

Now, however, Mao was vulnerable due to the economic crisis brought about by misguided policies and Liu and Deng, in a political struggle still obscure in some of its dimensions, exercised their influence in the Central Committee to pressure Mao Zedong to step down from the chairmanship of the state. Mao Zedong remained the Party chairman but was deprived of actual participation in decision making. Liu Shaoqi replaced Mao as chairman of the state and the erstwhile chairman was encouraged, as the following document suggests, to concentrate on "Marxist-Leninist theoretical work."

Mao Zedong was unhappy with this forced departure from the frontline of political work and later complained that he was treated by Liu and Deng as a "dead man at his own funeral." Between 1958 and 1966, Mao restively inhabited the historical shrine constructed for him by his comrades-in-arms but the struggle for control of the state was still very much alive. During the Cultural Revolution, Mao Zedong would return to the stage with a vengeance and his opponents would learn the perils of confronting a living political legend.

In the past few years, Comrade Mao Zedong has more than once expressed to the Central Committee of the Party the wish that he should not continue to hold the post of Chairman of the People's Republic of China. Following full and all-round consideration, the Plenary Session of the Central Committee has decided to approve this proposal of Comrade Mao Zedong, and not to nominate him again as candidate for Chairman of the People's Republic of China at the First Session of the Second National People's Congress. The Plenary Session of the Central Committee deems this to be a completely positive proposal, because, relinquishing his duties as Chairman of the state and working solely as Chairman of the Central Committee of the Party, Comrade Mao Zedong will be enabled all the better to concentrate his energies on dealing with questions of the direction, policy and line of the Party and the state; he may also be enabled to set aside more time for Marxist-Leninist theoretical work, without affecting his continued leading role in the work of the state. This will be in the better interests of the whole Party and of all the people of the country. Comrade Mao Zedong is the sincerely beloved and long-tested leader of the people of various nationalities of the whole country. He will remain the leader of the entire people of various nationalities even when he no longer holds the post of Chairman of the state. If some special situation arises in the future which should require him to take up this work again, he can still be nominated again to assume the duties of the Chairman of the state in compliance with the opinion of the people and the decision of the Party. Party committees at all levels should, in accordance with these reasons, give full explanations to the cadres and masses both inside and outside the Party at appropriate meetings of the Party, sessions of the people's congresses of various levels, meetings of workers in industrial and

mining enterprises, and meetings in people's communes, offices, schools and armed units, so that the reasons for this may be understood by all that there may be no misunderstanding.

#### 21.5 "THE ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE LEADERSHIP OF THE CPSU AND OURSELVES," SEPTEMBER 6, 1963

The Chinese Communist party and the Communist party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) worked closely together after 1949 to rebuild China but by the closing years of the 1950s this collaboration was beginning to fray. The Chinese leadership resented the Soviets' provision of outdated or useless machines; rejected the Soviets' doctrine of "peaceful coexistence" with the United States, and were outraged by Khrushchev's secret speech at the twentieth congress of the CPSU and the subsequent process of de-Stalinization.

A major portion of the following 1963 *People's Daily* editorial focused on the issue of de-Stalinization and Chinese perceptions of Khrushchev's leadership. From the point of view of Mao and other Chinese leaders, "whipping the corpse" of Stalin served no purpose and invalidated the notion of a single center of authority in party work. The Chinese party, following the break with the Soviets, became increasingly dogmatic and sought, now independently of the Soviet Union, to play a leading role as a font of revolutionary theory.

It is more than a month since the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union published its open letter of July 14 to Party organizations and all Communists in the Soviet Union. This open letter, and the steps taken by the leadership of the CPSU since its publication, have pushed Sino-Soviet relations to the brink of a split and have carried the differences in the international communist movement to a new stage of unprecedented gravity.

Now Moscow, Washington, New Delhi, and Belgrade are joined in a love feast and the Soviet press is running an endless assortment of fantastic stories and theories attacking China. The leadership of the CPSU has allied itself with U.S. imperialism, the Indian reactionaries and the renegade Tito clique against socialist China and against all Marxist-Leninist parties, in open betrayal of Marxism-Leninism and proletarian internationalism, in brazen repudiation of the 1957 Declaration and the 1960 Statement and in flagrant violation of the Sino-Soviet Treaty of Friendship, Alliance and Mutual Assistance.

The present differences within the international communist movement and between the Chinese and Soviet Parties involve a whole series of important questions of principle. In its letter of June 14 to the Central Committee of the CPSU, the Central Committee of the CPC systematically and comprehensively discussed the essence of these differences. It pointed out that, in the last analysis, the present differences within the international communist movement and between the Chinese and Soviet Parties involve the questions of whether or not to accept the revolutionary principles of the 1957 Declaration and the 1960 Statement, whether or not to accept Marxism-Leninism and proletarian internationalism, whether or not there is no need for revolution, whether or not imperialism is to be opposed, and whether or not the unity of the socialist camp and the international communist movement is desired.

How have the differences in the international communist movement and between the leadership of the CPSU and ourselves arisen? And how have they grown to their present serious dimensions? Everybody is concerned about these questions. . . .

#### THE DIFFERENCES BEGAN WITH THE 20TH CONGRESS OF THE CPSU

There is a saying, "It takes more than one cold day for the river to freeze three feet deep." The present differences in the international communist movement did not, of course, begin just today.

The open letter of the Central Committee of the CPSU spreads the notion that the differences in the international communist movement were started by the three articles which we published in April 1960 under the title of *Long Live Leninism!* This is a big lie.

What is the truth?

The truth is that the whole series of differences of principle in the international communist movement began more than seven years ago.

To be specific, it began with the 20th Congress of the CPSU in 1956. . . .

The criticism of Stalin at the 20th Congress of the CPSU was wrong both in principle and in method. Stalin's life was that of a great Marxist-Leninist, a great proletarian revolutionary. For thirty years after Lenin's death, Stalin was the foremost leader of the CPSU and the Soviet Government, as well as the recognized leader of the international communist movement and the standard-bearer of the world revolution. During his lifetime, Stalin made some serious mistakes, but compared to his great and meritorious deeds his mistakes are only secondary. . . .

It was necessary to criticize Stalin's mistakes. But in his secret report to the 20th Congress, Comrade Khrushchev completely negated Stalin, and in doing so defamed the dictatorship of the proletariat, defamed the Socialist system, the great CPSU, the great Soviet Union and the international communist move-

ment. Far from using a revolutionary proletarian party's method of criticism and self-criticism for the purpose of making an earnest and serious analysis and summation of the historical experience of the dictatorship of the proletariat, he treated Stalin as an enemy and shifted the blame for all mistakes on to Stalin alone.

Khrushchev viciously and demagogically told a host of lies in his secret report, and threw around charges that Stalin had a "persecution mania," indulged in "brutal arbitrariness," took the path of "mass repressions and terror," "knew the country and agriculture only from films" and "planned operations on a globe," that Stalin's leadership "became a serious obstacle in the path of Soviet social development," and so on and so forth. He completely obliterated the meritorious deeds of the Stalin who led the Soviet people in waging resolute struggle against all internal and external foes and achieving great results in Socialist transformation and Socialist construction, who led the Soviet people in defending and consolidating the first Socialist country in the world and winning the glorious victory in the anti-fascist war, and who defended and developed Marxism-Leninism.

In completely negating Stalin at the 20th Congress of the CPSU, Khrushchev in effect negated the dictatorship of the proletariat and the fundamental theories of Marxism-Leninism which Stalin defended and developed. It was at that congress that Khrushchev, in his summary report, began the repudiation of Marxism-Leninism on a number of questions of principle.

In his report to the 20th Congress, under the pretext that "radical changes" had taken place in the world situation, Khrushchev put forward the thesis of "peaceful transition." He said that the road of the October Revolution was "the only correct road in those historical conditions," but that as the situation had changed it had become possible to effect the transition from capitalism to Socialism "through the parliamentary road." In essence, this erroneous thesis is a clear revision of the Marxist-Leninist teachings on the state and revolution and a clear denial of the universal significance of the road of the October Revolution.

In his report, under the same pretext that "radical changes" had taken place in the world situation, Khrushchev also questioned the continued validity of Lenin's teachings on imperialism and on war and peace, and in fact tampered with Lenin's teachings.

Khrushchev pictured the U.S. Government and its head as people resisting the forces of war, and not as representatives of the imperialist forces of war. He said, ". . . the advocates of settling outstanding issues by means of war still hold strong positions there [in the United States]," and ". . . they continue to exert big pressure on the President and the Administration." He went on to say that the imperialists were beginning to admit that the positions-of-strength policy had failed and that "symptoms of a certain sobering up are appearing" among them. It was as much as saying that it was possible for the U.S. Government and its head not to represent the interests of U.S. monopoly capital

and for them to abandon their policies of war and aggression and that they had become forces defending peace.

Khrushchev declared: "We want to be friends with the United States and to co-operate with it for peace and international security and also in the economic and cultural spheres." This wrong view later developed into the line of "Soviet U.S. co-operation for the settlement of world problems."

Distorting Lenin's correct principle of peaceful co-existence between countries with different social systems, Khrushchev declared that peaceful co-existence was the "general line of the foreign policy" of the U.S.S.R. This amounted to excluding from the general line of foreign policy of the Socialist countries their mutual assistance and co-operation as well as assistance by them to the revolutionary struggles of the oppressed peoples and nations, or to subordinating all this to the policy of so-called "peaceful co-existence."

The questions raised by the leadership of the CPSU at the 20th Congress, and especially the questions of Stalin and of "peaceful transition," are by no means simply internal affairs of the CPSU; they are vital issues of common interest for all fraternal Parties. Without any prior consultation with the fraternal Parties, the leadership of the CPSU drew arbitrary conclusions; it forced the fraternal Parties to accept a fait accompli and on the pretext of "combating the personality cult," crudely interfered in the internal affairs of fraternal Parties and countries and subverted their leaderships, thus pushing its policy of sectarianism and splittism in the international Communist movement. . . .

## CHAPTER 22

## The Cultural Revolution

22.1 LIFE AND DEATH OF LEI FENG,  
AN ADMIRABLE "FOOL"

In September 1959, Lin Biao, a veteran general and one of the ten great "field marshals" of the People's Liberation Army (PLA), succeeded Peng Dehuai as minister of defense. During the years prior to the opening of the Cultural Revolution, the army remained a powerful bastion of support for Mao Zedong and the Maoist line. As minister of defense, Lin Biao played a central role in organizing PLA support for the ex-chairman of the Chinese state and later, when Mao returned to power, was rewarded for his loyalty by being designated as Mao's successor.

One aspect of Lin Biao's political work was the creation of a cult around the figure of a PLA soldier named Lei Feng. For the Maoists of the army, Lei Feng epitomized the highest qualities of socialist man. He was devoted to Chairman Mao, he loved the people, he was frugal, he did good deeds, and was, in general, great because of his sheer ordinariness. Everyone could imitate Lei Feng; he was praised as a "rust-proof screw" in the machinery of revolution. In fact, even Lei's death, his species of revolutionary martyrdom, was humdrum: he died when a heavy pole, propelled by a skidding truck, crashed down on his head. The model of Lei Feng was designed to promote personal submission to the Party's leadership and incorporation of Mao Zedong thought into everyday life. After 1963, a "Learn from Lei Feng" campaign became a central element of army political training. The following excerpts, purportedly from Lei Feng's diary, create a vivid sense of the values Lin Biao and the PLA would promote with great energy before and during the Cultural Revolution.