

# A Strategic Change

— Initial victory in putting an end to the transportation  
of grain from south to north

by Hung Chiao

CHINA as a whole has been more than self-sufficient in grain. Now because the northern regions have also achieved basic self-sufficiency in grain, there have been initial successes in changing the situation in which grain had to be shipped from the south to the north. This is a strategic change and a victory for Chairman Mao's revolutionary line.

## Historical Background

Getting southern grain to the north is a big question long left over by history. To maintain their reactionary rule and carry out cruel exploitation and suppression of the working people, feudal dynasties in the past had to move large amounts of government grain yearly from the south to the north to supplement the provisions of the reactionary government organs and troops. Under the reactionary rule of the Kuomintang, natural resources and production in the northern regions suffered more serious damage and food grain was greatly lacking in Hopei, Shantung, Honan and Liaoning Provinces. According to incomplete statistics, Hopei brought in from other provinces and abroad more than 2,000 million *jin* of wheat and flour to feed its major cities between 1931 and 1933. Grain shortages were even more serious in the rural areas and the working people could not get enough to eat the year round. Whenever there were fairly serious natural disasters, vast areas of farmland were laid waste and large numbers of people starved to death.

Following the founding of the People's Republic of China, the Chinese people carried out the land reform, took the road of agricultural co-operation and established people's communes under the leadership of Chairman Mao and the Chinese Communist Party. With the fundamental change of the ownership of the means of production, the productive forces were liberated and grain production registered big rises. Chairman Mao issued the instruc-

tions "Work on the Yellow River must be done well," "The Huai River must be harnessed" and "The Haiho River must be brought under permanent control" and formulated the principles "Take agriculture as the foundation and industry as the leading factor," "Industry must develop together with agriculture" and "Take grain as the key link and ensure an all-round development." In 1964 Chairman Mao issued the great call "In agriculture, learn from Tachai." These instructions and principles guided the poor and lower-middle peasants and other commune members in the northern areas to take the socialist road, engage in large-scale capital construction on farmland, transform natural conditions and work hard to put an end to the transportation of southern grain to the north.

However, the renegade, hidden traitor and scab Liu Shao-chi and his gang spared no effort to push the counter-revolutionary revisionist line, including *san zi yi bao* (the extension of free markets and of plots for private use, the promotion of small enterprises with sole responsibility for their own profits or losses, and



Members of the Nankunlungkou Brigade at Pingshan County in Hopei Province building farmland on a mountain.

the fixing of output quotas on a household basis) and "four freedoms" (freedom to practise usury, to hire labour, to buy or sell land and to engage in private enterprises). They developed capitalism in the rural areas, sabotaged and interfered with the line and principles formulated by Chairman Mao and caused the northern areas to go on being short of grain.

During the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution the Chinese people shattered the bourgeois headquarters headed by Liu Shao-chi and criticized the counter-revolutionary revisionist line. Chairman Mao's revolutionary line has been firmly implemented. The masses have studied and applied Chairman Mao's works in a

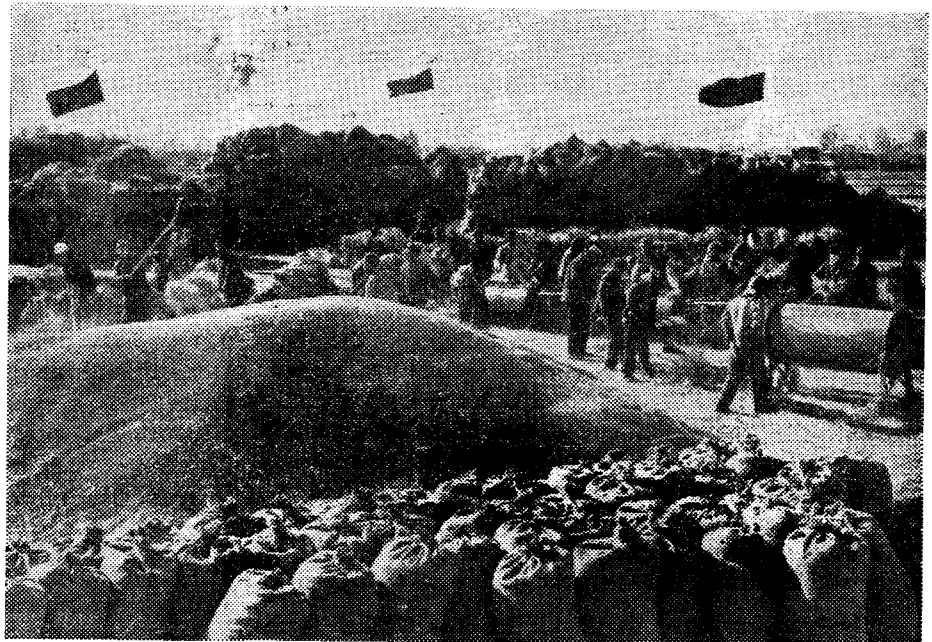
living way, deepened the mass movement to learn from the Tachai Brigade and worked hard by relying on their own efforts. As a result, farm production in the northern regions made swift progress and they have begun to do away with dependence on the south for part of their food grain.

### Struggle Between the Two Lines

There were sharp struggles between the two lines in the course of changing the backward state of farming in the northern regions.

The principle of "taking agriculture as the foundation and industry as the leading factor" advanced by Chairman Mao is the general principle guiding the development of our national economy. It profoundly expresses the objective law of socialist economic construction and scientifically explains the dialectical relationship between industry and agriculture. Liu Shao-chi and his agents did all they could to oppose this principle. In the areas where industry was fairly developed, they spread such reactionary fallacies as: "Any place with a large share of industry is not doing its proper job if it engages in farming" and "Producing iron, steel and coal in exchange for grain is rational division of labour and exchange at equal value." They thus poured cold water on the enthusiasm to develop farming in these areas. At the same time they also prevented the areas where industry was not well developed from expanding it, cut down on local industry and reduced the leading role of industry. This was how they obstructed farming and industrial progress in the northern areas.

Because of the interference of Liu Shao-chi's counter-revolutionary revisionist line, Liaoning Province had long depended on other provinces for part of its grain, meat and vegetables. In the Great Proletarian



Panchin Reclamation Area in Liaoning Province reaps a rich grain harvest.

Cultural Revolution, the people there made agricultural development a matter of primary importance and exerted great efforts in this respect. Liaoning's grain output in 1970 was 33 per cent over the 1969 figure. This enormously raised the rate of self-sufficiency in grain in Liaoning. Agricultural expansion in turn pushed industrial progress. Total industrial output value in 1970 rose 25 per cent compared with 1969.

The principle of "taking grain as the key link and ensuring an all-round development" scientifically reflects the mutual dependence and mutual promotion relations between various crops in agriculture and between farming on the one hand and forestry, livestock breeding, side-occupation and fishery on the other hand. It is a long-term principle guiding the development of our socialist agriculture. Liu Shao-chi and his bunch desperately opposed this principle put forward by Chairman Mao. By strenuously pushing the capitalist line, including "putting money in command" and "free engagement in private enterprises," they tried to undermine grain production and disintegrate the collective economy. Consequently certain northern areas growing industrial crops were unable to produce sufficient grain for a long time though they could have done so if efforts were made.

Since the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution started, the poor and lower-middle peasants raising industrial crops in the northern areas have conscientiously implemented the principle of "taking grain as the key link and ensuring an all-round development," rationally arranged the areas sown to grain and industrial crops, raised the per-mu yield and had rich harvests of both kinds of crops. With a relatively large area sown to industrial crops, Shantung Province has not only tremendously raised its output of cotton, peanuts and fruit but increased total grain output by large margins. Raising huge quantities of cotton and tobacco, Honan

Province has initially become self-sufficient in grain. Cotton production surpassed all previous records and that of cured tobacco also made big strides.

As to the historically known disaster-ridden, low-yielding areas, Liu Shao-chi and those like him exaggerated the unfavourable aspects in developing agriculture and did their best to advocate the theory of "natural conditions decide everything," babbling that "the northern countryside often suffers from natural disasters and it stands to reason that grain supplied by the state should be consumed." They also sabotaged the mass movement to learn from Tachai in agriculture, saying: "The thing is to fill the belly, not to learn from Tachai." By displaying the Tachai spirit these areas have gone in for transforming mountains, harnessing rivers, and capital construction on farmland since the start of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution. The people there have built up many large tracts of farmland which give high, stable yields despite drought or waterlogging.

By working hard to popularize the Tachai experience, Hsiyang County in Shansi Province doubled its per-*mu* grain yield in 1969 as compared with 1966. Last year, the county's average per-*mu* grain yield reached 500 *jin* and this year saw new increases. Of the 46 counties on the southeastern plain of Hopei Province, which had suffered the severest damage from the Haiho River, only one was self-sufficient in grain. Now all 46 counties have enough or surplus grain. Hopei's total grain production in the past two years was 30 to 50 per cent above the top annual figure before work on harnessing the river began, enabling the whole province to embark on the road to self-sufficiency in grain.

State grain storage is now at an all-time high and that of the communes, brigades, teams and commune members is also increasing steadily. Many people's communes and brigades in the long-time grain-deficient areas now have grain stored. The communes, brigades, teams and households in the grain-sufficient areas have more reserves.

On the eve of the birth of the People's Republic of China in 1949, the then U.S. Secretary of State Acheson hoped in vain that New China would collapse because it could not solve the problem of feeding its population. The U.S. imperialists estimated that China would eventually have to beg them for flour to survive. At that time, Chairman Mao sharply denounced this shameless slander by the U.S. imperialists and clearly pointed out: **"Revolution plus production can solve the problem of feeding the population."** China's successive rich harvests in grain and the fact that we have initially brought about a change to the necessity of shipping grain from the south to the north have testified to the great truth of Chairman Mao's wise thesis and are a sound rebuff to the U.S. imperialists.

### Great Significance

To end the necessity of south to north grain shipments, a situation left over from the old society, is of great political and economic significance. It is an impor-

tant aspect of implementing Chairman Mao's great strategic principle **"Be prepared against war, be prepared against natural disasters, and do everything for the people."**

The question of grain is of major importance for the national economy and the people's livelihood. Lenin pointed out: **"Food stocks are the real basis of the economic system."** **"Without such a fund the state power is nothing. Without such a fund socialist policy is but a pious wish."** The rapid rise in China's grain production has initially ended the need to ship grain to the north and food stocks have continued growing. All this provides a substantial material basis for the further consolidation of the dictatorship of the proletariat, developing the national economy in a planned way and gradually improving the people's life.

Grain is a necessity of life and also a highly strategic material. Chairman Mao has said: **"The danger of a new world war still exists, and the people of all countries must get prepared. But revolution is the main trend in the world today."** So long as the menace of imperialist and social-imperialist subversion and aggression exists, we must strengthen all-round preparedness against war and firmly grasp the production of grain and build up grain reserves. Enough grain reserves everywhere in China will guarantee the needs of the army and civilians in their war against aggression if the invading enemies impose one on us. Moreover, grain reserves will help us arrange the people's life well and guarantee the development of production by our own efforts when bad harvests occur. We thus will have the initiative and be invincible in our war against aggression and in the struggle against natural disasters.

Agriculture is the foundation of the national economy and grain the foundation of agriculture. Whether industry can develop with greater, faster, better and more economical results is determined, to a great extent, by the amount of marketable grain agriculture can supply. Northern China, with a vast area and rich resources, is an important industrial base. With the rapid development of agriculture in this part of China, the rural areas are supplying growing quantities of marketable grain which in 1970 was 35 per cent more than in 1965. This has created good conditions for the development of industry in the northern areas. The initial ending of southern grain being shipped north also provides more favourable conditions for southern industry to develop, thus promoting the growth of the entire national economy. Northern China is an important area producing cotton, oil-bearing crops, tobacco and other industrial crops as well as fruit. The development of agriculture and the basic sufficiency in grain over recent years have pushed the expansion of industrial crops and other agricultural and side-line production and helped consolidate and expand the collective economy of the people's communes. The income of the communes, brigades, teams and commune members has been rising and the worker-peasant alliance continues to be consolidated.