

"Boulder Bay" — A New Peking Opera

BOULDER Bay, another model revolutionary modern Peking opera, has been put on stage at a time when the proletarian revolution in literature and art is developing in depth in China.

Guided by Chairman Mao's revolutionary line in literature and art, the Chinese proletariat has, since 1964, started a revolution first in Peking opera, ballet and symphonic music—realms considered sacrosanct by the bourgeoisie both inside and outside the Party. Strenuous and painstaking efforts have been rewarded by the production of a number of model revolutionary theatrical works. Their achievement in unifying revolutionary political content with the highest possible perfection of artistic form has been exemplary. Hence the term model revolutionary theatrical works, as the masses customarily call them.

Held in high esteem by the people, these works have served for the masses as an ideological weapon in a graphic form in criticizing the old world and creating a new one.

Boulder Bay is one of these excellent theatrical works.

Between 1962 and 1963 when the imperialists, revisionists and other reactionaries in the world stirred up an anti-China current, the Chiang Kai-shek clique



A scene from *Boulder Bay*: Lu Chang-hai.

entrenched on China's sacred territory Taiwan Province made many harassing raids on the mainland. Under the guidance of Chairman Mao's revolutionary line, our coastal armed forces and militia smashed its attacks, and many heroic personages emerged from the struggle. *Boulder Bay* is an opera with this as the background.

Boulder Bay is a fishing harbour in southeast China.

With class struggle as its main theme, the opera depicts the heroic images of the militia who, led by the Party branch, have successfully shattered a raid by the special agents of the Chiang Kai-shek gang.

In 1963, two days before National Day on October 1, a band of the Chiang clique's special agents tried to land at Boulder Bay. Its ringleader, nicknamed Black Shark, was formerly a feudal fishing despot whose hands were stained with the blood of the local fisherfolk. His plan was to launch a raid into this part of the mainland with the help of a hidden special agent and effect a counter-revolutionary restoration.

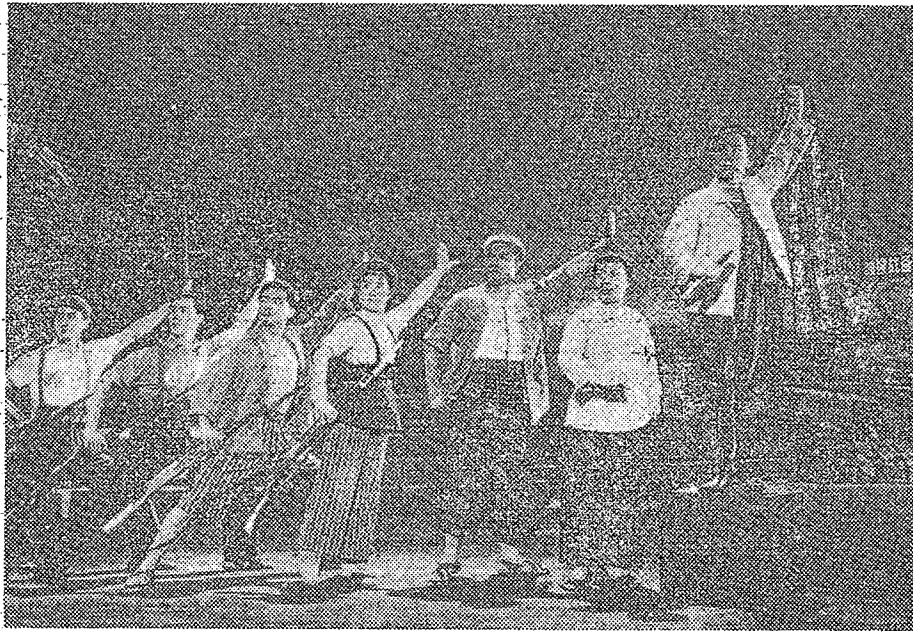
But when this horde of armed counter-revolutionaries approached the coastal waters, our armed forces and militia, in combat readiness, were waiting for them. The hidden enemy agent was exposed as soon as he took action while the special agent sent to contact him was kept under close watch by our militia the moment he came ashore.

What kind of people does the enemy run up against? Just ordinary fisherfolk in Boulder Bay—the fishermen's militia, teen-agers and aged people.

These people who have a bitter class hatred for the old society cherish a strong love for Chairman Mao, the Communist Party and the socialist system. The older generation among them experienced untold misery in the old society while many of their dear ones were murdered by Black Shark; the second generation, bearing the scars left by the old society, has played its part in earlier struggles against Black Shark; those of the younger generation are growing up fast in the storm of class struggle and the struggle between the two lines. All of them are leading a happy life and engaging in peaceful labour but are at the same time fully aware that they must carry on the revolution under the dictatorship of the proletariat, always be on guard and ready at all times to defeat any enemy, open or covert.

Among the militiamen Lu Chang-hai is a representative figure and the hero of this opera. He is secretary of the Party branch of the Boulder Bay Production Brigade and leader of the local militia company. He has a high degree of revolutionary vigilance and is a heroic figure fighting consciously to fortify the dictatorship of the proletariat.

He always keeps the public interest in mind with little consideration for his personal affairs. When he returns from two months' fishing on the sea and has not yet gone home to see his family, he immediately leads his militia company into action on learning that the enemy has come for another raid.



Another scene from *Boulder Bay*: The militia and the masses are determined to defend their motherland and wipe out the enemy completely.

He is a man with tact and good judgment. From the enemy movements on the sea and a sheath found in the village, he concludes that the sheath is the tally to be used by the hidden agent to make contact with the invading enemy. Using this sheath, he tactfully wins the confidence of the enemy agent sent ashore. When that enemy agent thinks he has found the man he wants and everything is going to be all right, he has actually confided to Lu every detail of the landing scheme.

Lu Chang-hai is of fearless, heroic mettle. He is able to thwart the enemy, tactfully and bravely, under difficult conditions in which the enemy is numerically stronger.

The last scene is set at the out-of-the-way Wolf Fang Reef. Black Shark and his gang, having suffered defeat, retreat to the reef; Lu Chang-hai, wounded and all alone, rushes to the scene. Facing great odds, he may be killed at any moment, but he has little regard for his personal safety. Though single-handed, he is fully confident that he will win out with the feeling that the whole nation is behind him. The enemy, by contrast, though fierce in appearance, is inwardly feeble and near his doom. This is why Lu is able to display wisdom and bravery, which the enemy has not expected, and lure the enemy into a trap. This done, he wraps a blood-stained towel round a flashing beacon as a signal to his comrades who arrive in time to wipe out the enemy.

The mere mention of Lu's name makes the enemy shiver with fear, but the people love and respect him.

Hai-ken, head of the fishing team and a member of the militia, is lulled by the superficial phenomenon of peaceful labour and, as a result, he is interested only in production. Failing to see the danger of capitalist

restoration, he relaxes his revolutionary vigilance. He is hoodwinked by the hidden enemy agent, accepts the latter's offer for a drink, finds a boat for him and even leaves behind his rifle in the latter's cottage. Lu Chang-hai, in his capacity as leader of the militia, refrains from reprimanding this comrade and giving him any disciplinary punishment, but helps him to recall the bitter life and hard struggle in the old society and arouses his consciousness of class struggle so that he will intensify his hatred for the enemy and be a really good fighter in the ranks of the fishermen's militia.

In China, there are thousands upon thousands of fishing harbours and villages like Boulder Bay and people like Lu Chang-hai and militia companies of the Boulder Bay type are legion.

In the period of the new-democratic revolution, the militia in our country, fighting in co-ordination with the regular troops, made invaluable contributions to defeating both domestic and foreign enemies. Since 1958 when Chairman Mao issued the call "organize contingents of the people's militia on a big scale," the building of militia in our country has made great headway. "Be able to come at the first call, fight as soon as you come, and win when you fight"—this has become the watchword of militiamen and women. In and around Boulder Bay, as a character in the opera says, every house is a sentry-box and everyone a soldier. Boulder Bay is a microcosm of China as a whole.

"What is a true bastion of iron? It is the masses, the millions upon millions of people who genuinely and sincerely support the revolution." (Mao Tsetung: *Be Concerned With the Well-Being of the Masses, Pay Attention to Methods of Work*.) Confronted by such people, any enemy who dares to come will certainly be dashed to pieces.

Peking opera is a comprehensive theatrical art with singing, stage elocution, acting and acrobatics, accompanied by instrumental music. Over a long period in the past, it had evolved a stylized form of singing and acting. The revolutionary modern Peking opera has done away with those stereotyped conventions and replaced them with new forms of singing and acting. *Boulder Bay* has made new advances in singing, stage elocution and other aspects. The rhymed elocution in the opera especially has made a hit.

Teng Hsiao-ping, the arch unrepentant capitalist-roader in the Party, opposed the revolution in literature and art and attacked the model revolutionary theatrical works, describing them as "the only flower in blossom." This is a sheer slander. Our socialist

literature and art are like a garden in spring with a hundred flowers blossoming in full glory. *Boulder Bay* is one of them. It has been made into a film for a still larger audience, and is widely acclaimed by the workers, peasants and soldiers.

"Spring Shoot" — A Film

Spring Shoot is the first feature film that directly reflects the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution in China. Guided by Chairman Mao's theory on continuing the revolution under the dictatorship of the proletariat, it portrays a proletarian heroine, barefoot doctor Tien Chun-miao (chun-miao means spring shoot), who dares to struggle against the capitalist-roaders in the Party. Singing the praises of her revolutionary spirit of going against the tide, the film shows that the Great Cultural Revolution is absolutely necessary and most timely.

The time is spring, and the scene is set in an east China village south of the Yangtze, crisscrossed by rivers and canals. When the film begins, Tien Chun-miao, the main character, appears before the audience against the background of a vast expanse of paddyfield where the sturdy young shoots are swaying gently in the breeze. She is a young Communist Party member and deputy leader of a production team under the Hupin Production Brigade of the Chaoyang People's Commune. Later she becomes a barefoot doctor, which is a socialist new phenomenon described by the scriptwriters as a young shoot in spring.

After liberation, land reform was carried out in this village, followed several years later by the setting up of a people's commune. The political status of the rural people was raised and their economic conditions were improved. But since medical and health work at that time was dominated by Liu Shao-chi's counter-revolutionary revisionist line, the rural areas still suffered from the lack of medical care, a legacy of the old society. The Chaoyang People's Commune in the film has a clinic, but it is controlled by Tu Wen-chieh, a capitalist-roader in the Party who is head of the clinic and a member of the commune Party committee. Taking the reactionary stand of the bourgeoisie, he does not show the least concern for the health and general well-being of the poor and lower-middle peasants, but has trust in Chien Chi-jen, a doctor from a landlord family with great hatred for the new society and the poor and lower-middle peasants, and puts him in an important position. Moreover, Tu connives at the sorceress Chia Yueh-hsien practising charlatantry and duping the peasants.

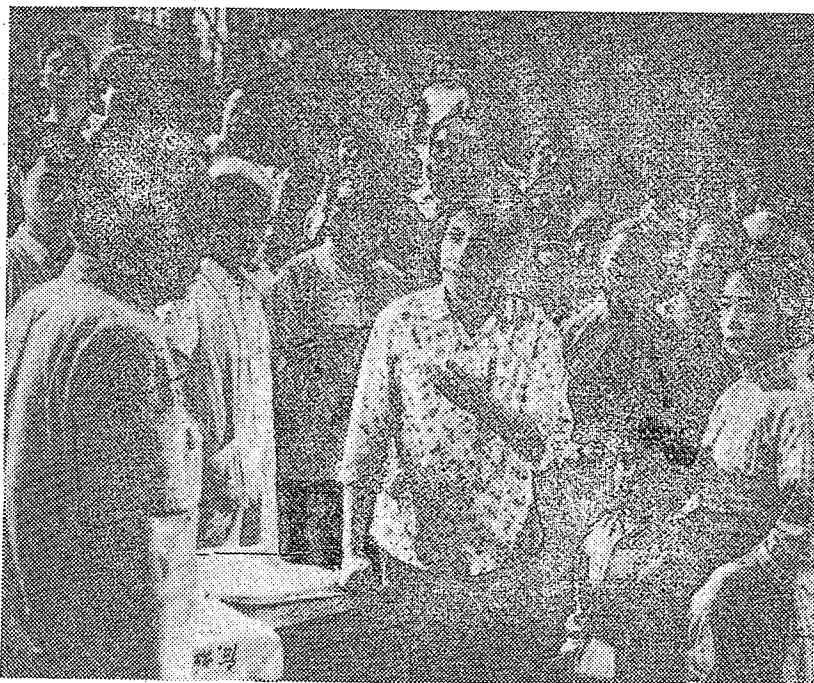
One day when the little daughter of a poor peasant is seriously ill, Chun-miao takes her to the commune clinic for emergency treatment. But Chien Chi-jen cold-shoulders the case, which results in the baby's death. Filled with burning rage, Chun-miao declares: "We can't tolerate this any longer!" Her words echo the demand of the poor and lower-middle peasants throughout the country.

At this juncture, Chairman Mao's great call "In medical and health work, put the stress on the rural areas" reaches the village. Chun-miao is sent to the commune clinic to study medicine on the recommendation of the poor and lower-middle peasants.

It is the wish of the people to train barefoot doctors from among the poor and lower-middle peasants. The emergence of this newborn thing is a fruit of Chairman Mao's revolutionary line in medical and health work. It is a major event unheard of since ancient times for peasants to become doctors while at the same time doing farm work and occupy the positions in medical and health work in the vast countryside.

The capitalist-roaders in the Party, however, are dead against Chun-miao studying medicine.

Shielded by Tu Wen-chieh, the head of the clinic's medical group Chien Chi-jen, by the instinct of his reactionary class, is fully aware that should Chun-miao succeed in learning to become a doctor he and his like will surely lose what little hold they still have over medical work in the countryside. So he obstructs her by every possible means from learning medicine and ridicules her as "a rough porcelain teacup on which fine designs cannot be carved." Echoing Chien Chi-jen, Tu Wen-chieh says that those accustomed to using the spade cannot handle the injection needle. He thus



A scene from *Spring Shoot*: Chun-miao and the masses exposing and criticizing Tu Wen-chieh.

takes the attitude of an aristocratic overlord towards Chun-miao.

Chun-miao exposes Chia Yueh-hsien for swindling money out of patients, but Tu Wen-chieh says that she is "skilled in her line," conforms to the regulations and is therefore entitled to carry on her practice as a doctor. Chun-miao exposes Chien Chi-jen for stealthily and illegally supplying medicines to Chia Yueh-hsien while ignoring the needs of the poor and lower-middle peasants who are seriously ill, but Tu Wen-chieh tells Chun-miao to "respect" Chien Chi-jen.

Discriminated against by Tu and Chien, Chun-miao is forced to return to her village. With the support of the production brigade Party branch and the poor and lower-middle peasants and with the help of Fang Ming, a revolutionary intellectual and young doctor of the commune clinic, Chun-miao sets up a health centre in the production brigade. Considering this to be an open challenge to his authority, Tu Wen-chieh announces that Chun-miao is "practising medicine illegally," and orders the brigade to shut down the health centre and takes away Chun-miao's medical kit. He even threatens to expel her from the Party if she does not mend her ways.

How eager Chun-miao is in looking forward to the arrival of a revolutionary storm!

As the story goes on, the significance of barefoot doctors becomes clearer. Their emergence has broken the monopoly of Tu Wen-chieh and Chien Chi-jen and the domination of Liu Shao-chi's revisionist line in medical and health work, and is in line with the general trend of the development of history towards reducing the differences between town and country, between worker and peasant and between mental and manual labour.

The revolutionary storm finally arrives. Chairman Mao has personally initiated and is leading the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution. Boldly standing in the forefront of the struggle, Chun-miao wages a decisive battle against Tu Wen-chieh and Chien Chi-jen.

This revolution has fully mobilized the initiative of the proletarian revolutionaries and the broad masses of the people. Daring to struggle and good at struggle, Chun-miao fights together with the revolutionary peasant masses until victory is won. Though the capitalist roader Tu Wen-chieh and the counter-revolutionary Chien Chi-jen put up a desperate fight, they end up in utter defeat.

Under the signboard of a Communist Party member and using the power he has usurped, Tu Wen-chieh resorts to various tactics to suppress the revolutionary movement.

Frightened out of his wits by the angry waves of the mass movement, Tu makes a false self-criticism admitting that it is a mistake not to have paid more attention to the class for training barefoot doctors. To remedy this, he promises to resume the class immediately, and each trainee will get a doctor's coat, a

stethoscope and food subsidy, and that those who excel in learning will become full-time doctors or go to medical colleges for further studies. In this way he tries to lead the revolutionary barefoot doctors astray and corrupt them with bourgeois ideas of fame and position, so as to strangle the Cultural Revolution and protect the rule of the revisionist line.

When this bait fails to work, he casts away all pretences and exposes himself for what he is. He falsely accuses Chun-miao and other revolutionaries of having committed anti-Party crimes. In his eyes, anyone who opposes him is tantamount to opposing the Party. But Chun-miao tells him point-blank that judging by what he has said and done he can no longer represent the Party.

Chun-miao tries to cure an old poor peasant who suffers from lumbago by giving him a new decoction. Before using it, she tries it on herself at the risk of her own life. After taking the decoction, the patient who has for long years suffered from numbness begins to feel pain. This is a symptom of a turn for the better. But Tu Wen-chieh seizes this opportunity to attack Chun-miao, alleging that the patient is getting worse because he feels pain. Meanwhile, Chien Chi-jen plots to give the patient a poisonous injection and then lay the blame on Chun-miao for his death. Here the film shows the sharp life-and-death struggle between the two lines.

Chun-miao earnestly studies the *Decision of the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party Concerning the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution* drawn up under the personal guidance of Chairman Mao. She gradually realizes that Tu Wen-chieh is the behind-the-scenes man backing Chien Chi-jen, and persons like Tu are the most dangerous. A Communist in name, Tu Wen-chieh has actually become the agent of Chien Chi-jen and his like in the Party. From top to bottom, they represent a revisionist line. If the power Tu has usurped is not seized back by the people, the dictatorship of the proletariat cannot be consolidated and the Great Cultural Revolution cannot be carried through to the end. This leap in Chun-miao's understanding shows that, in her struggle against the capitalist-roaders in the Party, she has become a conscious fighter in continuing the revolution under the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Spring Shoot has been warmly received and is applauded by the revolutionary people. In the first month since it was being shown, the Shanghai Film Studio that made the film received over 300 letters of praise.

The bourgeoisie inside and outside the Party, however, dislikes it. The arch unrepentant capitalist-roader in the Party Teng Hsiao-ping angrily walked out in the middle of the showing and labelled it as "ultra-Left."

The revolutionary masses sharply point out: "Spring Shoot has dealt a blow at Tu Wen-chieh, but it's Teng Hsiao-ping who feels the pain, for he is the chief representative of persons like Tu Wen-chieh. Spring Shoot is a good film indeed!"