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**PREFACE AND EDITOR'S NOTES TO  
*MATERIAL ON THE  
COUNTER-REVOLUTIONARY HU FENG CLIQUE***

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# PREFACE AND EDITOR'S NOTES TO *MATERIAL ON THE COUNTER-REVOLUTIONARY HU FENG CLIQUE*

*May and June 1955*

## PREFACE

*June 15, 1955*

To meet the needs of the broad reading public, we have made a compilation of the material on the counter-revolutionary Hu Feng clique which appeared in three instalments in the *People's Daily* between May 13 and June 10, 1955 and also the *People's Daily* editorial of June 10, and are having it issued by the People's Publishing House under the title *Material on the Counter-Revolutionary Hu Feng Clique*. In this book we have also reprinted Hu Feng's "My Self-Criticism" as source material, but in an appendix coming after the material supplied by Shu Wu,<sup>[1]</sup> so that readers can study this double-dealing counter-revolutionary. We have made a few verbal changes in the editor's notes and the footnotes to the three instalments of the material. We have revised some footnotes, added others and inserted two more editor's notes in the second instalment. For the sake of consistency, the term "anti-Party clique" in the title of the first and second instalments has been changed to "counter-revolutionary clique", as in the third instalment. Otherwise, the text is unchanged.

It may be expected that, as with the publication of the material in the *People's Daily*, the publication of this book will attract the attention of two kinds of people. On the one hand, counter-revolutionaries will pay attention to it. On the other, the masses of the people will give it even more attention.

Counter-revolutionaries and those with certain counter-revolutionary sentiments will find that the correspondence of the Hu Feng

elements strikes a sympathetic chord. Hu Feng and his clique are indeed spokesmen for all counter-revolutionary classes, groups and individuals, and the curses they hurl at the revolution and the tactics they use in their activities will be appreciated by all those counter-revolutionaries who can get hold

of this book, from which they can derive some counter-revolutionary education about class struggle. Nevertheless, this will in no way save them from their doom. Like all the counter-revolutionary writings of their backers, the imperialists and Chiang Kai-shek's Kuomintang, which were directed against the Chinese people, these writings of the Hu Feng elements are records not of success but of failure. They did not save their own clique from destruction.

The masses of the people are very much in need of this material. How do counter-revolutionaries employ their double-dealing tactics? How do they succeed in deceiving us by their false appearances, while furtively doing the things we least expect? All this is a blank to thousands upon thousands of well-intentioned people. On this account, many counter-revolutionaries have wormed their way into our ranks. The eyes of our people are not keen, they are not adept at distinguishing good people from bad types. When people operate in normal conditions, we know how to tell the bad from the good, but we are not adept at seeing through those who operate in unusual conditions. The Hu Feng elements are counter-revolutionaries who put on a disguise to hide their true features and to give a false impression. But since they oppose the revolution, it is impossible for them to cover up their true features entirely. As for the leading spirits of the Hu Feng clique, they have had disputes with us on many occasions before and since liberation. They are different in word and deed not only from Communists but also from vast numbers of non-Party revolutionaries and democrats. They were recently exposed to the full simply because we got hold of a mass of solid evidence against them. As for many of the individuals in the Hu Feng clique, they were able to deceive us because our Party organizations, state organs, people's organizations, cultural and educational institutions or enterprises failed to make a strict examination of their records before admitting them. It was also because we were in a stormy period of revolution in the recent past and people of all sorts tried to get close to us as we emerged the victors; so inevitably the waters were muddied, the bad became mixed with the good, and we have not yet got around to sifting them thoroughly. Furthermore, success in spotting and clearing out bad elements depends on a

page 178

combination of correct guidance from the leading organs with a high degree of political consciousness on the part of the masses, but in this regard our work in the past was not without shortcomings. These are all lessons for us.

We attach importance to the Hu Feng case because we want to use it to educate the masses of the people, and first those cadres who can read and also the intellectuals; to them we recommend this *Material* for raising their level of political consciousness. The *Material* is striking for its extreme sharpness and clarity. Counter-revolutionaries will naturally pay attention to it and revolutionary people even more so. If the masses of the revolutionary people learn something from this case and this material and thereby increase their revolutionary ardour and their ability to discriminate, we shall have all sorts of hidden counter-revolutionaries gradually uncovered.

## EDITOR'S NOTES (Selections)

A faction -- called "coterie" by our forefathers and "ring" or "outfit" by people today -- is something quite familiar to us. To attain their political ends people who pursue factional activities often accuse others of being factional, and being factional, they say, is not upright; for themselves, they claim to be upright, and upright people just don't have anything to do with factions. Those who followed Hu Feng's lead were said to be "young writers" and "revolutionary writers" "hated" and "persecuted" by the Communist Party, the faction that had "bourgeois theories" and "formed an independent kingdom"; therefore, Hu Peng and company wanted revenge. The question of the *Literary Gazette* [2] was "merely a breach that has been seized upon" and was "by no means an isolated one", it was most necessary to "extend and generalize" it and "show that the question was one of factionalist rule", and "factionalist and warlord rule" at that. The matter was so serious that they "fired off" a lot of ammunition to mop us up. In so doing Hu Feng and company attracted attention. After careful investigation of many of these persons, this clique was found to be of some size.

page 179

Previously they were known as "a small group". No, that's not so, there are quite a few of them. Previously they were known simply as a group of men of letters. No, that's not so, they have wormed their way into political, military, economic, cultural and educational departments. Previously, they seemed to be a group of revolutionaries operating in broad daylight. No, that's not so, most of them have a very shady background. The main force of the clique consists of imperialist and Kuomintang secret agents, Trotskyites, reactionary army officers, or renegades from the Communist Party; with these persons serving as the backbone, a counter-revolutionary faction hidden in the revolutionary camp, an underground independent kingdom, was formed. This counter-revolutionary faction, this underground kingdom, has set itself the task of overthrowing the People's Republic of China and restoring imperialist and Kuomintang rule. Whenever and wherever possible, they go nosing around for our shortcomings which they use as pretexts for sabotage. Wherever they have their men, strange things happen. After liberation, this counter-revolutionary clique expanded and, if unchecked, would go on expanding. Now that the truth about Hu Feng and company has come to light, many phenomena can be satisfactorily explained and their activities stopped.

Sure enough, Hu Feng subsequently acted on Lu Tien's suggestion to use offensive tactics for defence. Thus he came to Peking to ask for a job, requested that his case be discussed, submitted the 300,000-word memo to the Central Committee, and finally seized upon the question of the *Literary Gazette* to open fire. Generally, when things are going badly for them, all kinds of representatives of the exploiting classes use offensive tactics as a means of defence in order to survive today and grow tomorrow. Rumours are fabricated out of thin air and lies told point-blank; certain superficial phenomena are seized on for attacking the essence of things; some people are lauded while others are condemned; and matters are distorted and exaggerated to "make a breakthrough at certain points" so as to put us in a difficult position. In short, they are assiduous in studying what tactics to use against

us and "spying out the land" in order to attain their end. Sometimes they "play possum" and wait for a chance to "spring a counter-attack". They have long years of experience in class struggle and are

page 180

skilful in different forms of struggle, legal and illegal. We revolutionaries must know their tricks and study their tactics in order to defeat them. Never be so bookish and naive as to treat complex class struggle as a simple matter.

3

It is conceit, self-complacency, lack of vigilance and absorption in the day-to-day job to the neglect of politics on our part as revolutionaries that have made it possible for many counter-revolutionaries to "penetrate" our "liver". They are by no means confined to the men of the Hu Feng clique, many other secret agents and bad elements have also sneaked in.

4

When a Party member is criticized for his liberalistic tendencies, Hu Feng elements say he is "being attacked". If his "fighting will is rather weak", that is, if he does not cling to his liberalistic stand but is willing to accept Party criticism and come over to the correct stand, then he is not much of a hope to the Hu Feng clique and cannot be dragged away. On the contrary, if his "fighting will" to cling to his liberalistic stand is not "rather weak" but "rather strong", he is in danger of being dragged away. Hu Feng elements are sure to "have a go" at it, and they are already calling him "comrade". Shouldn't this be taken as a warning? What then should be the attitude of a Party member when he is criticized for having made ideological and political mistakes? There is a choice of two courses before him: one is to correct his mistakes and be a good Party member, the other is to slide further down the path and even fall into the pit of counter-revolution. The second alternative really exists and counter-revolutionaries may be beckoning him on.

5

Just as we constantly appraise the balance of forces in the international and domestic class struggle, so does the enemy. But, being backward and decadent reactionaries, our enemies are doomed; they are ignorant of the laws of the objective world, are subjective and

page 181

metaphysical in their thinking, and thus are invariably wrong in their judgments. They are inexorably driven by their class instinct to believe that they are very superior and that the revolutionary forces can never amount to much. They invariably overestimate their own strength and underestimate ours. We have witnessed many counter-revolutionaries toppled one by one -- the Ching Dynasty

government, the Northern warlords, the Japanese militarists, Mussolini, Hitler and Chiang Kai-shek; they made mistakes in thought and deed and could not do otherwise. All contemporary imperialists are bound to repeat such mistakes. Isn't it ludicrous? According to the Hu Feng elements, the Chinese people's revolutionary forces led by the Communist Party are "doomed", and they are nothing but "the sere, the yellow leaf" and "a rotting corpse". And how about the counter-revolutionary forces represented by the Hu Feng elements? Although "some fragile sprouts may be smothered", large numbers of sprouts "are breaking through" and will "grow sturdily". If to this day Royalist representatives are found in the bourgeois French National Assembly, then it is highly probable that some representatives of the Chiang Kai-shek dynasty will remain active here and there years after the complete elimination of all exploiting classes from the face of the earth. The worst die-hards among them will never admit defeat. That's because they need to deceive themselves as well as others, or else they could not carry on.

6

In this letter, the phrase "those veiled feudal forces are madly killing people" indicates that the counter-revolutionary Hu Feng clique is terror-stricken by the great struggle of our people's revolutionary forces to suppress the counter-revolutionary forces, and this feeling is typical of all counter-revolutionary classes, groups and individuals. What strikes terror into their hearts is precisely what makes the revolutionary masses jubilant. "Unprecedented in history" -- that's correct too. Except for the revolution which replaced the primitive communal system by the slave system, that is, a system of non-exploitation by one of exploitation, all revolutions in the past ended in the replacement of one system of exploitation by another, and it was neither imperative nor possible to do a thorough job of suppressing counter-revolutionaries. Only our revolution, the revolution of the

page 182

masses of the people led by the proletariat and the Communist Party aims at the final elimination of all systems of exploitation and all classes; therefore, the exploiting classes which are being eliminated are bound to come out and put up resistance through their counter-revolutionary political parties and groups or through certain individuals, and the masses of the people on their part must unite and suppress these forces of resistance resolutely, thoroughly, wholly and completely. Only at this time is such suppression imperative and possible. "The struggle has inevitably deepened" -- this is quite correct, too. The expression "veiled feudal forces", however, is wrong; it is a derogatory expression for "the people's democratic dictatorship led by the proletariat and the Communist Party and based on the worker-peasant alliance", just as the word "mechanism" used by this clique is a derogatory term for "dialectical materialism".

7

Here again we come across this Chang Chung-hsiao. He has a pretty good counter-revolutionary nose and outmatches many in our revolutionary ranks, including a number of Communists, in level of class consciousness and keenness of political sense of smell. Compared with men of the Hu Feng

clique, many of our own people are vastly inferior in these respects. We must study and heighten our class vigilance and make our political sense of smell keener. If there is anything positive the Hu Feng clique can offer, it is that through the present soul-stirring struggle we shall raise our own political consciousness and sensitivity much higher, firmly suppress all counter-revolutionaries and greatly strengthen our revolutionary dictatorship; we shall thus carry the revolution through to the end and achieve the objective of building a great socialist country.



# NOTES

<sup>[1]</sup> This refers to "Some Material About the Counter-Revolutionary Hu Feng Clique" submitted by Shu Wu, a member of the clique. It contains excerpts from a number of counter-revolutionary confidential letters Hu Feng wrote to Shu Wu before and after liberation. [p. 176]

page 183

<sup>[2]</sup> From the end of October to the beginning of December 1954, the presidiums of the Federation of Literary and Art Circles of China and of the Union of Chinese Writers held enlarged joint meetings to examine the mistakes of the *Literary Gazette* in suppressing the criticism by young writers of the bourgeois ideas prevalent in studies of *The Dream of the Red Chamber*. Hu Feng believed his opportunity had come and began attacking the Communist Party. He said in a confidential letter to one of his followers, "This is merely a breach that has been seized upon, and it is most necessary to extend and generalize the matter." [p. 178]