

# Countering Pessimistic Winds: Applied Revolutionary Optimism in Revolutionary China

MARCH 10, 2020

STRUGGLESSESSIONS

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Applied Revolutionary Optimism  
in Revolutionary China

Article by Mariposa Vermelha

*Editors note: Edits were made to this piece on 4/1/20 after an email requesting clarity over who Li Feng-lan was and what side she took during the 1976 counterrevolution—which was revealed to have been the left line by the original author. During the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution (GPCR) a great many peasants and workers were drawn into making intellectual works, and as Mariposa explained to us, Li Feng-lan emerged as one of those such less-known intellectual leaders. Her works were shared in the English published “Peking Journal,” and were ultimately suppressed by the late 1970s.*

*The person who emailed also pointed to technical errors, which we fixed.*

*But the main area of contention was the use of the Lenin’s conception of dialectics, in regards to events and motion. This is seen in author Mariposa Vermelha’s “Twists & Turns” section. Lenin was mistakenly going off of a form of Hegelian dialectics that Engels largely promoted in Anti-Duhring.” We failed to struggle with Mariposa over this and that reflects a liberalism then we must self-criticize for, in that we were prioritizing getting content up over engaging. This form of dialectics known as “negation of negation” became associated with reformist and revisionist political conceptions, in that is fixated on a specific “lawful” motion which inevitably promotes gradualism. It diminishes the role of creative human decisions*

*of revolution happening in the superstructure to unleash the forces of the base, focusing on quantity becoming quality rather than the reverse, and it downplays the fact that contradiction in all things and processes, in a metaphysical way.*

*Struggle Sessions rejected this inclusion of Lenin here and we want to argue that the “spiral development” laid out by Hung Yu in “History Develops In Spirals” is distinctive and based on the Maoist understanding of dialectics. The author uses the Lenin quote in this section out of context from what Lenin originally wrote. She did this without ill intention to affirm revolutionary optimism, but in obscuring the controversy around the topic of negation of negation and not differentiating between the two conceptions at hand, we must criticize for not explaining this further.*

*So before the reader reads, let's un-obscure things. What is the correct view? As Mao explains:*

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*“Engels talked about the three categories, but as for me I don't believe in two of those categories. (The unity of opposites is the most basic law, the transformation of quality and quantity into one another is the unity of the opposites quality and quantity, and the negation of the negation does not exist at all.)*

*The juxtaposition, on the same level, of the transformation of quality and quantity into one another, the negation of the negation, and the law of the unity of opposites is ‘triplism’, not monism. The most basic thing is the unity of opposites. The transformation of quality and quantity into one another is the unity of the opposites quality and quantity. There is no such thing as the negation of the negation. Affirmation, negation, affirmation, negation . . . in the development of things, every link in the chain of events is both affirmation and negation.*

*“Slave–holding society negated primitive society, but with reference to feudal society it constituted, in turn, the affirmation. Feudal society constituted the negation in relation to slave–holding society but it was in turn the affirmation with reference to capitalist society. Capitalist society was the negation in relation to feudal society, but it is, in turn, the affirmation in relation to socialist society.”*

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*The reader, even those who are well read in theory, may wonder why this advance in philosophy was important and represents an important part of Maoism. At the time that Mao was starting to develop the view that affirmation and negation is the proper unity of opposites over negation of the negation, the Soviet revisionists promoted the latter view of “two into one” synthesis, where class contradictions become ultimately eliminated under socialism by having legal relations in production alone determining the end (i.e., negation) of contradiction, and where chaining workers to increasing work rates to push out ever larger outputs (of quantity, or the increase in level of the productive forces, becoming quality, or communism) was the correct Marxist view.*

*Mao opposed this view of synthesis that implies the resolution of conflict in a schematic way, which implied that synthesis itself exists as a fusion, merger, or even the emergence of harmony. In the time that the Criticize Lin Biao, Criticize Confucius campaign was launched, the Maoists led a struggle over philosophy that insisted that conflicts and contradictions were not typically resolved (or mitigated) through merger. And that it is not the task of Communists to constantly find the “golden mean” to mitigate contradictions. In other words, they argued against the view that the conflicts of opposites should be resolved through some kind of blending of non–revolutionary approaches with revolutionary ones, but instead described the resolution of contradiction as “one eats up the other.”*

*The theory of “combine two into one” in China was associated with (rested upon, alluded to) those earlier non–revolutionary forms of dialectics that took great harmony as its goals. This view of resolution had great influence among both Chinese nationalists and Communists during earlier periods. It became clear by the*

time the campaign started in 1973 that those same counterrevolutionary forces who just three years later would wash the revolution would blood actually embodied a great pessimism through their view of negation of the negation. They downplayed how that subjective factor (i.e. consciously acting workers and peasants being led by a revolutionary party) should deal with contradiction. One place to explore how this question was posed during the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution is the essay called “The Theory of ‘Combine Two into One’ Is a Reactionary Philosophy for Restoring Capitalism.” The theory of “combine two into one” (which was embraced and promoted by China’s capitalist-roaders in the 1950s and 60s) has now morphed (in their unfortunately victorious hands) into the ongoing campaigns of China’s new post-Mao rulers for harmony and “harmonious society” (within a capitalist social order riddled with oppression and resistance). From a theory for mitigating class conflict under socialism it has moved on to become a system for mitigating class conflict under capitalism.

The concept of “spiral progress” was distinctive from Lenin’s understanding of dialectics embodied in the Lenin quote used, the former representing an epistemological argument and the latter a teleological one. The term was used by Hung Yu and others to understand, in the context of the larger work they produced, the mass line method of Communist leadership in its contradiction to idealism’s view of reality and history. “On Studying Some History of Philosophy” it is argued that those organizers with the left line come to correct knowledge and appraisal of a situation only through a “spiral” of struggle with idealism and all its presumptions that come up in practice, showing the primacy of those true Marxists that demand knowledge originates from practice and is a reflection of the outside world. We see then that this law of spiral development is more appropriately the law of class struggle—specifically against those who use the philosophical front who promote knowledge that is a priori.

To conclude before one reads the piece, there are many “Left” intellectuals like Joshua Moufawad-Paul who, while initially blazing in and making a name for themselves with a defense of Marxism from postmodernism and anarchism, have also used the same Lenin quote out of context as Vermelha did, but unlike Vermelha who is upholding the left line, do it for more insidious purposes: to argue that a

*“new” Maoism needs to be birthed because Lenin’s vanguard Party is obsolete and all inherited Marxism in general is too, and the setbacks of counterrevolution are evidence of this. So in while arguing that political power shouldn’t be considered an “old” goal in Communist Necessity and Continuity and Rupture, he still embarrassingly walks on with his Zapatista poetics, hoping to opportunistically cater to those petty bourgeois who’ve moved on from anti-globalization movements to new forms of social democracy whose limited goals still seem visionary and romantic to them. We must have clarity in our times, so before one proceeds with this piece, we want to promote the need to study closely and understand particularity and context.*

*“The essential conditions for the existence and for the sway of the bourgeois class is the formation and augmentation of capital; the condition for capital is wage-labour. Wage-labour rests exclusively on competition between the labourers. The advance of industry, whose involuntary promoter is the bourgeoisie, replaces the isolation of the labourers, due to competition, by the revolutionary combination, due to association. The development of Modern Industry, therefore, cuts from under its feet the very foundation on which the bourgeoisie produces and appropriates products. *What the bourgeoisie therefore produces, above all, are its own grave-diggers. Its fall and the victory of the proletariat are equally inevitable*” [my emphasis]*

-Karl Marx & Frederick Engels, Communist Manifesto

*“In the last analysis, it is a question of world outlook whether or not one takes a revolutionary optimistic attitude towards actual struggles and the future of the revolution. Dialectical materialism and historical materialism are the ideological foundation of revolutionary optimism, while idealism and metaphysics are the root cause of pessimistic views as far as the theory of knowledge is concerned.”*

-Pi Sheng, Proletarians Are Revolutionary Optimists

(Note: Struggle Sessions has already published a piece about revolutionary optimism which you can read [here](#). The piece does an excellent job at defining revolutionary optimism and differentiating it philosophically from both blind optimism and pessimism. The author highly recommends that piece to all readers.)

## What is revolutionary optimism?

Revolutionary optimism is a world outlook which views the forward progression of history towards Communism as inevitable and unstoppable. Revolutionary optimism is not based in starry-eyed ideas or a positive attitude; it is based in objective reality and it embodies conclusions drawn from historical facts. As a mode of production, Communism is not unique in its inevitability and unstoppable. Each progression of history thus far – from primitive communism to slave society, from slave society to feudal society, from feudal society to capitalist society – has been inevitable and unstoppable.

Why was progression inevitable and unstoppable each time? Because, in each historical stage, there came a moment where the *productive forces* came into sharp opposition with the *relations of production*. At this moment, the relations of production began to act as a fetter on the productive forces, forcing society into frequent crises. These crises did not resolve by themselves; they were resolved by revolutions in which members of new and emerging dominant classes waged ceaseless struggle against the old and decaying ruling class—this piece will deal with practical examples of this later on. (Stalin)

In today's capitalist world, there is a fundamentally antagonistic contradiction between socialized production and individual capitalist ownership of the means of production. This has led to frequent crises globally. The transition from the capitalist mode of production to the communist mode of production, via revolutions in the economic base and superstructure, is the inevitable solution of this contradiction.

However, no contradiction is solved overnight. Revolutionary optimism is the world outlook of historical and dialectical materialists, those who understand that change is prolonged and that, though the future is bright, the road is torturous. During the Cultural Revolution, as part of the campaign “Criticize Lin Biao & Confucius”, Hung Yu wrote:

“Revolution invariably advances along a zigzag path by incessantly surmounting all kinds of obstacles and obstructions. New things are bound to replace the old and revolutionary forces are bound to prevail over reactionary forces. This is an objective law independent of man’s will”

Understanding the inevitability of running into obstacles, into twists and turns in the road, is a vital part of revolutionary optimism, which differentiates it from blind optimism. Blind optimists negate the torturous road ahead and are predisposed to slacken their vigilance when there are victories, and become despondent and pessimistic when there are losses. Revolutionary optimists, on the other hand, embrace the twists and turns of the history. They understand that, while our victory is inevitable, it will come only after repeated struggles.

### **Twists & turns**

In his exposition on Marxism, the great Lenin writes about Marxist dialectics and theory of evolution as “*[a] development, so to speak, that proceeds in spirals, not a straight line; a development by leaps, catastrophes, and revolutions; “breaks in continuity”*”; the transformation of quantity into quality; inner impulses towards development, imparted by the contradiction and conflict of the various forces and tendencies acting on a given body, or within a given phenomenon, or within a given society...” [my emphasis]

Here, Lenin combats the “straight line” theory of development, arguing that things do not develop in a straight line forward, but in spirals. Marxists do not deny that human history develops from a lower stage to a higher stage; development from a lower to higher stage is an inevitable consequence of the



accumulation of experience and knowledge. However, Marxists understand that the process of development will necessarily run into reversals and setbacks.

In the same piece, Hung Yu expands on spiral development:

“Why do things develop in spirals? It is because in each thing there is the contradiction between its new and its old aspects and the two aspects of the contradiction are united and at the same time opposed to each other, thereby pushing the development of things. The course of development of things from a low to a high stage is one in which the new things develop through continuously defeating the old. To conquer the old and replace it, a new thing is bound to meet with strong resistance from the old; only by repeated and fierce struggles can the new thing grow in strength and rise to predominance, and only thus can the old thing be weakened and forced to perish gradually. *Therefore, in spite of the fact that the general direction of the development of things is a forward movement from a low to a high stage, it cannot advance in a straight line. The inevitable phenomenon in the actual process of development is that there are twists and turns of varying degrees at one time or another*” [My emphasis]

In China, the campaign “Criticize Lin Biao and Confucius” (which was initiated during the Cultural Revolution) emphasized this law of spiral development and the inevitability of twists and turns in the revolutionary road ahead. To give some context into the campaign, Lin Biao was the former Defense Minister and Vice Chairman of the Chinese Communist Party who, *in appearance*, was an enthusiastic proponent of Chairman Mao’s revolutionary line. Lin Biao vigorously supported the Cultural Revolution and even directed the compilation of the Quotations of Chairman Mao. However, *in essence*, Lin Biao was a pessimist who lacked faith in the masses, a revisionist who preached capitulation to Soviet social-imperialism, and a devout student of Confucius and Mencius, even comparing these two classical reactionaries to the great revolutionaries Marx and Lenin. Lin Biao’s pessimism manifested itself far before 1969, when he openly began attacking Mao’s revolutionary line. Mao

had written “A Single Spark Can Start a Prairie Fire” back in 1930 in an effort to educate Lin Biao and other pessimists within the Party and Army.

In 1969, Lin Biao and his forces prepared a Political Report which basically called for an end to the Cultural Revolution, announcing that it had achieved its aims. This was at total odds with Chairman Mao’s line which stated there would probably have to be multiple Cultural Revolutions, one after another, to sweep away the garbage heap of reactionary ideology and to continue bombarding the bourgeois headquarters within the Party. Lin Biao also pushed for accommodation to and reliance on Soviet social-imperialism. After being strongly rebuked by Mao, Lin Biao grew bolder and more embittered. In 1970, he began openly attacking the Cultural Revolution, calling cadre participation in productive labor “forced labor reform” and harshly criticizing the education programs which sent the youth down to the countryside. In 1971, he attempted a military coup against Mao. His plans were exposed and, while attempting to flee to the social-fascist Soviet Union, his plane crashed over Mongolia.

Because Lin Biao had appeared to defend Chairman Mao and the Cultural Revolution and because he had occupied such a high role in the Communist Party and in the government, this affair threw China into some chaos. However, Chairman Mao and the leftists in the CCP turned this bad thing into its opposite by initiating the campaign to “Criticize Lin Biao and Confucius”. This campaign drew out the similarities between Lin Biao and Confucius in doctrine, and encouraged the masses to study theory in order to fully criticize the two reactionaries, both of whom strove to divert the course of history and turn back time. While Confucius was a representative of the dying slave society and the decrepit slave owner class against the emerging feudal society and the newborn landlord class, Lin Biao was a representative of the moribund bourgeois class which had snaked its way into the party against the emerging socialist society and the newborn dictatorship of the proletariat, which aimed to destroy classes altogether. Confucius and Lin Biao both preached the doctrine of “innate genius”; they both despised the masses and viewed them as incapable of understand intellectual matters; they both upheld the doctrine of the mean, opposing going too far in either direction, in a failed attempt to

hold up their dying regimes; they both preached the doctrine of benevolence, with Lin Biao decrying those “who ruled by force” in an attempt to smear revolutionary violence and the dictatorship of the proletariat.<sup>[9]</sup> These are only some of the main examples of ideas the pair had in common.

The main purpose of this campaign was to teach the masses to identify and criticize reaction in all its forms. Both Confucius and Lin Biao were examples of failed reactionaries; they had tried with all their might to fight against new and emerging social systems but, in the end, they perished and the new triumphed over the old. However, this did not come so easily. Confucius and the dying slave-owners class, clinging to Confucian ideology, fought the emerging landlord class, and their revolutionary Legalist ideology bitterly, clawing even at the grave. It took approximately 370 years for feudalism to be fully consolidated in China. These 370 years were marked with many twists and turns in the road, where the new land-owning class seized and lost power a number of times. Yet, in the final analysis, history was bound to move from a lower to a higher stage, and it did. Feudalism triumphed in China and it was all the stronger *because* of these twists and turns, *because* of setbacks and bends in the road.

Lenin expressed a similar optimistic sentiment in his piece attacking neo-Malthusianism. Neo-Malthusianism was a trend that had taken root among the petty-bourgeoisie at the time. As a doomed class, they saw a future filled with despair and hopelessness. They believed that conditions would only get worse and, from this standpoint, encouraged birth control and abortion among the masses. Why bring children into a world where they are destined to suffer?

Lenin tirelessly combatted this unscientific and anti-masses line. He believed that the proletariat had a bright future ahead of it, stating that:

“Yes, we workers and the mass of small proprietors lead a life that is filled with unbearable oppression and suffering. Things are harder for our generation than they were for our fathers. But in one respect we are luckier than our

fathers. *We have begun to learn and are rapidly learning to fight*—and to fight not as individuals, as the best of our fathers fought, not for the slogans of bourgeois speechifiers that are alien to us in spirit, but for our slogans, the slogans of our class. We are fighting better than our fathers did. Our children will fight better than we do, and they will be victorious.”

It only takes a brief examination of history to see clearly how the proletariat fight better in each succeeding generation. The Paris Commune took place in 1871 and lasted a little less than 3 months. This was the proletariat’s first attempt at seizing power and, without a definitive ideology or vanguard party leading them, it fell quickly. The Russian Revolution (beginning with the dress rehearsal in 1905) triumphed in 1917 (although fighting with reactionary forces continued until 1923). Less than half a century after the proletariat’s first attempt to seize power, they succeeded and built the world’s first dictatorship of the proletariat which lasted for nearly 40 years until Khrushchev and his social-fascist clique seized power. The Soviet Union was proof that when the masses were mobilized and the capitalistic fetters on production were restrained, incredible innovation was possible. When led by the Party, the people were capable of earth-shattering transformation. The USSR was a bastion of hope and liberation which marked a qualitative growth in the fighting capacity of the proletariat. It was followed a little over 25 years later by the Chinese Revolution, where the masses learned to assault the very skies themselves. It was the Chinese Revolution which paved the way to the very first Cultural Revolution, a revolution which had been theorized briefly by Lenin, but never carried out in practice. When Chairman Gonzalo synthesized Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, principally Maoism, he was able to draw out the lessons from Chairman Mao and the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution and provide the proletariat with invaluable experience in how to make all three types of revolution – new democratic, socialist, and cultural.

Each revolution ran into many twists and turns in the road. Yet, they were able to synthesize the experiences of these twists and turns and march ahead better equipped than before. Today, socialism does not exist anywhere on the earth. But this is only a temporary turn in the road. In Lenin’s time, there were

four imperialist superpowers – today, there is only one, and it is deteriorating faster than ever before. The proletariat is armed with Marxism–Leninism–Maoism, and more experience than they have ever had before. We live in the strategic offensive of world revolution, where conditions for revolution are better than they have ever been before. Imperialism is in complete decay and collapse – capitalism is marked by more and more acute and deepening crises, and imperialist nations struggle to maintain sway and control over the oppressed nations of the world. Communist Parties everywhere are being constituted and reconstituted, and oppressed peoples of the world are deepening their rebellions, forcing imperialists to retreat and make concessions. As the proletarians of all countries and oppressed peoples of the world link hands, our prospects for the realization of Communism and the death of exploitation and oppression on Earth loom closer than ever before.

This is a vital part of the historical viewpoint of revolutionary optimists. The Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, which marked the highest expression of socialism yet, was initiated less than 100 years after the Paris Commune, which was the very first dictatorship of the proletariat! If we dedicate ourselves to studying Maoism and history, if we take deliberate steps to temper ourselves in the class struggle and mass work, how can we be anything other than endlessly optimistic?

### **Applying revolutionary optimism**

Many comrades may understand revolutionary optimism in theory, but are not able to apply it in practice. They are optimistic when there are victories or big actions, but become despondent and pessimistic when we run into hardships or failures. This manifests in both their organizing work and in their personal lives. This attitude is rooted in both a lack of education (a failure to fully grasp Marxism and its optimistic spirit), and in a petty–bourgeois class stand. The revolutionary movement in the US today is still small and still struggles, in areas, to reach and recruit the deepest and broadest masses. Many activists either come from petty–bourgeois class backgrounds, or from student

backgrounds where they are infused with petty-bourgeois ideology and aspirations, however unfounded and unlikely these aspirations may be.

It is the duty of any revolutionary to grasp and embody revolutionary optimism. This does not mean that they never get sad or unhappy – it is natural and human to feel negative emotions from time to time. But this does mean that they combat those negative emotions whenever they do feel them, that they strive to be as positive and inspiring in all the work they carry out, that they enthusiastically take up two-line struggle and class struggle, that they steel themselves in the twists and turns of the revolutionary road ahead, and never give up faith in a better future.

None of this comes easy; a revolutionary attitude is the outcome of incessant internal struggle between correct and incorrect ideas. Struggle sharpens all things and the defeat of an incorrect idea elevates the correct idea to a higher level. It is the internal struggles which drive the development of a thing and cause it to either grow and blossom, or decay and rot.

True revolutionaries must struggle implacably against despondence, pessimism, and blind optimism. They should embody the attitude that any problem, no matter how big and overwhelming it may seem, can be solved. This is line with our ideology, which is attempting to solve one of the biggest historical problems of all time – class society.

Revolutionaries must always maintain an optimistic attitude towards the masses. As the Communist Party of Peru states in the *General Political Line*, “[Chairman Gonzalo] refutes those who propound that the masses don’t want to make revolution or that the masses will not support the People’s War. He teaches us that the problem is not with the masses because they are ready to rebel, but rather it is with the Communist Parties who must assume their obligation to lead them and rise up in arms”. The masses themselves are the makers of history; their rebellions and uprisings have been the base of every major historical transformation.

Pessimism on the left is largely based in anti-masses ideas. It lends to methods as varying as gross electoralism and reformism, and focoism. Electoralism and reformism show a complete lack of faith in the masses and a core belief that the masses are stupid, cowardly, and can be easily bought out. The masses cannot see beyond their short-term interests and revolution is totally out of the question. This completely negates the masses history of rebellion, including in imperialist countries like the United States. Focoism, on the other hand, embodies a blindly optimistic attitude about the subjective forces with pessimism regarding the masses and their struggles. Revolutionaries, no matter how weak and unlinked with the masses they may be, can lead a revolution. However, the masses cannot be organized by the Party, through patient work and mounting struggles, to make revolution themselves. Overall, both of these tendencies are doomed to fail because they regard the masses with pessimism and doubt.

The objective conditions are excellent and the masses are ripe for revolution. What is lacking is the subjective conditions. The subjective forces within the revolutionary ranks must be built up and steeled through two-line struggle and participation in the class struggle. The left in the United States is weak – its ideologies and methods of work reflect its vacillating petty-bourgeois class composition. It is only recently that revolutionary organizations, basing themselves in Maoism, have begun to arise. Revolutionaries in the United States still have to forge themselves and form links with the deepest and broadest masses.

But as long as we learn from our victories and failures and continue to study Marxism carefully, we will improve at applying Maoism to our concrete conditions. Anyone can read the Marxist classics, but it takes time and patient struggle to understand how to apply Marxism to our conditions.

Marxism holds that all things can turn into their opposites. The pamphlet “Workers, Peasants and Soldiers Criticize Lin Biao and Confucius” has numerous examples of oppressed and toiling workers and peasants who witnesses China turn into its opposite – from a country which oppressed and

exploited the broad masses, to a country which put power directly into their hands, under the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party. The pamphlet details many stories where illiterate masses, once provided education by the CCP, turned into their opposites and became literate and began to fervently study Marxism.

One of Lin Biao's most treacherous ideas was his theory of innate genius, which posited that certain people (such as Lin Biao himself!) were born with genius, while others (meaning, the broad masses of people) were not. This was an idea based in pure pessimism and a deep hatred of the masses. It negated the centrality of practice in knowledge. It negated the fact that, if working people are provided with education in any field and try earnestly to learn, they will be able to grasp any idea in the world. One example from this pamphlet is by an artist, Li Feng-lan. Li Feng-lan grew up as an illiterate peasant who liked to make decorations for window-panes as a child, but was not able to go to school or learn to draw. After liberation, she was sent to a part-time art school (which was on the site of a reservoir work-site, so she also actively participated in productive labor). Inspired to make revolutionary art for the masses, she began drawing in all her free time. She warmly received criticism from the Party and the masses about her art, and made every effort she could to improve herself as an artist to serve revolution and serve the masses.

Li Feng-lan went from being a poor, illiterate peasant who was never given time to draw, to the deputy secretary of her local brigade's Party branch and an artist for the revolution. By trying her hardest to learn new skills and by participating in the class struggle, she was able to transform into her opposite. It's important to understand that we can transform almost any aspect of ourselves if we sharpen our ideology and engage in the class struggle.

Li Feng-lan embodied revolutionary optimism – no obstacle was insurmountable and any skill was attainable. Her attitude was one which was shared by many of the poor peasants and proletariat before liberation. The oppressed and toiling Chinese had every reason to hold their heads high with optimism; in a matter of decades, they had seen their country liberated from



the mountains of feudalism, imperialism, and bureaucratic capitalism. The Chinese masses embodied a proletarian spirit and a revolutionary attitude, daring to scale the heights and never fearing struggle. They knew that only socialism could save China, and were determined to devote their lives to building it, all towards the shining goal of Communism.

Lin Biao, on the other hand, cared far less about the future of China than he did about personal power and his own career. He represented the vacillating national bourgeoisie; once progressive but unable to keep up with the pace of the revolution and, for this reason, determined to halt it and turn back time. Lin Biao is joined by the socialist fascist government of China today, who have also turned back time and once again burdened the masses with oppression and exploitation.

If we look at things historically, in the long-term, Li Feng-lan's optimistic attitude is a hundred times more scientifically correct than Lin Biao's attitude. It may seem otherwise in this moment, because social fascists and capitalist roaders reign again in China. But if we go beyond the appearance of a thing and grasp its essence, we can see quite clearly that imperialism and capitalism are doomed, moribund systems, and that socialism is an inevitable, historical progression. The social fascists in China will fall again, just as exploitation and oppression will fall everywhere else in the world.

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In Comrade Stalin's 1939 piece “Dialectical & Historical Materialism”, he defines the productive forces as comprising of “[the] *instruments of production* wherewith material values are produced, the *people* who operate the instruments of production and carry on the production of material values

thanks to a certain *production experience* and *labor skill*.” If we understand this definition of productive forces and we understand the reality that human knowledge is always developing from a lower to a higher stage as humanity accumulates more and more experience and transforms this perceptual experience into a conceptual understanding of the experience, then we know that the productive forces are inevitably bound to develop.

In the same piece, Comrade Stalin defines the relations of production as “relation of men to each other in the process of production... Men carry on a struggle against nature and utilize nature for the production of material values not in isolation from each other, not as separate individuals, but in common, in groups, in societies. Production, therefore, is at all times and under all conditions social production.”

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