Liu Shaoqi and the Chinese Cultural Revolution

revised edition

Lowell Dittmer

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To TANG TSOU

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Abbreviations

GENERAL

ACGU—All-China General Union
APC—Agricultural Producers' Cooperatives
CC—Central Committee
CCP—Chinese Communist Party
CCRG—Central Cultural Revolution Group
CPSU—Communist Party of the Soviet Union
CYL—Communist Youth League
GLF—Great Leap Forward
GPCR—Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution
MAC—Military Affairs Commission
MCC—Military Control Commission
NCNA—New China News Agency
PLA—People's Liberation Army
RC—Revolutionary Committee
SEM—Socialist Education Movement
URI—Union Research Institute

PUBLICATIONS

AS—Asian Survey
CL&G—Chinese Law and Government
CN—China Notes
CNA—China News Analysis
CQ—The China Quarterly
CS—Current Scene
CSN—China Science News
CW—Collected Works of Liu Shaoqi
DSJP—Daily Summary of the Japanese Press
ECMM—Extracts from China Mainland Magazines
FBIS—Foreign Broadcast Information Service
FEER—Far Eastern Economic Review
GR—Guangming ribao [Illumination Daily]
HP—Hongqi piaopiao
IS—Issues and Studies
JPRS—Joint Publications Research Service
LAD—Liberation Army Daily [Jiefang junbao]
LD—Liberation Daily [Jiefang ribao]
LSWZJ—Lin Shaoqi wenti ziliao juanji
NB—Liu Shaoqi nianbu
NJJ—Nongye jixie jishu

PD—People's Daily [Renmin ribao]
PR—Peking Review
RF—Red Flag [Hongqi]
SCMM—Selections from China Mainland Magazines
SCMP—Survey of the China Mainland Press
SRWM—Selected Readings from the Works of Mao Zedong
SW—Selected Works of Mao Zedong
ZM—Zheng ming [Contending]

Note: Each abbreviation in the text or notes is cited in full the first time it appears. If the abbreviation refers to an item in the Selected Bibliography, the full citation will not appear in subsequent notes, but titles not included in the Selected Bibliography are cited in full the first time they appear in each chapter.

Preface to the Second Edition

Why this book? There are two reasons for a second edition. The first is that the true significance of Liu Shaoqi in Chinese political history has not yet been fully appreciated. It is an unfortunate fact of political life that a large quantity of plausible falsehood can outweigh a small quantity of truth. The 1980 attempt at official rehabilitation, though certainly well-intended, has not entirely erased the impact of ten years of calumniation—even among many well-informed Chinese. Though Liu is no longer treated like the rat whose mere presence evokes cries to "kill it," he is still often dismissed as a supporter of the Soviet model, a planner, or a dour martinet. None of these oversimplifications do him justice. In a way, Liu is far more politically meaningful now than when he was a household word: whereas he previously could be considered a major victim of the mass movement, or as the subject of one of history's fascinating counterfactual conditionals—what might have been, the road not taken—since the advent of the reforms he must also be studied in order to understand what *is*, for it is his thinking that underlies much of Deng's reform program.

The second reason for a revised edition is that new materials have come to light. Since Liu's rehabilitation, a significant memorial *cum* biographical literature has appeared that illuminates important and hitherto obscure facets of Liu's character and career. This new material necessitated a far more comprehensive and detailed revision than I had originally foreseen, simply in order to ensure factual accuracy. The essential themes and conclusions remain the same, with one exception. In the first edition, Liu had to be defended against the charge of conspiring to seize power from Mao, a charge that provided the animus for Liu's disgrace. Since that time, particularly since the reversal of verdicts on the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution (GPCR), the plausibility of that charge has diminished, and the suspicion has gained credence that it was actually the Maoists who conspired to bring down Liu and Deng. This is not the place to go into detail, but my own conclusion is that both conspiracy and spontaneity theories must be included in a fully satisfactory explanation. I submit that there are two

levels of reality in Chinese politics, one on the surface and one lurking beneath the surface, and that while the idealistic and programmatic motives predominated at the surface level, the subsurface realm did entertain various schemes and plots—which, this being Chinese politics, tend to be convoluted and personal. Yet I do not mean to "privilege" the subsurface dimension, for great issues were also at stake, such as whether the Chinese masses have an inherent right to rebel against unjust leadership without being repressed, or whether the Party is rather needed to guide mass participation and keep it within safe bounds. If this bilevel explanation is plausible it is of course only a beginning, inviting further research on the dynamics of the relationship between surface and subsurface, public and private, formal and informal.

Acknowledgments

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The Program for Contemporary China of the University of Chicago generously provided the financial support that made it possible for me to spend the 1972–73 academic year revising the final draft, and the Center for Chinese Studies of the University of California gave me full access to their research facilities and an excellent environment for work during this period. For permission to republish slightly revised versions of chapters 9 and 10 I wish to thank *Asian Survey* and *The China Quarterly,* respectively; some of the ideas presented in chapters 5 and 6 first appeared in abbreviated form in *Journal of Comparative*

Administration and *Studies in Comparative Communism.* For their patient help with revisions and production, I am grateful to members of the University of California Press. The ultimate *sine quibus nihil* was of course provided by my family, whose love and faith sustained me during the entire gestation period.

For their invaluable help in gleaning and harvesting the rich material incorporated into the revised edition, I am indebted to Guoling Zhang and Alice (Shihong) Chin for research assistance, and to Angela Piliouras for editorial assistance. I am especially grateful for the chance to interview Li Qi, Chen Donglin, Huang Zheng, Chen Shaozhong, and other dedicated historians at the Department on Research and Party Literature Central Committee CPC in Beijing. For underwriting this project I am deeply indebted to Doug Merwin, who has made M. E. Sharpe a premier publisher of books on contemporary East Asia.

Though all of the aforementioned helped me well beyond my ability to express my debt to them in footnotes, none should be held responsible for any errors of fact or interpretation that remain.

PART I
Liu's Fall

And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions: And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit.

—JOEL 2: 28–29

It is good for them to argue. Let them rebel a little. What good does it do to make them say, "Yes, Papa," "Yes, Mama," all the time? I don't approve of that. Yet I feel to be strict to one's children is to love them.

—JIANG QING, April 12, 1967

Our actions are our own; their consequences belong to Heaven.

—THOMAS FRANCIS

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Introduction

To seek the meaning of Liu Shaoqi's life is to become embroiled in inevitable controversy, for, by an unexpected turn of events in 1966, Liu's life came to be subjected to the most far-reaching reinterpretation by a nationwide movement of militant young activists who claimed to speak on behalf of Mao Zedong and the Chinese people. Because of Liu's intimate involvement for more than four decades with the major events that have shaped contemporary China, this reinterpretation opened Chinese Communist history to reassessment as well. Study of the controversy is an experience at once frustrating and rewarding. It is frustrating because some of the questions that the reinterpretation have posed must remain open, while we can at best reduce others to a limited number of objective possibilities. It is rewarding because such study places us in the eye of the storm of "mass criticism" whereby meaning and history are publicly created in modern China.

Liu's life may be viewed as an attempt to combine order with revolution and equality with economic efficiency and technocratic values. Over a period of more than a quarter century, he served as a constructive and stabilizing force within the Party and the regime. Unlike most Chinese Communist leaders, who tended to distinguish themselves in some particular endeavor and then pursue their careers along related lines, Liu had experience in numerous aspects of the Chinese Communist movement—trade unions, mass movements, underground organizations, guerrilla bases—but in all of these fields he exhibited the same fundamental concerns. During the revolutionary period of the 1920s and 1930s, his role as a Party and trade union organizer led him to place particular emphasis on an attempt to synthesize order and revolution. "Criticism and self-criticism," as definitively set forth by Liu in his 1941 essay, "On Inner-Party Struggle," was the most successful and important attempt to institutionalize this combination. His more extensive experience in the "White areas," and later as the operational administrator of the "first line" in Liberated China, led him to try to combine equality and economic efficiency as well. Perhaps his greatest success in this

endeavor was in pulling the nation back together after the debacle of the Great Leap Forward (GLF) of 1958–60 and achieving a sustained economic recovery.

In the end, however, Liu's vision of how this combination of order and revolution, equality and economic efficiency could be achieved was overwhelmed by the sweep and depth of the revolutionary drive in China, as symbolized by Mao Zedong. Liu was dismissed as heir apparent and then purged, bringing his civil existence to an end. But his greatest contribution to the Chinese revolution was his last, as its victim, a role he played according to the principles that had guided his previous career. From August 1966 to the spring of 1967, despite the rising tide of public criticism, he chose not to oppose Mao actively and thus plunge China into even greater chaos. In his dignified, "cultivated" bearing during two years of intense and relentless polemical attacks, Liu lived up to his own prescription for a good Communist:

> Even if it is temporarily to his disadvantage and if, in upholding the truth, he suffers blows of all kinds, is opposed or censured by most other people and so finds himself in temporary (and honorable) isolation, even to the point where he may have to give up his life, he will still breast the waves to uphold the truth.[1]

This last phase of Liu's career began in the spring of 1966, when Mao Zedong launched a "Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution" (GPCR), which was designed to provoke mass criticism of a "small handful" of "Party persons in authority taking the capitalist road" and to bring China's "bourgeois" cultural superstructure into closer conformance with its socialist base. As the ranking vice-chairman of the Central Committee (CC) during Mao's absence from Peking, Liu dispatched work teams in June and July 1966 to various schools and government organs to supervise the burgeoning movement. Upon his return to Peking in late July, Mao sharply criticized the activities of the work teams and requested their withdrawal. At the Eleventh CC Plenum in August, Liu came under criticism for his dispatch of work teams and was demoted from second to eighth place in the Politburo and relieved of his office as vice-chairman of the CC.

Two months later Liu submitted a self-criticism, which was reported to have been accepted, but his status remained uncertain; then in the next six months he became the target of a nationwide polemical assault, which characterized him as "China's Khrushchev," the leader of a "bourgeois reactionary line" that had been leading China down the "capitalist road" and was continuing even yet to resist Mao's "proletarian revolutionary line." Despite Liu's apparently passive reaction to these allegations, the "great repudiation" campaign continued for nearly two years before it culminated in his formal dismissal from all leadership positions and banishment from the Communist Party at the Twelfth CC Plenum in October 1968.

It was in the course of the GPCR that Liu's life, which seemed to have achieved such logical and felicitous unity, was to disintegrate. By a sudden turn of events, Liu's control over the meaning of his life was wrenched from his

hands and "took wings" in the critical communication process of the GPCR. Liu's person and his public meaning became completely estranged: the former was cut off from the instruments of policy and sequestered in his official residence at Chungnanhai, but the other "Liu" became the animating spirit of opposition against which the GPCR was waged, and indeed proved so dauntless and resourceful an opponent that he could be vanquished only after two years of fierce "struggle." Since his downfall, this "Liu" has allegedly inspired repeated counterattacks against the GPCR, led by his former opponents, Chen Boda and Lin Biao. Thus the meaning of Liu's life has passed from his hands to the Chinese people as a part of their heritage, and his name has become an integral part of the polemical vocabulary indicating the direction in which the continuing Chinese revolution should move.

We are, perforce, concerned with two Liu Shaoqis, and with the nature of the process that rent him in twain. Perhaps, like Humpty Dumpty, Liu Shaoqi can never be reassembled to form a fully convincing whole. Our objective is to understand the forces that unraveled his life and, in the process of putting him back together, to form a picture of Liu's China, as well as of China's Liu. The portrait that emerges will be in the cubist style, from several different perspectives, with rough edges.

This book consists of three parts. The first features a chronological reconstruction of Liu's attempt to impose form on the world, of the gradual, subtle deviation of Liu's order from Mao's vision of China's future in response to various exigencies of nation-building and modernization, and of the confrontation between that order and the revived forces of revolutionary change in China. Chapter 2 presents a brief biographical sketch of Liu's life before 1959, skirting areas of controversy in the hope of establishing a sound factual framework in terms of which later reinterpretations may be understood. It seeks to show how Liu's vision of the political process emerged as a result of various formative experiences in his life. Chapter 3 reviews the decade between 1956 and 1966. By tracing the main criticism themes of the GPCR to their origins in a series of unresolved political disputes, it seeks to reconstruct the decision to launch the GPCR and to determine the relationship between that decision and the decision to subject Liu Shaoqi to mass criticism. In chapters 4 and 5, Liu is swept into the GPCR, which exposed him as the Chinese revolution's greatest and most consistent nemesis. In a recent article, Howard Boorman compared Liu Shaoqi "as a human being" to the submerged portion of an iceberg, noting that his real personality "scarcely emerges in the polemical pyrotechnics" of the GPCR.[2] Chapter 4 aims to correct this situation by describing the GPCR as Liu experienced it, as an interpersonal drama of crime and unsuccessful atonement involving Liu and those with whom he had contact and whom he may have influenced. Chapter 5, in contrast, describes Liu's fall "objectively," i.e., as a symbol caught up in the rhetoric of a mass criticism movement over which he exerted minimal influence. It views his fall as the outcome of the conflictual and

cooperative interaction among political actors in a greatly expanded decision-making arena.

Part II consists of an analysis of the Chinese attempt to reconstruct the past of the Mao–Liu rupture, the so-called struggle between two lines. Both the "struggle" and the polemical distortion of its significance are of momentous importance for China's future—the latter because it was accepted as reality, the former because it is real. Chapter 6 compares the personalities and political styles of Liu Shaoqi and Mao Zedong; chapter 7 analyzes Liu's policies, and their political and economic ramifications, in the context of an evaluation of the Maoist criticisms of Liu. These two chapters attempt not only to explore the value implications and feasibility of two diverging roads to communism but to solve the puzzle of their origin: if Mao and Liu differed so profoundly, how were they able to cooperate for so long? And yet if they did not, why was Liu subjected to such comprehensive criticism?

Part III seeks to come to terms with Liu Shaoqi's impact on China's political future. Liu stood for a concept of socialist modernization that stressed the institutionalization of revolution within complex structures of elaborately qualified formal rules regulating nearly every aspect of life. "Criticism and self-criticism" may stand as a paradigm of this attempt, inasmuch as it sets forth the parameters for decision-making and discipline at every level in the Party organization, including the highest. Mao's GPCR involved a deliberate abrogation of the formal rules of criticism and self-criticism in the name of substantive justice. Liu, to the end, played the game according to rules that Mao, a more flexible man, altered to suit his ends. Part III analyzes "criticism and self-criticism," Liu's most significant legacy to Chinese politics, as it was transformed during the GPCR and as it seems likely to evolve henceforth. Chapter 8 first formalizes the process of "mass criticism" in a semiotic model of social roles and intended meanings, then analyzes the Liu Shaoqi case in terms of that model. Chapter 9 compares mass criticism to the "normal" functioning of the mass line: it attempts to assess the impact of such innovations as the displacement of a national organization of professional bureaucrats by an ad hoc network of amateur publicists, the partial eclipse of the orderly process of formally adopted central directives by the direct dissemination of polemics through the mass media, and, of course, the advent of unprecedented popular participation in the movement. The final chapter describes the structural evolution of the process of "criticism and self-criticism" in China from its origins in 1942–44 in the Zhengfeng (rectification) Movement as a system of mediated and regulated collegial conflict to its climactic emergence in 1966 as a national mobilization and rectification technique.

I have been deliberately eclectic in assembling sources on the assumption that, if an "objective" analysis of the meaning of Liu's life and fall is probably impossible, a consideration of the widest possible array of subjective judgments will at least facilitate a balanced perspective. The sources include original and

translated materials from the Chinese and Japanese press, as well as a wide assortment of secondary monographs in English, German, and French.

With regard to methodology, I have taken to heart Lewis Edinger's proposal that "for the analysis of individual political leaders we employ conceptual models and quantitative analysis in conjunction with a frank but disciplined use of empathy and other forms of imaginative speculation."[3] Quantitative indices are of course much scarcer and of more doubtful validity in China than in Germany, but chapters 8 and 9 do make use of content analysis in an attempt to attain somewhat more precision in the characterization of meanings. Much of the book, however, is based on evidence that is neither quantitative nor of assured validity. Whereas I continually try to move beyond available evidence to propose theories that plausibly link discrete events, sometimes going so far as to suggest alternative hypotheses to explain the same sequence, these explanations should conform to the Weberian methodological criteria of "objective possibility" and "subjective meaningfulness."[4]

Despite occasional forays into neighboring disciplines, this is a political biography and should be evaluated in terms of its ability to shed new light on Chinese politics at a critical transition point. In placing Liu's biography within the broad social and political milieu that lent meaning to his life, and in using various social science techniques to analyze the structure of that milieu, this study hopes to contribute to innovation in the uniting of political biography and political history.

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The Life and Times of Liu Shaoqi

Liu Shaoqi[1] was born in Huaminglou village, Ningxiang county, Hunan, on November 24, 1898. He was the youngest in a family of four boys and five girls. His father and grandfather were educated rich peasants (not landlords, as alleged by Red Guards, but certainly not poor peasants either). Only a mountain range separated his hometown from Shaoshan Cun, Xiangtan, where Mao Zedong was born. Very little is known of his childhood, though a scattering of letters suggests he maintained a more amicable relationship with his natal family than did Mao, a notorious problem child. Liu's ancestral home had a hundred-year history, during which it was gradually expanded to its final twelve-room size. In 1958 it was designated an important historical site and the house opened as a museum, with the original furniture and particularly the room in which Liu was born preserved intact. When Liu discovered this on a return visit to his hometown in 1961, however, he asked the secretary of the local Party branch to rescind these arrangements and allow poor peasants to live in the house.[2] Because this was done the house was spared from marauding Red Guards during the Cultural Revolution; local villagers also took care to conceal the location of the graves of Liu's ancestors.[3] Following Liu's verdict reversal in March 1980 the local commune engaged in repairing the house and access road for tourists.

Student Radical

Contrary to some previous reports, Mao and Liu apparently never met before both had left Hunan. Following graduation from elementary school, Liu in 1913 went to Wangluyuan Middle School of Ningxiang county, located in Changsha. In 1915, at the age of seventeen, he attended *Changsha yucai xuexiao* (Changsha high school), graduating the following year. In 1917 he entered the Hunan Military Academy (Hunan shengjiang wutang), but remained only two months before

withdrawing. Liu then joined the "New People's Study Society" (*Xinmin xuehui*) established by Mao and Cai Hesen, which sponsored a "work-study" program to enable students to continue their education in France; in September 1919 he matriculated in Yude Middle School in Baoding (Hobei) as a work-study student.[4] The training was vocational with an orientation toward factory work. Possibly at this time Liu first acquired his penchant for mechanical efficiency and a functional division of labor; in any event, he made repeated proud references to his proletarian beginnings throughout his life. "When I was a work-study student preparing to go to France, I learned to operate many kinds of equipment," he told workers on a factory tour during the Great Leap Forward. "Carriage, pliers, wood plane, drill press—I know how to use them all."[5] In 1964 he again touched upon this experience while promoting the part-work, part-study system:

> I had led the life of a work-study student for one year. Originally I had no thought of going to the Soviet Union. . . . That preparatory class provided a four-hour session in the morning. I learned French and engineering. . . . I learned both of them for one year! That year was quite a successful one.[6]

Yet the following year he again withdrew and went to Shanghai, where he and Ren Bishi joined the Socialist Youth League that had been organized in October of that year by Comintern agent Grigory Voitinsky, and studied Russian for eight months under Mrs. Voitinsky at the League headquarters in Shanghai's French settlement, preparing to study in the Soviet Union. According to a former classmate, he was already a single-minded revolutionary: "Comrade Shaoqi had hardly any personal hobbies, never engaged in random chatting and seldom went out . . . whenever we saw him he was studying Russian, reading *The Communist Manifesto* or considering problems in the Chinese revolution."[7] "At that time," Liu recalled four decades later, he "only knew that socialism was good"; he had "heard about" Marx, Lenin, the October Revolution, and so forth, but was "not clear" about the nature of socialism, or the means of implementing it.[8] In the early summer of 1921, he was one of eight students selected by the Socialist Youth League to study in the Soviet Union. He described his feelings upon his first departure from the homeland in a poem titled "On the Tianjin Bridge," which he scrawled on the back of a photo and mailed to a close friend:

> An unusual man seven feet fall,
> Why are you so sad and angry, and sighing all the time?
> Your life is short and your fortune is also bad,
> Wealth and high office you can hardly expect in life.
> Why not then enjoy life while you can,
> Why drift a thousand miles, undergoing numerous hardships?
> Talents are going westward,
> Which frontier are you gazing at by raising your head?
> Do you want to follow the footsteps of Marquis Pan to conquer distant land?

> Your eyes are wistful with thoughts of the autumn.
> Your aspirations are foolish, and your sentiments silly.
> Nobody knows me standing here on the Tianjin bridge.
> I can only mail it far away to my intimate friend who knows me.[9]

Liu reached Moscow on July 9, 1921, by way of Vladivostok and Chita, and studied for about seven months at the Communist University of the Toilers of the East, founded for the specific purpose of training cadres from minority peoples in the eastern Soviet Union and from Asian countries. Zhang Guotao, a senior classmate at Toilers of the East, recalls his first impression of Liu Shaoqi:

> As I take up my pen, I recall the face of a serious young man whom I first saw forty-six years ago in Soviet Russia. At the time, a famine had engulfed the Soviet Union, and even the Communists who publicly presented a bold front were mumbling in private. But this tall, skinny, pale young man endured the hunger and cold without observable murmur or depression. In 1922, the Communists were passionate and full of verve; but he seldom displayed any excitement. He was somewhat bookish, thoughtful, rather taciturn, but clearly persevering. His friends soon recognized these characteristics as genuine, cultivated from childhood. Some people, however, found him a bit too glum and devoid of youthfulness.[10]

In the winter of 1921–22, Liu joined the Communist Party in the Soviet Union. "The reason that I joined the Party was that I knew I could not solve my personal problems, and by solving the problems of national interest and of the country and society, my personal problems could also be solved," he reminisced to his children. "With the interests of the public raised, the interests of the individual would also be raised."[11] Although Toilers of the East offered no systematic course of study and no interpreters, he apparently did learn some Russian, for he later drew Chinese students' attention to "some nouns which, in my opinion, have not been translated correctly."[12]

Trade Union Organizer

Though a good student,[13] Liu asked to be transferred home for "practical" work. In the spring of 1922 he returned to China and was appointed to the Secretariat of the Chinese Labor Unions (*Zhongguo laodong zuho shujibu*), which Nym Wales later called China's first "systematic program for unionizing labor along modern lines." According to Liu, the organization consisted "mostly of students" recently returned from Moscow or France, or from Peking colleges.[14] The first secretary was Zhang Guotao, who described his working relationship with his former assistant in the Shanghai headquarters:

> My work often required me to travel, and even when I was in Shanghai, there were other duties to attend at the CCP Central Committee, so I left all the daily

> work of the Secretariat for Labor Organization to Liu Shaoqi, and he assisted me wholeheartedly. Sitting face to face in the small office, we worked for six months in perfect cooperation.[15]

Liu's first major assignment was under Mao Zedong, then secretary of the CCP District Committee in Hunan. On September 11, 1922, Liu was sent to work among the coal miners of Anyüan at Pingxiang Xian (Hunan) as deputy director to Li Lisan, then director of the Anyuan Miners' Labor Union. The Pingxiang mine was part of the Hanyeping Steel Company, the first major heavy industrial complex in China, which employed some 12,000 workers. "At Anyüan, Li Lisan was the one in the limelight, but it was I who hammered away at work," Liu later boasted.[16] His working relationship with Li was analogous to his earlier relationship with Zhang Guotao and his later relationship with Mao Zedong. Zhang describes this Sancho Panza role as follows:

> Li Lisan and Liu Shaoqi were a good combination in the labor movement. Liu Shaoqi once remarked that Li Lisan had a strong impetus and was an expert in agitation, capable of launching offensives and capturing new beachheads, but the programs he set up were always chaotic, requiring Liu Shaoqi to put in a lot of hard work to sort them out, to get the masses organized and the programs functioning. I was often called upon to help them solve their difficulties and found this a recurrent pattern.[17]

One of the workers at Anuan, to whom Liu taught the meaning of such simple Marxist concepts as "exploitation" in the extramural school for Pingxiang and Anyuan miners (founded by Li Lisan on May 1, 1922), recalls that Liu was careless about his clothing and personal appearance, self-effacing, and "extremely patient."[18] In mid-September Liu assisted Li in organizing "the most notorious strike in the annals of the Chinese labor movement" at the Anyuan Coal Mine and Beijing-Hankou Railroad, involving "an overwhelming body of 20,000 miners and 1,500 railway workers."[19] The owners capitulated after a three-day work stoppage, agreeing to thirteen of the Anyuan Labor Club's seventeen demands (including legalization of the club, a salary increase, and back wages).

In April 1923, Li Lisan left Anyuan, and on August 16 Liu was elected next president of the club, which survived the suppression of the labor movement in Hunan to become one of the most successful and renowned unions in the nation.[20] Liu remained until early 1925 (leading a second strike in January), when he was sent to Shanghai to organize a nationwide protest against foreign ("comprador") economic interests; he also joined the Kuomintang (KMT) in 1924 and was appointed to the secretariat of the Chinese Labor Union, one of the most active departments under the (KMT) Central Committee; in this capacity he established a joint KMT-CCP Headquarters to organize underground work in Changsha. His first writings also date from this period, describing the activities of the Hanyeping Iron and Steel Company. "I carry out the revolution outside

and must succeed," he explained to relatives during a visit home in 1923. "If I do not succeed, China will fail. By that time, I shall go abroad, and you don't have to look for me."[21]

In the spring of 1925 Liu traveled to Guangzhou to take part in preparatory work for the convocation of the Second National Labor Congress; when the Congress was held in May, Liu was elected one of the vice-chairmen of the newly established All-China General Union (ACGU), which replaced the Labor Secretariat. He then returned to Shanghai, where he worked with Li Lisan once again to organize anti-British agitation following the May 30 incident (in which police opened fire on unarmed demonstrators), which blossomed into a nationwide protest and strike movement directed against foreign interests. But when the Shanghai branch of the ACGU (chaired by Li Lisan) was suppressed in September, the leadership fled to Wuhan, while Liu left the city in November due to "illness." Liu was arrested and detained from December 16, 1925, to January 16, 1926, by the warlord Zhao Hengti in Changsha, but a relative of He Baozhen bailed him out (on condition that he leave Hunan) and he returned to Guangzhou (Zhao gave him a set of the Confucian classics as a going-away present), where he helped organize the 16-month Guangzhou–Hong Kong strike of 1925–26. Liu took part in the 1926 Northern Expedition and was put in charge of the Hubei Federation of Trade Unions when the Expeditionary Forces reached Wuhan. Liu reached Wuhan ahead of Li Lisan, and, as a representative of the ACGU, plunged into labor agitation that resulted in thirty-odd strikes within a month, causing serious trouble in Wuhan's industry, commerce, and transportation. In December he and Li Lisan organized anti-British demonstrations that led to a clash with marines guarding the concession; these demonstrations forced the British to abandon their Hanchuan concessions on January 5, 1927. Despite his intense involvement in such activities, Liu in intraparty forums frequently criticized the Chen Duxiu leadership's "adventurist" (i.e., overoptimistic) diagnosis that the revolution had reached its high tide.[22]

Underground Organizer in "White Areas"

Following the collapse of the 1925–27 revolution with Chiang Kai-shek's suppression of the Communists, Liu went underground, where he continued to organize and lead labor movements. He worked for a few months in the Party underground in and around Wuhan, then returned to Shanghai, and in early 1928 was assigned to the Hubei Party Committee, then (on March 24, 1928) transferred to Tianjin as a replacement for Cai Hesen as Hebei provincial Party committee secretary and director of the Department of Organization, where he became a leader in the "workers' movement in North China." This brought him into contact with many North China intellectuals, and he also made the acquaintance of Peng Zhen.[23] He was first elected to the Central Committee (CC) and appointed head of the CC Labor Department at the CCP's Fifth Congress in

1928, though he was unable to attend (according to some reports he was first elected to the CC at the Sixth Congress in Wuhan in 1927).[24] In 1929, he worked in the Party headquarters in Shanghai; in July, he became secretary of the Manchurian Party committee in Fengtien, where he was again arrested on August 22 (with one Meng Yungqian, whom the radicals would later force to testify against him) in Mukden by Zhang Xueliang, but released for lack of evidence. Upon his release he worked to organize a China Eastern Provincial Railway Workers' Union in Harbin before returning to Shanghai. In July 1930 he left there to attend the national convention of Red unions in Moscow, remaining there until the fall of 1931 (thus missing the Fourth Plenum of the Sixth CC, held in Shanghai in January 1931, where he was elected an alternate Politburo member). He worked as head of the CC Workers' Department in Shanghai from November 1931 to the winter of 1932, also publishing a series of articles analyzing the workers' movement, wherein he stressed the need for adequate strike preparations, proper timing, good organization, and minimization of risk; rather than urging workers to vacate "yellow" unions, he argued, those unions should be infiltrated and "turned."[25] When Japanese troops marched into Shanghai in January 1932 the ACGU called for a protest strike, but in the context of widespread unemployment (fifteen factories had shut down) Liu argued that considerations of the workers' livelihood should take precedence. He was overruled and agreed to lead the strike—which failed, as he predicted:

> The workers' enthusiasm to struggle was surging high. The great majority of workers and Party members under the branch advocated the call of a strike. However, on the basis of an analysis of the objective conditions, a strike called at that time would be doomed to failure. Therefore I did not agree to it. The comrades of the branch and workers disagreed with me and went ahead to get up a strike committee of which I was elected chairman. . . . What should I do? The strike, if called in compliance with the wish of the great majority, was to fail for certain. . . . What would have happened had I acted according to my personal opinion? I would have violated democratic centralism and the organizational principles and created a situation whereby I would have isolated myself from the branch and the mass of workers. Hence, I decided to call the strike according to the wish of everyone and actively and energetically to lead it. Before the strike was called, I declared that it was going to fail and that since the majority wanted to call it, I could only comply with their wish. The strike ended in a disaster as I predicted. Fortunately, as it was under my command, I took precaution, and the losses were not great. Afterwards . . . most comrades had greater confidence in me.[26]

Such views earned Liu criticism as a "right opportunist" from the leadership, leading him to resign as head of the Workers' Department and join Mao and Zhu at their base in Ruijin as chair of the Soviet Regional Bureau of the ACGU. He left in February to become labor commissioner in the Communist areas along the Jiangxi-Fujian border, when he spent two years at the Central Soviet base organ-

izing labor for work on the primitive arsenals that supplied the Red Army. Though his labor policy that "defense should be the primary tactic" alienated him from the "returned student" leadership, he continued to publish theoretical articles and discussions of organizational tactics. In January 1934 he attended the Fifth Plenum of the Sixth CC in Ruijin (where he was reelected to his alternate Politburo seat and became a member of the Central Secretariat); the following July he was appointed first secretary of the Fujian Provincial Party Committee.

It can now be confirmed that Liu participated in the entire Long March, initially as the CC's representative to the Eighth and then to the Fifth Army Corps, still later as political commissar in Peng Dehuai's Third Army Corps.[27] He supported Mao at the historic Cunyi conference (January 1935) with a critique of "leftish adventurism" in the "White areas," which he said led to the disintegration of the labor movement and Party apparatus in those regions. Leaving Cunyi, he reached Sichuan (as commissar of the Red Third Army) by mid-July, finally arriving in Wayaobao on November 7, 1935. In mid-November Liu became a member of the executive branch of the newly organized Northwest Bureau of the ACGU, and on December 29 was appointed CC representative to the Northern Bureau; his assignment was to contact the anti-Japanese volunteer units scattered over the northeast "White areas" and to strengthen Communist influence over them. It was in this two-year period that the Party underwent a sea change, shifting from land reform and urban class struggle to a focus on national revolution. Under his leadership, the Northern Bureau blossomed into the largest CCP bureau, expanding particularly vigorously in Shanxi and Hebei, provinces to which the CCP then attached key strategic importance.

Liu next surfaces as an undercover organizer of the December Ninth Movement in 1935–36 in Beijing, whose success "proved the correctness of these [Liu's] tactical principles for work in the "White areas," according to Mao Zedong. Liu arrived in Beijing as secretary of the Party's North China Bureau in 1936, shortly after the movement began; with the assistance of Peng Zhen and An Ziwen, he made contact with the protesting students and was able to recruit many of them to the Youth League or the CCP. Liu quickly unified a movement that was in danger of polarizing around common resistance to Japan. It was at this time (sc., April 1936) that Liu became implicated in requesting approval for CCP cadres to sign public "confessions" in exchange for release from KMT prisons, which the CC granted in June, resulting in the release of some 130 cadres in nine groups from August 1936 to March 1937. As Liu admitted in his August 2, 1967, self-criticism,

> The Head of the Organization Department of the Northern Bureau at the time, comrade Ke Qingshi . . . said that there were a number of comrades in Beijing prisons and that most of them had already served their sentences but that without going through certain formalities they could not be released; he asked me whether or not I could go through the formalities. . . . I immediately wrote

> a letter about this reporting it to the Party CC of Shen-Bei and asking the CC for a decision. But it wasn't long before I received the CC's answer, namely that the affair should be handled by comrade Ke Qingshi.[28]

Some of these men, such as Bo Yibo, An Ziwen, Yao Yilin and others, later rose to prominent Party positions, remaining closely associated with Liu throughout their careers. Throughout 1936, in Shaanxi, Hebei, Beiping, and Tianjin, Liu promoted the "Resist Japan National United Front," disbanding the radical student association as "ultra-leftist" and organizing the more nationalist Beiping Students' National Salvation Federation (which was then franchised in other cities and given a national headquarters in Shanghai), and calling upon its members to halt the civil war and unite against Japan.[29] One eyewitness account of the movement notes only rumors of his presence, indicating how furtive his modus operandi was at the time.[30]

For most of the next decade, Liu remained in "enemy-occupied areas" with only occasional intermissions to attend conferences: from 1936 to 1942, he was successively secretary of the Party's North China Bureau (1936), its Central Plains Bureau (1936), and its Central China Bureau (1941). According to the recollections of a former cadre, Liu was a model "secretary" during this period, one who "had a quiet nature, did not talk much, and who, if he wasn't sitting all day reading a book, would be writing something."[31] His strategy in the "White areas" was to "act chiefly on the defensive" and to rely on "utmost possible exploitation of overt, legitimate means" (e.g., "gray" organizations), and to coordinate underground activities in urban areas with armed struggle in rural areas. He stressed mobilization of the masses at the grass-roots level, and at the elite level promoted a policy of uniting with anyone who could be united with, utilizing internal contradictions among the enemy to play lesser foes off against the major one.[32]

The CCP moved its headquarters to Yanan on January 13, 1937, and Liu was transferred there to be secretary of the CC Organization Bureau. Following a May 2–14, 1937, CC conference, Liu addressed students at a meeting dealing with work in KMT-controlled areas, warning them that the moment had come to "legalize our hitherto illegal activities and make the mass movement widespread." Moreover, he added, because war against Japan was "imminent, the comrades in North China should get ready to take off their robes and bear weapons and join guerrilla bands."[33] On July 7, 1937, war with Japan began; Japanese intelligence reports suggested that Liu's men had touched off the Marco Polo Bridge incident that precipitated hostilities.[34] When war broke out, Liu transferred the North China Bureau to Taiyuan, then headquarters for Yan Xishan, governor of Shansi and KMT-appointed commander-in-chief of the Second War Zone, comprising all of north Shansi. There Liu played a central role in this phase of united front diplomacy, formally subordinating his organization to Yan's overall command while at the same time seeking to manipulate Yan's actions.[35]

For much of 1938–39, Liu stayed in Yanan (in a cave next to Mao's, which has since been closed to the public) as director of the Cadre Training Department, which shared a good deal of organizational power with the Central Organization Department, while concurrently serving as Central Plains Bureau Secretary. He also taught CCP history at the Yanan Party School during this period, delivering (*inter alia*) a series of lectures that were compiled and first printed in pamphlet form in 1939 as *How to Be a Good Communist.* The publication later became one of the most influential and controversial tracts in the history of the Communist movement.[36] In this essay, cited by a Western sinologist in 1956 as an exemplary synthesis of "Communist Ethics and Chinese Tradition,"[37] Liu blends quotations from Marxist and Confucian classics to preach the virtues of "steeling and cultivation" through "practical struggle," the "unconditional subordination of personal interests . . . to the interests of the Party," and an appropriate equilibrium between compromise and "principle."[38]

As Central Plains Bureau secretary, Liu spent the latter part of 1939 and most of 1940 with various New Fourth Army units in Hunan, Anhui, and Jiangsu, concentrating on ways to develop bases behind Japanese lines.[39] On January 14, 1941, Commander Ye Ting was captured and Political Commissar Xiang Ying killed in the New Fourth Army Incident, which Mao characteristically attributed to their own faulty leadership; on January 20 he appointed Liu as the Army's political commissar (with Chen Yi as acting commander) and assigned him to rectify the erroneous policies. Liu vigorously pursued two complementary objectives: to protect and develop CCP troop strength, which he did through a reorganization of Ye Ting's "bandit remnant" into a more professional military unit;[40] and to use those troops to capture territory and establish political authority. Thus "friction" between the guerrilla forces of the New Fourth Army and their KMT allies became impossible to avoid. As concurrent secretary of the Party's Central China Bureau, Liu also promoted formation of "regional governments" and Party cells in various guerrilla bases. In his memoirs, Tan Xilin, once division commander of the New Fourth Army, recalls a conversation with Liu during the battle of Tingyuan in March 1940:

> I asked comrade Liu Shaoqi, "When we drive out Wu Zizhang, will the Nationalists appoint a good magistrate in his stead?" "We shall appoint our man," said comrade Liu, "and we have the right to appoint even a provincial governor. We shall appoint a magistrate for any county we occupy; when several counties are under our occupation, a special district commissioner will be appointed. We need approval from nobody so long as approval is given by our Party and by the people.[41]

To those who, like Zhang Guotao, opposed such tactics on ethical grounds, Liu wrote an essay in 1941 justifying their adoption in terms of Marxist orthodoxy as well as political expedience:

> But in the Party there are many comrades, even among the leaders, . . . [who] see the Party's united front policy and the policy of class conflict as being in contradiction. They take the Party's united front policy to be something that transcends classes and parties. . . . Because of this, they will necessarily impair their own independence, and become the tools of other classes. . . . In the united front, one aspect is unity, the other aspect is struggle.[42]

On December 20, 1942, Liu returned to Yanan to serve as secretary-general of the Party's Central Secretariat and vice-chairman of the CCP Military Affairs Commission, in which capacity he helped make arrangements for the Zhengfeng rectification movement, whose purpose was the consolidation of Mao's ideological authority within the Party. Liu's participation in this movement reportedly included a trenchant critique of Zhou Enlai for his role in the Returned Student leadership.[43] His procedural directives were, however, of lasting theoretical import. His 1941 lecture "On Inner-Party Struggle" was published in pamphlet form as one of the major texts of the movement, replacing Wang Ming's 1931–32 pamphlet on the same subject. Although this essay did not achieve the wide popular impact of *How to Be a Good Communist,* it was of formative influence in the intra-Party evolution of "criticism and self-criticism," which has since Liberation become one of the primary forums of political involvement in Chinese society. In an apparently successful bid to institutionalize the revolutionary impulse within a rational organizational context, Liu encouraged "principled" (i.e., impersonal, "reasonable," issue-oriented) struggle but called for compromise on "unprincipled" disputes.[44]

For the remainder of the war years, except for a brief inspection trip to Shandong and Hebei in late 1942, Liu remained in Yanan. While there, he continued to occupy himself with the consolidation of base areas, which even included promotion of industry at the Shaanxi-Gansu-Ningxia border region. As he notes in 1944:

> Although the scale of our industry is still very small, its development made over the past few years is surprising. In 1935, there was only a repair shop with several tens of workers there, but now the number of workers has increased to more than ten thousand.[45]

Liu's experience as the highest Party leader in enemy-occupied areas during the war enabled him, more than any other senior leader, to gain a first-hand acquaintance with many of the top and second-echelon leaders who emerged during the war years in Communist base areas in North and East China. During a period when Party membership increased from 40,000 in 1937 to 5.8 million by 1950, he built up the Party machine in a vast territory stretching from the Yangtze River to Manchuria and from the China Sea to the Yellow River. In October 1943, Liu was elected a member of the five-man Secretariat of the CC (with Mao, Zhu De, Zhou Enlai, and Ren Bishi) and a vice-chairman of the

governmental Revolutionary Military Council (also chaired by Mao); following these appointments be began taking charge of the daily work of the CC.[46]

First "Maoist"

Liu apparently first became acquainted with Mao while working at Anyuan, which Mao would occasionally visit in his capacity as secretary of the CCP district committee in Hunan. Liu reportedly had many meetings with Mao at Jingshuitang which marked the beginning of their friendship; Liu was undoubtedly the first of the Russian "returned students" to give Mao his impressions of life in the Soviet Union.[47] When he was working in the Communist areas along the Jiangxi-Fujian border in 1932–34, Liu at one time went into hiding with Mao at Shazhouba village, 5 *li* west of Ruijin, when Mao fell into disfavor with the Party Center.[48]

Liu and Mao evidently entered their mutually beneficial alliance due to their common opposition to the "returned student group," which dominated the leadership of the Party at the time. In the Fifth Plenum of the Sixth CC and the Second National Congress of the Chinese Soviet Republic, both held in Ruijin in January 1934, the "returned students" attacked not only Mao, but Liu's work in the "White areas" with urban labor, categorizing both Mao and Liu under a "rightist" label.[49] Thus Liu sided with Mao against the "returned students" at the Cunyi Conference in 1935, facilitating Mao Zedong's takeover of the Military Affairs Commission, as Mao remembered in October 1966:

> At the Cunyi Conference he played a good role. In those days they were quite useful. Lo Fu [Zhang Wentian] was stubborn. Comrade Shaoqi opposed them, and so did Nie Rongzhen.[50]

According to Zhang Guotao, who left the Party in 1938 in a dispute over the relative priorities of "unity" and "struggle" in the second united front, the Mao–Liu coalition was a *mariage de convenance* lacking any basis in principle. According to Zhang's retrospective account, Liu wrote a 10,000-character petition to the CC in 1937 (never published) in which he opposed the seizure of big cities and advocated conservation of strength by carrying on undercover activities. Zhang contended that this petition (which criticized Chen Duxiu as "left adventurist" rather than "right opportunist") demonstrated that Liu was "more rightist than Zhang Guotao," but Mao suppressed Liu's letter and (again according to Zhang) "exploited Liu for the purpose of suppressing Zhang Wentian."[51] In one of Zhou Enlai's attacks on Liu during the GPCR, Zhou also alluded to the allegedly unprincipled character of the alliance: because both Liu and Deng Xiaoping had been attacked by the "third left line," he said, "after the Seventh Party Congress, these two had to be trusted."[52] This would seem to imply that Mao temporarily moved to the right because his opponents were on his "left," whereas Liu was a more "sincere" rightist.

While such a "revisionist" interpretation is obviously more consonant with the ultimate fate of the Mao–Liu alliance, few indeed were those able to discern the spurious character of the coalition before then. At the time, we find only indications of mutual accord and esteem. Certainly Liu had good reason to oppose a conciliatory united front policy (the "Second Wang Ming Line"), which would have greatly complicated his task as leading underground organizer in the "White areas," and to support Mao's policy of "free development" of CCP activities under the united front line. In his concluding speech to the Sixth Plenum (held September 29–November 5, 1938), Mao availed himself of Liu's support in an attack on Chen Shaoyu's advocacy of "everything through" the united front:

> Comrade Liu Shaoqi has rightly said that if "everything through" were to mean "through" Chiang Kai-shek and Yan Xishan, then that will only mean unilateral submission, and not "through the united front" at all. Behind the enemy lines, the idea of "everything through" is impossible, for there we have to act independently and with the initiative in our own hands while keeping to the agreements which the KMT has approved.[53]

Henceforth, Liu's position as urban spokesman and chief of the North China organization in the occupied areas steadily improved. According to Zhang, "Mao Zedong went out of his way to win Liu Shaoqi, sympathizing with his frustrations, accepting many of his opinions, making concessions and awarding him with Politburo membership [*sic*]."[54] Liu, in turn, began "working to build up Chairman Mao's personality cult." In 1940, he was telling underground workers in the area north of the Huai River:

> Only the Thought of Mao Zedong is able to inspire us to go from victory to victory. . . . If we want the revolution to succeed this is impossible without the right leadership. Mao Zedong is the great revolutionary leader of all the people of China, and we should learn from him.[55]

The immediate political intent of "On Inner-Party Struggle," which the Party CC disseminated to every base in July 1941, with the comment: "It has solved an important problem in theory and in reality," asking all Party members to read it carefully during the rectification campaign,[56] was to evolve a non-Stalinist procedure for purging Mao's "leftist" rivals. Liu's 1943 essay, "Liquidate Menshevist Ideology in the Party," was likewise aimed at the "international faction" led by the returned students," accusing the latter of being doctrinaire; it included the first published tribute to Mao's Thought:

> Our comrade Mao Zedong is a resolute and great revolutionary who has undergone long tempering in the many strenuous and complicated revolutionary struggles of these twenty-two years, who has completely mastered the strategy

> and tactics of Marxism-Leninism and who possesses infinite loyalty to the cause of the liberation of the Chinese working class and the Chinese people.[57]

As the war drew to a close, Mao and Liu both grew more prolix in their expressions of mutual esteem. In a meeting held April 4–20, 1945, immediately before the Seventh Party Congress (April 23–June 11), the CCP adopted a "Resolution on Certain Questions in the History of Our Party," which is included in Mao's *Selected Works*. The appendix contains the following encomium:

> Comrade Liu Shaoqi's ideas on tactics for work in the "White areas" are likewise a model. Correctly taking into account the glaring disparity between the enemy's strength and our own in the "White areas," and particularly in the cities, after the defeat of the revolution in 1927, Comrade Liu Shaoqi advocated systematic organization of our retreat and defense and "the avoidance of decisive engagements with the enemy for the time being, while the situation and conditions are unfavorable to us," in order to "prepare for revolutionary attacks and decisive engagements in the future." He also advocated that the Party's open organization in the period of the 1924–27 revolution be transferred systematically and strictly into underground organizations, while "utilizing open legal means as far as possible" in mass work to enable the Party's organizations to conceal their strength for a long time in such mass work, to go deep among the masses and "accumulate and strengthen the forces of the masses and heighten their political consciousness." With respect to leadership in mass struggles, Comrade Liu Shaoqi held that it was necessary, "in accordance with the situation and the specific conditions at a given time and place and the degree of political consciousness of the masses, to advance limited slogans, demands, and forms of struggle acceptable to the masses in order to set the mass struggle to a higher stage or, 'knowing how far to go,' temporarily to conclude the battle so as to prepare for the next battle at a higher stage and on a larger scale." On the question of utilizing the enemy's internal contradictions and winning temporary alliance, he held that it was necessary "to push these contradictions to the breaking point and form a temporary alliance against the chief enemy with those elements in the enemy camp who may cooperate with us, induce them to join with us and participate in common action and then influence them and win over their mass following.[58]

Three weeks later, Liu presented his "Report to the Seventh Party Congress," in which he referred to Mao Zedong or his Thought no less than 105 times. In the revised Party Constitution, which Liu also drafted, Mao's Thought was put on the same footing with Marxism as a "guiding principle for all the works of the Party," and every member was required to study it.[59] "Mao Zedong had no prestige until the seventh general meeting of the Party," Liu's wife later remarked privately to his daughter. "Your father and other leaders established the prestige for him."[60]

One of the likely purposes of his "mutual admiration society" was to integrate the Party, which for nearly a decade had been split into two halves, meeting only

for infrequent conferences: the "Red area" (*hongqu*) forces, which consisted of peasant guerrilla armies under the leadership of Mao Zedong, and the "White area" (*baiqu*) forces, which consisted of urban intellectuals, workers, and some peasants, operating under Liu Shaoqi.[61] In 1945, Liu grafted his "White area" machine to the center, in an institutional merger that combined the Party's leading military strategist and symbol of revolution (Mao) with its leading organizational genius (Liu). Many of Liu's followers felt that the objective preconditions were not yet ripe for reforms as sweeping as those Mao proposed and were more amenable to Chen Shaoyu's line of separate workers' movements, women's movements, and youth movements. "The policy has been decided by the Center, you cannot discount it (*da zhekou*) in the slightest," Liu informed leading cadres in Shandong. "There is nothing left to consider" except tactics of implementation.[62]

In remarks made in February 1967, Chen Yi claimed that Mao's Thought had been "developed" in Liu's writings.[63] Indeed, it seems that Lin Biao's projection of the validity of Mao's theory of people's war to the rest of the world was prefigured in Liu's statements as early as 1945. In his "Report to the Seventh Party Congress," Liu "for the first time . . . put forward the idea . . . that China was not merely the pioneer but the leader and ideological mentor of anti-imperialist revolutions throughout Asia and Africa."[64] In an interview with Anna Louise Strong in 1946, Liu attributed theoretical originality and international relevance to Mao's Thought. "The basic principles of Marxism are undoubtedly adaptable to all countries, but to apply their general truth to concrete revolutionary practice in China is a difficult task," he noted. "Mao Zedong is Chinese; he analyzes Chinese problems and guides the Chinese people in their struggle for victory. He used Marxist-Leninist principles to explain Chinese history and the practical problems on China. He is the first that has succeeded in doing so." He went on:

> China is a semi-feudal, semi-colonial country in which vast numbers of people live at the edge of starvation, tilling small bits of soil. Its economy is agricultural, backward and dispersed. In attempting the transition to a more industrialized economy, China faces the competition and pressures—economic, political, and military—of advanced industrial lands. This is the basic situation that affects both the relations of social classes and the methods of struggle toward any such goal of national independence and a better, freer life for the Chinese. There are similar conditions in other lands of Southeast Asia. The course chosen by China will influence them all.[65]

In November 1949, at the Asian and Australasian Trade Union Conference, Liu called for "national liberation movements" in which "armed struggle can and should become the main form" of "people's liberation." These movements would take place under a "people's liberation army" led by the Communist Party; conditions in Vietnam, Burma, Indonesia, Malaya, the Philippines, Korea, Thailand, even Australia, he suggested, might foster such movements.[66]

Heir Apparent

Chen Yi said that Liu was recognized as Mao's successor as early as the Seventh Congress in 1945. Formally speaking, this is incorrect; when members of the CC were elected, Liu received the third highest total of votes and hence became third-ranking CC and Politburo member after Mao and Zhu De. Yet it is likely that Liu was already second to Mao in actual authority. When Mao flew to Chongqing in August 1945 for peace negotiations with Chiang Kai-shek, Liu acted in his place in Yanan, the Politburo split up; Mao, Zhou, and Ren Bishi remained in the Shaanxi-Gansu-Ningxia Border Region to carry on the fight against the KMT, while Liu, Zhu De, and an alternate central committee moved to the Communist-controlled Shanxi-Chahar-Hebei Border Region. Mao had given the entire CC to understand that if his group were wiped out, Liu's committee was empowered to act as the CC. This alternate committee remained in the Shijiazhuang area of southern Hebei until Mao and the central organs of the Party arrived in May 1948. Again in 1950, when Mao visited the Soviet Union, Liu presided in his absence over the Fifth Meeting of the central People's Government. When Mao fell ill in March 1951, he again handed the reins of government over to Liu.[67]

From 1945 through 1955, when Deng Xiaoping succeeded him, Liu was general secretary of the CC Secretariat and in this capacity seemed to act as de facto supervisor of the routine administration of domestic affairs. He also delivered reports introducing important legislative initiatives and began to fill certain ceremonial functions. On September 13, 1947, Liu convened and presided over a national land conference, which called for land reform, land markets, and liquidation of peasant debts to landlords; this marked a shift for him from career labor organizer to agricultural issues. In June 1950, he reported on the new Agrarian Reform Law, which introduced class demarcation to the countryside. In September 1952, he led a delegation to Moscow to attend the Nineteenth Soviet Party Congress, remaining there for more than three months. He headed the Electoral Law Drafting Committee and delivered its report to the First National People's Congress in 1954. In September 1956, he delivered the keynote political report to the Eighth Party Congress, in which he first proposed visits by responsible personnel to subordinate levels (*xiafang*) as one means of curtailing "intra-Party bureaucracy." In late 1957, "a radical group headed by Mao . . . and Liu . . . finally succeeded in imposing [its] policy of social mobilization on the Politburo, in opposition to the more cautious advocates of gradual economic development."[68] At the Fortieth Anniversary of the Russian Revolution, and again in his keynote speech to the Second Session of the Eighth Party Congress in May 1958, Liu issued strong endorsements of the Great Leap Forward. To get a first-hand view of the situation, he and other top leaders went on extensive tours throughout the country.

Following an announcement at the end of December 1958 that Mao intended to relinquish his governmental responsibilities, Liu was officially elected chair-

man of the People's Republic at the Second National People's Congress on April 20, 1959. It was Deng Xiaoping who broke the ice when Mao announced "I should retreat from the stage and let others take the position" without proposing a successor, with "If no one makes the nomination, I nominate Liu Shaoqi for the position."[69] At around the same time, he began to be described in official publications as Mao's "closest comrade-in-arms." Although many province chiefs, important mayors, ministers, and a large proportion of the CC could already be termed "Liu's men," Liu's new position further strengthened his authority, particularly after the reorganization of the Party's regional structure into six bureaus in January 1961. In an interview with Lord Montgomery in 1960, Mao replied to a query concerning his succession that this was clear and had been laid down—Liu Shaoqi was the choice.[70]

Conclusion

Liu's attempt to realize his particular vision of socialism achieved its pervasive impact on the Chinese political system through his personal example, through the educational impact of his extensive writings, through his origination or (more often) successful mediation of policies, and through his organizational influence. In all of these realms of endeavor, Liu sought to combine elements of revolution and order, equality and efficiency. Given the relatively late appearance and limited compass of the "cult of Liu Shaoqi," the power of Liu's personal example remained confined to those who worked with him; but among this select but influential group of Party and government officials Liu's stature was impressive. "When directing work, he would always try to exhaust the possibilities . . . of raising the theoretical consciousness of the cadres . . . to get at the theoretical principle of the thing before taking action to solve the problem in practice," a former subordinate wrote.[71] He consistently attempted to raise theoretical standards, adjuring students to study not only Mao's works but those of Marx, Engels, and Lenin, saying, "Some people think: Why study these foreign things? Too many Chinese books to read and too many of Chairman Mao's books to read! . . . Such a view is not correct. . . . We should understand their relationship between the experience of the Chinese revolution and that of the world revolution."[72] As Zhang Guotao noted in regard to Liu's early career:

> In practical work, Liu Shaoqi not only obeyed the decisions of superiors and carried them out, but also proposed his own ideas in proper ways. At that time there were over a dozen young leaders in the Shanghai labor movement working under Liu Shaoqi; they all got along with him very well, and their programs were orderly arranged.[73]

Liu's are the only doctrinal works besides Mao's to have attained catechismic status in the Party: In his writings on "self-cultivation" and on inner-Party strug-

gle, he indoctrinated Party members with an inner feeling of disciplined responsibility and "Communist morality," which "combined an anti-traditional spirit and will to change with a neo-Confucian ethic wherein everyone stood in a definite relationship to everyone else—an authoritarian pattern, but permeated with the concept of reciprocal responsibility and tempered with an appreciation of the value of balance."[74] His writings also contributed to the transformation of class categories from ascriptive to achievement criteria, opening the way to recruitment of both intellectuals and broad masses of peasants to the Party and to the extensive promotion of "thought reform" as a functional substitute for a secret police system.[75]

In addition to the moral impact exerted through his personal example and writings, Liu had a significant effect on the formulation of certain policies. He promoted the idea of a "Resist Japan National United Front Line" as the Northern Bureau's central mission as early as 1936[76] and originated the "united yet independent" (*ji tongyi yu duli*) compromise formulation that the Party successfully adopted in 1937.[77] In a pioneering 1938 talk Liu outlined concrete steps to be taken in the organization of base areas, and in a series of leadership positions in North and Central China he supervised the development of these steps, organizing the peasantry to support Communist troops and building up industry and primitive arsenals.[78] His administration of the Zhengfeng Movement in Yanan, together with the model of "inner-Party struggle" he articulated in direct connection with it, set a pattern for later rectification movements and purges that was followed with remarkable consistency up to the time of the GPCR. The pattern consisted of treating high-ranking deviators with lenience (usually reinstating them to lesser leadership positions) while submitting their followers to intensive "study" and "reeducation" sessions. In 1956 Liu introduced the idea of "transfers down" (*xiafang*) to combat bureaucratic ossification, an idea Mao welcomed enthusiastically; in 1961 Liu himself spent forty-four days in three communes in three different *xian* in Hunan; and in 1964 his wife spent nearly a year on a commune at Taoyuan.[79]

Of even more importance than Liu's contribution to specific policy decisions was his pervasive influence over the processes of organization and institution building. Upon Mao's defeat of the "internationalist faction," Liu and his colleagues moved in to assert organizational control over the northern base areas in which the returned students held sway. When Zhang Wentian and Qin Bangxian were removed, the Party administration fell under the complete domination of the Mao–Liu team, with Mao holding the policy-making offices at the top and Liu controlling the organizational apparatus.[80] Throughout the war with Japan and the civil war, Liu was the "Politburo chief (or first commissar) among all the Communist forces in eastern and northeastern China."[81] Liu thus assumed command over the urban-based, intellectual segment of the Party in those areas that had previously looked to the "returned students" for leadership, bringing them under the banner of Mao Zedong while also winning their personal allegiance.