Mao Tsetung Thought since the Cultural Revolution*

Mao Tsetung Thought has been the ubiquitous guiding spirit of national and international life in China, especially since 1966, with the beginning of the Cultural Revolution. However, both Mao Thought and its avatar, the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution (GPCR), have been critically misunderstood by the outside world. Mao Thought, regarded by Communists as a continuation and development of Marxism-Leninism, has often been viewed by outsiders as militant fanaticism. Similarly, the GPCR has been superficially seen as a façade for a power struggle, rather than the valid experimentation and promotion of Mao Thought, which it is. In fact, Mao Thought has been tempered by the Cultural Revolution into a more mature line of Marxism-Leninism for continued proletarian revolutionary struggle.

As the offspring of Marxism-Leninism, Mao Thought is characterized particularly by its celebrated anti-revisionist struggle. For the purpose of defending the ideological purity of Marxism-Leninism, Mao Thought, together with the determined efforts of the Albanian Party of Labor, has openly challenged a series of revisionist interpretations, primarily attributed to Khrushchev and upheld by Brezhnev, Kosygin and satellite associates.

As a counterpart to China's international struggle against modern revisionism, the GPCR, guided by Mao Thought, has carried the anti-revisionist struggle to the masses of the Chinese people and particularly to the Communist Party of China (CPC) itself. The Cultural Revolution has been essential to the implementation of Mao Thought: it has magnified the anti-revisionist struggle into a massive movement for concrete identification and understanding of the once abstract concept of revisionism, i.e., 'Know your enemies'. In the absence of the Cultural Revolution within China to dramatize and propagate the anti-revisionist struggle, Mao Thought would be deprived of its practical influence on the international Communist movement.

With Mao Thought as its guiding principle, the GPCR has been a far-reaching and continuing campaign on an unprecedented scale for forceful
and positive implementation of the anti-revisionist struggle. It has served as a catalyst for an ideological ‘great leap forward’, strengthening and enriching the substance of Mao Thought by consistently and penetratingly promoting the anti-revisionist struggle in political, military, economic, social, and cultural life.

Since Marxism-Leninism is an ideology of proletarian revolution, in which the seizure and maintenance of political power the world over is of primary concern, politics must take command. For it is essentially in the sphere of national and international political outlook that the confrontation between revolutionary ideology and its opposing revisionist line looms large. Spurred on by the negative lessons incurred in the course of the development of Titoism, Khrushchevism, the Brezhnev doctrine, etc., Mao Thought has been systematized and crystallized into the most valid interpretation of Marxism-Leninism of the contemporary epoch.

Mao’s political theory and practice serve as the core of the revolutionary struggle. Repudiating revisionism, in a comprehensive way, Mao Thought deals with the entire spectrum of the proletarian political program on a national and international scale: from the kernel issue of the proletarian Party and dictatorship; to the inter-Party and inter-state relations which are at the heart of the international Communist movement and the socialist camp; all the while inquiring into the very essence of the proletarian revolution in the non-Communist world through peaceful or non-peaceful transition to socialism with particular attention to the issue of the national liberation movements in Asia, Africa and Latin America; and the problems of war and peace, or peaceful coexistence with the powers of the developed world.

Mao Thought insists upon the mutual indispensability of the proletarian Party and proletarian dictatorship, and their concurrent existence until the world’s entry into the ‘classless society’. Mao rejects the idea of a ‘party of the entire people’, as suggested by Khrushchev in the 1961 program of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU), because no non-class or supra-class political parties can exist. Mao Thought also stresses that any attempted transformation of the proletarian Party into a ‘party of the entire people’, intermediate to entering the classless society, disarms the proletariat ideologically and organizationally, and is tantamount to aiding in the restoration of capitalism. Moves to defame the proletarian Party and dictatorship – for instance, by counterposing Stalin to