁵. Tie Zhuwei, Shuangranyegenghong; He Yuan and Zhang Tuosheng, "Dang di bajie shiyizhong quanwei pingshu," DSYJ, No. 6 (1982). The "Eight Regulations" stipulated: "Make a distinction between inside and outside the Party," "guard the Party and state secrets," "stand fast on one's post," "confine big-character posters within the wall of each unit," "do not hold mass rally on streets," "do not stage demonstration," "do not convoke mass denunciation meeting," and "do not resort to violence against 'black gang elements.'" See Liu Guokai, A Brief Analysis of the Cultural Revolution (Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe, 1987), p. 18.
- ⁴⁶. The Beijing Work Team ended its job in the middle of June. See JHCL, Vol. 3, p. 186.

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- ⁴⁷. He Yuan and Zhang Tuosheng, "Dang di bajie shiyizhong quanhui pingshu;" JHCL, Vol. 2, p. 78. In fact, according to Wang Renzhong, until the middle of July when Mao left Wuhan for Beijing, he was not sure if it was a good thing or bad thing to send out the work teams. See Wang Renzhong fan Mao Zedong shixiang yanlunji, August 1967.
- ⁴⁸. Fangeming xiuzheng zhuyi fenzi Wang Renzhong zuixinglu, September 1967; Jinjunbao, January 11, 1967. Work teams were sent out in all provinces except in Tianjin and Shandong. See JHCL, Vol. 2, p. 78.
- ⁴⁹. At a meeting held in early June, Liu said: "The present movement is similar with the one of 1957." See Fangeming xiuzheng zhuyi fenzi Wang Renzhong zuixinglu, September 1967.
- ⁵⁰. On June 6, some college students in Xi'an of Shaanxi province held a rally despite the discouragement of the local Party authorities. Informed of this incident, Liu and Deng suggested the Chen Boda's Renmin Ribao to denounce "sham leftists, real counter-revolutionaries" involved in the event, which Chen refused to do. JHCL, Vol. 3, p. 3.
- ⁵¹. Fangeming xiuzhengzhuyi fenzi Wang Renzhong zuixinglu.
- ⁵². Wang Shaoguang, Failure of Charisma: The Cultural Revolution in Wuhan, (Hong Kong: Oxford University Press, 1995), pp. 54-58.
- ⁵³. Even Chen Boda and Kang Sheng of the CRSG denounced the incident as "a counter-revolutionary incident" SNS, pp. 26-27.
- ⁵⁴. Liu Guokai, A Brief Analysis of the Cultural Revolution, pp. 18-19.
- ⁵⁵. He Yuan and Zhang Tuosheng, "Dang di bajie shiyizhong quanhui pingshu."
- ⁵⁶. Wang Shaoguang, Failure of Charisma, pp. 59-68.
- ⁵⁷. As early as on June 20, Chen Boda raised the issue of the work team. On that day, he made two suggestions to Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping: First, in all schools and work units, the movement should be led by popularly-elected Cultural Revolution groups. Second, work teams should be sent only wherethey were desperately needed, and the members of the teams should be "proletarian revolutionaries" rather than "bourgeois loyalists." In a letter to Mao, Chen later acknowledged that the two suggestions were a mild way of saying: "It is wrong to send out the work teams." Liu and Deng, however, flatly refused the suggestions. "It amounts to the abolition of the Party leadership," they asserted. But Chen did not give up. On his instigation, Qi Benyu went to Beijing Institute of Light Industry in early

July to contact the anti-work-team elements there. Chen himself gave secret support to those opposing the work team in the Overseas Cultural Commission under the Foreign Affairs Ministry. On July 16, Liu and Deng on one hand and Chen and Kang Sheng on the other broke out into curses on the issue of the work team at a meeting of the Politburo. Each side stuck to its stand. It seemed that only Mao's personal interference might break the deadlock. Liu therefore once again asked Mao back to Beijing to take charge of the Center. JHCL, Vol. 3, pp. 118-19, 127, 134; He Yuan and Zheng Tuosheng, "Dang di bajie shiyizhong quanwei pingshu;" Tie Zhuwei, Shuangranyegenghong; LSN, p. 583.

⁵⁸. JHCL, Vol. 2, p. 169; JHCL, Vol. 3, p. 274.

⁵⁹. Wansui, version 2, pp. 331-34.

⁶⁰. JHCL, Vol. 1 pp. 20-40; JHCL, Vol. 2, p. 169.

⁶¹. He Yuan and Zhang Tuosheng, "Dang di bajie shiyizhong quanwei pingshu." Then Liu took it out on Kang Sheng, who had been in charge of the communication between Beijing and Mao after the ouster of Yang Shangkun. On July 27, he criticized Kang for having secretly supported the anti-work-team students at Qinghua University and insisted that although the work teams might no longer be necessary, nothing was wrong with the original decision to send them out in the situation of June. Secure in the knowledge that they had Mao's strong backing, Kang Sheng and Chen Boda once again sent the CRSG members to call on Kuai Dafu, showing contempt for Liu's authority. On the same day, a formal instruction was issued: the work teams would withdraw from everyplace. Zhongyang shouzhang jianhua, October 1967.

⁶². He Yuan and Zhang Tuosheng, "Dang di bajie shiyizhong quanwei pingshu."

⁶³. One hundred forty one out of 179 members and alternate members of the Central Committee and 47 nonvoting delegates attended the plenum. LSN, p. 584.

⁶⁴. He Yuan and Zhang Tuosheng, "Dang di bajie shiyizhong quanwei ping shu."

⁶⁵. Liu once again criticized Kang Sheng's underground activities at Qinghua University. Zhongyang shouzhang jianhua.

⁶⁶. Literally, *dazibao* means big character poster. But Mao's *dazibao* was neither posted on the wall nor in big characters. That was why most of the participants at the plenum did not know its existence until two days later. He Yuan and Zhang Tuosheng, "Dang di bajie shiyizhong quanwei pingshu".

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- ⁶⁷. For most of participants, it was no secret that Liu had made several self-criticisms for having contradicted the Chairman at the meeting of December 1964. They therefore mainly castigated Liu for disrespecting Mao's authority. "Bombard the Headquarters" meant to them bombarding those leading figures who had made mistakes within the "Proletarian Headquarters." But the CRSG's interpretation was different. Jiang Qing pointed out: "There are actually two headquarters in Beijing. One represents the proletariat, while the other represents the bourgeoisie." Guan Feng added: "The former is Chairman Mao's headquarters and the latter a revisionist headquarters headed by several central leaders opposing Mao Zedong's Thought. Now it is time to attack and destroy this revisionist headquarters." Ibid.; Changjiang ribao, April 24, 1968.
- ⁶⁸. Among the six new members of the Politburo, Tao Zhu, Chen Boda, Kang Sheng, Xu Xiangqian, Nie Rongzhen, and Ye Jianying, the first three were members of the CRSG and the latter three were from the PLA. Zhou Enlai played an important role in promoting Lin Biao, Tao Zhu, Kang Sheng, and Chen Boda and in belittling the position of four vice-chairmen of the Party, Liu Shaoqi, Deng Xiaoping, Zhu De, and himself. See JHCL, Vol. 3, pp. 121-22, 191; Tan Zongji, "Guanyu jige wenhua dageming di wenti."
- ⁶⁹. Wansui, version 2, p. 336; Lin Biao Wenxuan, p. 245. Before made public, the document had been revised five times. At first, Chen Boda put forward a draft containing twenty three articles. Later Tao Zhu and Wang Renzhong were assigned to do the actual writing. They cut it to sixteen articles and did some substantial revisions. It was a difficult job for them, though. Mao offered only scant instructions; other central leaders also wanted to insert their ideas, and the two authors had their own perception of the CR as well. It was therefore difficult to make a coherent document. More important, the two authors were not sure they had grasped Mao's idea of how to carry the movement forward, because Mao himself might not yet have developed a grand plan. The perplexed authors were bound to produce an ambiguous document and they did. It was hard for such an ambiguous guideline of the movement to be implemented. See Song Qiong, "Tao Zhu tongzhi bei daxiatai di zhengxiang," in Hunan People's Press, ed., Huainian Tao Zhu tongzhi (Changsha: Hunan People's Press, 1979).
- ⁷⁰. JHCL, Vol. 1, p. 36.

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- ⁷¹. Jiefangjun bao, November 4, 1964; Zhongguo qingnianbao, November 17, 1964.
- ⁷². JHCL, Vol. 2, p. 58.
- ⁷³. JHCL, Vol. 3, p. 28.
- ⁷⁴. Liang Liang, "Yige hongweibing faqizhe di zhishu," Zhongguo Qingnian, No. 8 (1986); He Wei, "Lao hongweibing shuping," Zhishi fenzi, Vol. 2 (Spring 1986).
- ⁷⁵. In June and July, such groups were often declared "unlawful" or even "counter-revolutionary" once discovered by the work teams. He Wei, "Lao hongweibing shuping."
- ⁷⁶. JHCL, Vol. 1, pp. 46-57; He Wei, "Lao hongweibing shuping."
- ⁷⁷. JHCL, Vol. 1, pp. 34, 45; Liang Liang, "Yige hongweibing faqizhe di zhishu."
- ⁷⁸. Renmin ribao, August 19, 1966.
- ⁷⁹. SNS, p. 56.
- ⁸⁰. Crane Brinton, The Anatomy of Revolution (New York: Vintage Books, 1965), pp. 178-80.
- ⁸¹. SNS, p. 52.
- ⁸². Usually valuables, such as gold bars, jewelry, antiques, scrolls and rare books were confiscated, and less valuables items were destroyed. With the judgment left in those teenagers' hands, however, real treasures were often smashed as well. Moreover, when the students found that the living standard of many "old bloodsuckers" was still much higher than that of the ordinary Chinese, they, out of envy, tended to associate all items of material comfort with the Four Olds and confiscated them.
- ⁸³. Kang Sheng later estimated that in all about 2 million ounces of gold, 20 million ounces of silver, and \$2 million U.S. dollars were confiscated in the whole nation. In addition, more than 10,000 firearms and several hundred transceivers were found. At that time, the students were in the main morally as pure as devout Christians. They turned their booty over to the agencies which the local authorities created for keeping the goods. That is why in the early 1980s, the victims of the Smashing of the Four Olds were able to get back most of what they had lost twenty years before. JHCL, Vol. 3, p. 83.
- ⁸⁴. Renmin ribao, August 23, 1966; Jiefangjun bao, August 23, 1966.
- ⁸⁵. SNS, p. 68.

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- ⁸⁶. JHCL, Vol. 1, pp. 94, 275.
- ⁸⁷. Renmin Ribao published several editorials to persuade the teenagers to observe discipline by "learning from the PLA," and to use only verbal means of struggle rather than violence. Renmin Ribao, August 28, September 5, 1966.
- ⁸⁸. Hongqi, No. 10 (1966).
- ⁸⁹. Wansui, version 2, p. 337.
- ⁹⁰. More people suffered more cruel attacks in August than in June and July. Ironically, later, when many said the "bourgeois reactionary line" had persecuted them, they were often referring to the events in August, after Mao had assumed the leadership of the movement in Beijing and the work teams had withdrawn from their units. The cases of the bad and middle origin students were among the best examples.
- ⁹¹. Wansui, version 2, pp. 332-33.
- ⁹². JHCL, Vol. 1, p. 71.
- ⁹³. Renmin Ribao, August 19, 1966.
- ⁹⁴. Both the scope and the effect of *chuanlian* exceeded Mao's original expectations. See Wansui, version 2, p. 338. By the end of 1966, the students (and later workers and others) taking part in *Chuanlian* had totaled about 50 million in the entire nation. JHCL, Vol. 3, p. 10. It was unprecedented for so many people to move across the country free of charge in such a short period. Although probably the majority of those who were involved in *chuanlian* were interested not so much in "exchanging revolutionary experiences" as in visiting scenic spots, the *chuanlian* helped break the existing political equilibrium and create a situation favorable to the rebels. See Wang Shaoguang, Failure of Charisma, pp. 81-82.
- ⁹⁵. There were many formal and informal channels through which to contact with the CRSG. Even the supposed top secrets might find get around in Beijing very fast. On August 22, for instance, a *dazibao* criticizing Liu Shaoqi by name appeared in Qinghua University. The next day, Mao's "Bombard the Headquarters" appeared on the campus of Beijing University. JHCL, Vol. 1, pp. 79, 81.
- ⁹⁶. Zhang Chungqiao Yaowenyuan tongzhi zai Shanghai shi geming weiyuanhui baogaohui shang di jianghua, June 3, 1967; WGSL, Vol. 1, pp. 309-10.

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- ⁹⁷. Accordingly, on September 11 the Central Committee issued an instruction, and Renmin Ribao published an editorial, to prohibit such action. WGSL, Vol. 1, pp. 309-11.
- ⁹⁸. For Beijing Red Guards, it was no big deal to "bombard" Party Committees at the provincial level and below. Coming from the national capital, they believed it perfectly justified to "bombard" anyone, for they knew that Liu Shaoqi was under fire. If the head of the state could be criticized, how could it be considered a serious offense to criticize provincial leaders? But, at that moment, most people in the provinces still could not believe that what Beijing students said about the situation in Beijing was true. Obviously, the information advantage was the decisive reason why they were acting more radically than local residents.
- ⁹⁹. In the first twenty days of September, the members of the CRSG such as Chen Boda, Kang Sheng, Jiang Qing, Zhang Chunqiao, Yao Wenyuan, Wang Li, Guan Fang, and Qi Benyu, rarely appeared on public occasions. They did not meet students as often as Zhou and Tao did. See Song Qiong, "Tao Zhu tongzhi bei daxiatai di zhengxiang;" JHCL, Vol. 1, p. 110; JHCL, Vol. 3, p. 142.
- ¹⁰⁰. The editorial appeared on Renmin Ribao on September 7.
- ¹⁰¹. Hubei Provincial Revolutionary Committee, ed., Wuchan jieji wenhua dagemin wenjian huibian (hereinafter WJHB) (Wuhan 1969), Vol. 1, p. 138; WGSL, Vol. 1, p. 311. Moreover, a week later, the Center issued another document for the same purpose. Song Qiong, "Tao Zhu tongzhi bei daxiatai di zhengxiang;" Fangeming xiuzhengzhuyi fenzi Wang Renzhong zuixinglu.
- ¹⁰². Tie Zhuwei, Shuangranyegenghong.
- ¹⁰³. For instance, Qi Benyu went to Tianjin, Shandong, and other places in disguise. JHCL, Vol. 1, pp. 222-23.
- ¹⁰⁴. Ibid.; JHCL, Vol. 2, p. 51.
- ¹⁰⁵. Kuai Dafu later acknowledged: "[In September 1966], we found ourselves in a tight corner and knew no way out." Jinggangshan (Beijing) March 24, 1967.
- ¹⁰⁶. On September 23, with the support of the CRSG, the "minority" of Beijing Institute of Geology successfully forced the deputy minister of the Geology Ministry, Zhou Jiayu, to return to the school to make self-criticism. This was the first success of the minorities in Beijing. On the second day, with the help of the CRSG, the minority of Qinghua University established Jinggangshan Regiment. Ibid.

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- ¹⁰⁷. JHCL, Vol. 1, p. 156.
- ¹⁰⁸. JHCL, Vol. 1, pp. 81, 95, 118, 124, 129, 158, 223.
- ¹⁰⁹. Renmin Ribao, October 1, 1966.
- ¹¹⁰. Hongqi, no. 13 (1966).
- ¹¹¹. JHCL, Vol. 1, pp. 193, 197.
- ¹¹². JHCL, Vol. 1, pp. 195, 199.
- ¹¹³. Lin Biao wenxuan, pp. 256-58.
- ¹¹⁴. Ibid.; JHCL, Vol. 1, pp. 215-21. Chen condemned some leaders for having incited the masses to struggle against each other, but many participants held that not every incident in which the masses struggled against each other was incited by power holders. Chen suggested that if a leader had showed no favoritism to the leftists (the rebels) he must have been partial to the rightists (the conservatives), for he believed it impossible to be evenhanded. But he was said to have gone to extremes. Moreover, when Chen criticized "the theory of blood lineage," he was questioned whether family backgrounds should be ignored altogether. Chen asked the participants to support the minority while abandoning the majority, but a large number of the participants remained unconvinced. Chen's report had been examined and revised personally by Mao beforehand. The doubts regarding Chen's report thus were actually doubts of Mao's plan. Hongqi ruhua [Guangzhou], January 1968.
- ¹¹⁵. Wansui, version 2, pp. 336-40; Lin Biao wenxuan, p. 257; JHCL, Vol. 2, p. 275.
- ¹¹⁶. WGSJ, Vol. 1, pp. 330, 341, 348.
- ¹¹⁷. Tie Zhuwei, Shuangranyeqenghong.
- ¹¹⁸. First, the movement would end around the Spring Festival the next year, in February 1967. Second, except for educational institutions, other units should not set up mass organizations. Production should be emphasized. Third, the PLA units should not be attacked. Fourth, the internal affairs of courts, procuratorates, public security bureaus, and archives should not be interfered with. Fifth, broadcasting stations, television stations, and newspaper offices should not be occupied. And finally, cadres, especially high-level cadres, should not be dismissed directly by the masses and their houses should not be seized. JHCL, Vol. 1, pp. 261-64.
- ¹¹⁹. JHCL, Vol. 1, pp. 206, 261; JHCL, Vol. 2, pp. 11, 20, 74.

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- ¹²⁰. Backed by the CRSG, the former minority became arrogant in many colleges. The new Beijing Municipal Party Committee was under fire for having carried out the reactionary line. SNS, p. 98.
- ¹²¹. It seemed that anybody could create his or her headquarters, which might be named "Mao Zedong Thought Red Guards," "Mao Zedong Doctrine Red Guards," "East Is Red Red Guards," "Chinese Red Guards," "International Red Guards," or the like. It was not uncommon for a "headquarters" to have only a single member, who was called "*Guanggan Shilin*"---a general without a following.
- ¹²². Hubei ribao, September 13, 1966,
- ¹²³. In Wuhan, on October 10, rebel Thought Guards from various schools for the first time held a united mass rally to denounce the reactionary line of the Hubei Provincial Party Committee. Four days later, the Thought Guards from all over the city took a united action to support the efforts of the Thought Guards of Hubei University to force the head of the work team back the school for self-criticism. On October 16, the Thought Guards held a grand gathering of unprecedented size at Wuchang stadium to demonstrate their strength before the local leaders, who were invited to attend. Wuhan dichu wuchan jieji wenhua dagemin dashiji (hereinafter WWDJ) (Wuhan: 1967).
- ¹²⁴. For instance, Wuhan Thought Guard Headquarters was formally established on October 26.
- ¹²⁵. The Sixteen Articles stated: "The cultural and educational institutions, and the leading bodies of the Party and government in big and medium-sized cities are the focal points of the ongoing CR movement." Urban enterprises were required to continue the Socialist Education Movement. The document further specified that for workers, the CR merely meant "to foster proletarian ideology and to eliminate bourgeois ideology." In September, as shown above, the Center made renewed efforts to confine the movement within each enterprise. It was emphasized that political activities should be carried out only during workers' spare time. Even as late as on October 25, when authorizing Chen Boda's report for dispatching, Mao suggested: "Please consider inserting a sentences: 'Grasp revolution, promote production.'" WJHB, Vol. 1, pp. 138-42; JHCL, Vol. 2, p. 96.
- ¹²⁶. Interviewees 1, 2, 3, 7, 9, 16, 25, 26, 28, 65, 70, 72, 73, 80, 81, 84. Interviewing was conducted in Wuhan in the second half of 1986.

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- ¹²⁷. Renmin Ribao, November 10, 1966; JHCL, Vol. 1, p. 269; JHCL, Vol. 2, pp. 35, 94.
- ¹²⁸. In fact, Chen Boda tried to persuade the workers to disband the organization on November 12. See JHCL, Vol. 2, pp. 37, 43.
- ¹²⁹. Jin Chunming: "Shanghai yiyue fengbao di qianqian houhou," in DSTX, No. 18 (1983).
- ¹³⁰. Guanyu ganggongzong wenti diaocha baogao, 1967.
- ¹³¹. JHCL, Vol. 2, p. 63; Jin Chunming: "Shanghai yiyue fengbao he eryue kangzhen."
- ¹³². In the days following Mao's approval of the existence of the workers' organization, members of the CRSG advised workers that such organizations should adopt the form of a federation, association, or representative assembly rather than of a headquarters. Obviously, they hoped that the workers would set up a relatively unified organization in each enterprise, industry, or place and that the organizations would have no full-time cadres. In other words, what they had in mind seemed to be a substitute for the existing trade union, or more precisely, a revolutionary trade union that might, in Chen Boda's words, represent the real interests of the workers. The later development of worker organizations, however, far exceeded the bounds the CRSG set at this time. JHCL, Vol. 2, pp. 95, 117, 120.
- ¹³³. The conservative workers' organization in Beijing, the Guard Regiment (*Hanweituan*), was established on November 19 with 300,000 members. Its counterpart in Shanghai, the Red Escort (*Chiweidui*), was set up on November 26 with 400,000 members. In Wuhan, the conservative Federation of Revolutionary Laborers (*Lianhehui*) took shape on December 2. It quickly expanded into an organization of 400,000 members. See Jinggangshan (Beijing), December 22, 1966; JHCL, Vol. 2, p. 210; and WWDJ.
- ¹³⁴. For instance, in Wuhan there were groups of artists, contract workers, apprentices, cooks, veterans, elementary school teachers, middle school teachers, teachers in schools run by the local people, policemen, prosecutors, judges, street cleaners, doctors, militias, members of the Socialist Education Movement work teams, blind persons, and the like.
- ¹³⁵. Wang Li, Xianchang lishi, pp. 100-110.
- ¹³⁶. JHCL, Vol. 3, p. 77; Renmin Ribao, January 1, 1967.

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- ¹³⁷. The first two sets of such instructions were, not surprisingly, for the workers and the peasants, and they appeared in the middle of December 1966. The next to be considered was for the students. A drafting group to formulate the organic rules of the Red Guards was formed on December 27. In the meantime, the regulations regarding government functionaries, teachers, athletes, artists and public security men were also under preparation. See Zhang Chungqiao Yao Wenyuan tongzhi zai Shanghai shi geming weiyuanhui baogaohui shang di jianghua (June 3, 1967); WJHB, Vol. 1, pp. 162-70; JHCL, Vol. 3, pp. 17, 35, 58.
- ¹³⁸. On the last day of 1967, the CCP Central Committee and the State Council promulgated the "Circular on Revolutionary Teachers and Students of Higher and Middle Schools Taking Part in Short Military Training," which required the Party committees of all the provinces to set up their leading bodies for this particular purpose. See JHCL, Vol. 3, p. 38; WJHB, Vol. 1, p. 171.
- ¹³⁹. Lin Biao wenxuan, p 278. Despite the resistance of some students, who complained that the military training might arrest the progress of the movement, the CRSG had decided, by early January 1967, that military training would soon start, first in six experimental units of Beijing--- Beijing University, Qinhua University, Beijing Aeronautical Institute, Beijing Geological Institute, the No. 2 Middle School, and the No. 25 Middle School, all of which were well-known strongholds of rebellious students. See JHCL, Vol. 3, pp. 11-12, 14-15, 23, 30, 36, 38.
- ¹⁴⁰. JHCL, Vol. 3, p. 77.
- ¹⁴¹. State Statistical Bureau, Zhongguo tongji nianjian 1983, p. 234.
- ¹⁴². Harry Gelman, "Mao and Permanent Purge," Problem of Communism, No. 15 (1966); Peter Cheng, "The Root of China's Cultural Revolution: The Feud between Mao and Liu," Orbis, No. 11 (1968); Chu-yuan Cheng, "The Power Struggle in Red China," Asian Survey, No. 6 (1966).
- ¹⁴³. See Mao's letter to Lin Biao of May 7, 1966.
- ¹⁴⁴. Mario Von Cranach, 'Leadership as a Function of Group Action,' in Carl F. Graumann and Serge Moscovici, eds., Changing Conception of Leadership, (New York: Springer-Verlag, 1986), pp. 117-18.
- ¹⁴⁵. Wang Shaoguang, Failure of Charisma.