

COMRADE LO KUANG-PIN (5012 1639 2430)
IN PAI-KUNG-KUAN PRISON

[Following is a translation of an article by Cheng Yeh-jui (6774 2814 3843) in the Chinese-language newspaper Tung-fang Hung Pao (East Is Red News), published by the Tung-fang Hung Pao Editorial Board of the Peking Institute of Geology, Peking, No. 41, 30 May 1967, page 3.]

In February of this year, I went to Chungking on business, and as soon as I stepped onto the Hung-kang dock, I saw a wall newspaper, the headline of which read: "What kind of man was Lo Kuang-pin?"

"Is it possible that there are still some people who doubt Comrade Lo Kuang-pin's history?" I thought.

In order to get the details straight, I read the wall newspaper from top to bottom, but the more I read, the angrier I became, for the newspaper actually maligned Comrade Kuang-pin as a "traitor," a "spy," a "political pickpocket," said that while Lo Kuang-pin was in the Chung-mei-so concentration camp he was allowed to play basketball, play chess, and take a sedan into town to bathe and go to restaurants, and even that the U.S. - Chiang agents let him out on purpose, etc.

The wall newspaper left a deep impression on me, which was that those in power in Chungking taking the capitalist road and their underlings had already degenerated to such a level that there was no evil which they would not commit. It was quite possible that they had committed some malicious deeds in regard to Comrade Kuang-pin. Viewing the situation thusly, I decided to take time to find Comrade Kuang-pin

for a chat and tell him to be more alert (at the time, I didn't know that he had already been kidnapped and held for ransom). It was unfortunate that as soon as I went out the next day, the bad news passed around that "Lo Kuang-pin committed suicide by jumping from a building."

"Lo Kuang-pin would never have committed suicide. He never killed himself in such bad surrounding as those in Pai-kung-kuan; why would he kill himself now? There's certainly something questionable about all this."

Comrade Lo Kuang-pin's death was a premeditated political murder. The rumor-spreading wall newspapers appearing in Chungking in actuality were for the purpose of preparing public opinion for Comrade Kuang-pin's murder, and I am convinced that the murderer will be seized before long.

Now I would like to talk only of Comrade Kuang-pin's true situation in Pai-kung-kuan Prison.

I was locked up with Lo Kuang-pin in Cell No. 2 (in the prison, it was called room "P'ing-erh") for almost half a year, slept on the same floor as he, covered myself with the same ratty prison blanket, and ate the same prison food. I deeply understand everything about his stay in Pai-kung-kuan, and can use facts seen with my own eyes to pulverize Li Ching-ch'uan's (2621 0064 3123) and his running dogs' malicious slandering of Comrade Kuang-pin.

Comrade Kuang-pin was originally held in Cha-tzu-tung Prison and then transferred to Pai-kung-kuan. First he was put in a cell upstairs, and then in the summer of 1949 he was put into Cell No. 2 downstairs. Our cell-mates included Liu Kuo-chih (0491 0948 1807), Ch'en Jan (7115 3544), Wang P'u (3769 2613), Ting Ti-p'ing (0002 0966 1627), and others, twelve comrades in all. All were considered by the Chiang bandit agents to have "committed serious crimes."

The prisoners in Pai-kung-kuan were originally let out of their cells for exercise twice each day for half an hour at a time. Later this was changed to once a day, and the time was shortened to fifteen minutes. After October, the exercise periods were completely abolished, and only one person was allowed out of the cell once each day to empty the toilet pail. As far as I know, regardless of what happened to Comrade Kuang-pin either before or after he was put in Cell No. 2, he received the same harrassment and mistreatment as the other imprisoned comrades. If it be

said that the enemy gave him special treatment, it was that they kept him under stricter surveillance and persecuted him even more. Because the agents relied solely on an inmate's "behavior" to determine his "attitude," the reason why Comrade Kuang-pin was transferred from Cha-tzu-tung to Pai-kung-kuan, according to what one of the guards revealed, was that his "behavior" was bad. When he was locked up upstairs, he passed messages back and forth with the comrade in the next cell, so the enemy said that he still wasn't "honest." After he was moved to Cell No. 2, the enemy always regarded him as the most disobedient inmate, and always watched him. If he was only the least bit careless, he would receive a reprimand and punishment. I remember there was one time during our exercise period (each cell was let out one at a time in turn; when one cell had finished, another would begin) when Comrade Kuang-pin said a few words to Comrade Hsuan Hao (1357 3493), who was in Cell No. 4 opposite (after the Liberation, a letter written by Comrade Hsuan Hao to Comrade Kuang-pin before he was killed was found under the floor of the cell, and in the letter he fully expressed his admiration and respect for Comrade Kuang-pin) and was seen by the chief guard, Yang Chin-hsing (2799 6651 5281), who immediately cursed him violently and announced that his exercise periods would stop. He said, "If you are dishonest again, I'll put you in leg irons and lock you up in the latrine." The enemy's harrassment and threats did not really make Comrade Kuang-pin "honest"; all the time he was in Pai-kung-kuan he never ceased to struggle. And so he was always one of the inmates under "close custody." Those who slander Comrade Kuang-pin say that when he was in prison he was allowed to play basketball and chess and take a sedan into town, etc., but that is really the most shameless and vulgar rumor-spreading.

Pai-kung-kuan was surrounded by high walls and electrified fences, and within the walls there was only a light well some ten kilometers wide. There was no basketball court, and I never saw anyone playing basketball. We heard that in Cha-tzu-tung there was a basketball court for the sole use of the guards, and Comrade Kuang-pin had told us that after a struggle the comrades there finally got to play basketball once on New Year's Day in 1949, but that was the first and last game.

Comrade Kuang-pin never once played chess in Pai-kung-kuan, and he never even mentioned that he knew how to play.

No sedans ever came to Pai-kung-kuan, and the comrades imprisoned in Pai-kung-kuan regarded cars as most inauspicious and cruel objects, because there were only two kinds of cars that came to Pai-kung-kuan. One was trucks filled with "criminals," and the other jeeps with guards all sitting in rows. When the first kind came, it always meant that new "criminals" were being brought in, or that someone already there was to be taken out and shot; when the second kind came, it was certain that a comrade was to be dragged out and severely tortured to obtain a confession, or that stern measures were to be taken against all of the comrades in the prison. Those who say that Comrade Kuang-pin was allowed to take a sedan into town each week are stretching their exaggerations to the utmost!

That Comrade Kuang-pin came from a bureaucratic family was well known by all of the comrades in the prison. But we seldom found in him any traces indicating that he was the son of a bureaucrat. He loved to labor, loved to study, and loved to help his comrades; he clearly differentiated between love and hate, and was filled with faith in the Revolution and with optimistic morale.

The comrades in Pai-kung-kuan originally had a system of taking turns sweeping and cleaning up, but Comrade Kuang-pin never followed this system. More than half the time it was he who fought to empty the toilet pail and scrub the floor, and whenever he had the chance, he would help his comrades wash and mend their clothing.

Why did he do such things? In his own words, it was because "I'm in better shape physically, and I ought to do a little more." He also said that "men were born to work and to serve the people."

Comrade Kuang-pin was a student at the auxiliary middle school of the former Southwest University, and was also one of those responsible for the student movements there. He had relatively high political and cultural standards, but nevertheless he wasn't satisfied, and fiercely pursued his studies. In order to study current events, he risked great danger by getting news materials from General Huang Hsien-sheng (7806 7359 5116) (second in command of the Northeast Army; at the time, he was the only one in Pai-kung-kuan permitted to read the "Central" Daily News [Chung-yang jih-pao]), who was in a cell on the floor above, by means of a secret passage. As there were no materials for the study of Chairman Mao's works, the method of mutual teaching and mutual

study was employed. Each person memorized a portion, and after each recited what he had memorized, discussions were held. In Cell No. 2, Comrade Kuang-pin and Comrade Liu Kuo-chih were the ones who could recite more of Chairman Mao's works than anyone else; he [Lo Kuang-pin] could recite the entire text of "Oppose Liberalism" from memory, and could also recite many of the chapters and lead sentences of articles on rectification published at that time. He also studied the history of philosophy with Comrade Liu Kuo-chih. He had put it thusly: "If we can break out of this living hell, the building of the New China will need us to go and do much work, and the political consciousness and cultural standards which we now have will fall far short of being able to meet demands. We must study more intensively, and welcome victory." It seems that this was the reason why he so dearly loved to study.

Comrade Kuang-pin completely betrayed his bureaucratic family and gave himself to the proletarian revolution. There was one time when his father, after pulling all sorts of strings, sought to get him out of prison on bail. He was taken away by agents for negotiations. They wanted him to cease his revolutionary activities after they released him, but he answered frankly: "I can't do that. You might as well send me back to Pai-kung-kuan!" His father was fuming with anger, but Comrade Kuang-pin said quietly: "Our political paths are not the same. I hope that you will no longer regard me as your son." Thus he was brought back. That night, as he was telling us about what happened, one comrade said jokingly, "Here you have to sleep on the floor and eat prison food; if you go, you can sleep on an innerspring mattress and have all kinds of delicacies and good food to eat. Your influential big brother might even give you a commission in the army. Why don't you go?" He said angrily, "I don't even consider that I have such a father and brother. Only a pig cares solely about whether he gets enough to eat and sleeps well."

Comrade Kuang-pin felt special enmity toward the enemy. Once, when everyone was talking about the traitor Liu Tsung-i (0491 1350 4135) (Liu Kuo-ting [0491 0948 1353]), who was the colonel in charge of the guards at that time, and Jan I-chih (0373 4135 1807), he said furiously: "After we are liberated, I am going to personally try them and execute them." In Cell No. 2 there originally was a man named Li Tzu-li (2621 5261-4539), a student at the New Nan-ch'uan Technical School, who was jailed for participating in a student movement. His behavior was very poor: at first, he

was afraid that he was going die; then he became unstable. Comrade Kuang-pin, seeing that he would become a traitor, reported the situation in the cell to the guards, warned him severely in no uncertain terms, and together with the comrades, negotiated with the prison officials until they removed this unstable element from Cell No. 2.

After breakfast on 28 October 1949, we were just cleaning up when the head guard Yang Chin-hsing suddenly ran up and hollered for Ch'en Jan and three other comrades to change into their own clothing (in the prison we all wore uniforms with distinctive markings), as they were to go into town immediately. Yang said that Director Hsu (i.e., Hsu Yuan-chu [1776 6678 5282], head of the agents in Southwest China) wanted to talk to them. But everyone knew what was happening, and so they all looked silently at the few who were about to leave. They quietly changed their clothing, and shook hands with everyone. Comrade Liu Kuo-chih took off his own jacket, and Comrade Kuang-pin took off his own flannel shirt. They gave them to Wan P'u and Ch'en Jan, saying, "It's cold out; you wear them." Shaking Comrade Kuang-pin's hand; Ch'en Jan said, "There's no need; there are more comrades in the prison, and there's still a good bit of this cold winter left. You must take proper care of yourselves and keep up the fight. Tomorrow is ours!" Many of the comrades were crying, and Comrade Kuang-pin, swallowing his hot tears, said decisively, "Alright, then. I'll remember what you have said. We must fight on until tomorrow."

Someone once remarked that Chung-mei-so was hell on earth, but Pai-kung-kuan was a hell in hell. There was little chance that those incarcerated in Pai-kung-kuan would leave it alive, unless they escaped. Whenever they heard the sound of a car, someone was taken out and shot, and whenever the agents and military judges arrived, someone would ride the "Tiger Bench," be tortured with electric shocks, or made to swallow water laced with hot pepper. In this dreadful 18-story hell, Comrade Kuang-pin was never pessimistic or shaky. He was warm and optimistic, and filled with faith in the revolution. He used an opportunity during an exercise period to get a lump of clay from the edge of the pond next to the latrine, and with some cotton wadding from his quilted coat, made it into a chess set. Later, using some thin rice gruel, toilet paper, and cigarette packages as raw material, he fashioned a deck of cards. With these two implements of cultural recreation, Cell No. 2 became quite a bit more joyful. He taught everyone to sing the revolutionary songs

popular at that time, to dance the rice-planting dance. His optimism infected each comrade in the cell, and although our life was bitter, we were spiritually contented. We studied and engaged ourselves in cultural and recreational activities at set times each day -- it was really like a revolutionary club.

In October 1949 we learned of the formal declaration of the establishment of the People's Republic of China in Peking, and of Chairman Mao's raising of the first five-star red flag at T'ien-an Men. This news caused all the comrades in the prison to seethe in unrest. Hot tears spilled from everyone's eyes, and no threats on the part of the guards could quell the wild joy of the comrades or the dancing and singing. Comrade Kuang-pin tore up a bed quilt and sewed it into a rather misshapen five-star red flag, saying, "We will break out of Chung-mei-so Prison with this red flag flying."

At the end of November 1949, the People's Liberation Army was pressing close upon Chungking, but the utterly despicable and evil Chiang bandits created the appalling "11.27" [27 November] massacre on the eve of their total destruction.

At breakfast time on 27 November, a criminal called Li Yu-sheng (2621 5148 3932) who worked in the mess (he was seized by the agents by mistake, but as the custom at Pai-kung-kuan was that no-one got out once he was in, they did not release him, permitting him to move around only within the walls of Pai-kung-kuan to take food to the other prisoners) told me that a few days before, a large number of guards were digging holes near the prison, and it was said that they were to be graves. On the basis of this news, we figured that it wouldn't be long before the massacre would begin. We discussed the question of escaping after breakfast by means of Comrade Kuang-pin's relations with Cell No. 4 (the main thing was how to coordinate our actions with Cha-tzu-tung in order to avoid reprisals being taken against the prisoners at one place for the actions of those at the other). But we never expected the great massacre to begin on that very day.

About three o'clock in the afternoon, Huang Hsien-sheng and Li Ying-i (2621 5391 3015), who were upstairs, were the first to be taken out of Pai-kung-kuan. Then began the wholesale slaughter. When Li Yu-sheng brought dinner, he said that three groups of prisoners from upstairs had

already been done away with, and that they would start on the prisoners downstairs that night. Then a guard called Yang Ch'in-tian (2799 2953 0368) (Ch'en Jan and the other comrades had worked for him for a long time; at that time, he had realized that the Chiang bandit gang had already lost their power, and that death was inevitable if he did not meritoriously redeem himself) revealed to us all that with the exception of Liu Kuo-chih, Lo Kuang-pin, Jen Ho-feng (0117 0149 7685), Ting Ti-p'ing, and T'an P'u (6223 2613), who would not be killed for the time being, everyone else would be executed that evening. Actually, this was unreliable news obtained from a guard, because in less than half an hour they began to take groups of prisoners from downstairs, and Liu Kuo-chih and Ting Ti-p'ing were in the first group taken out. When his name was called, Liu Kuo-chih pretended to be urinating, and lingered inside the door for many minutes. He was arranging a poem, "We Die Unashamed," the one which he recited in a loud, clear voice when he was killed.

The comrades were taken out in groups of three or five and shot, and before the comrades in each group left, they quietly shook hands with those remaining behind and bid them goodbye. Some said, "You take the first step, and we shall follow." Others said, "This is a sign that the entire country has been liberated." The sounds of gunfire came from beyond the wall, and the sounds of slogans, and inside the walls, each cell spontaneously began singing the Internationale. This was the symphony before the dawn, the most tragic and the most heroic song in the world. It made the murderers tremble and shake, and made the comrades' hot blood boil and the fires of hatred burn.

Around eight o'clock that evening there were only 19 comrades left in all of Pai-kung-kuan. Just then, word suddenly came that the 40 or so comrades in Cha-tzu-tung who had not yet been killed had escaped from their cells and were rioting. The head guard, scared and confused, hastily transferred Pai-kung-kuan's entire contingent of "mobile personnel" to aid in suppressing the outbreak. This created the best possible chance for escape. Comrade Kuang-pin negotiated once again with Yang Ch'in-tian, the guard who had been won over, and he finally turned over the keys to the cell doors. In Cell No. 2, the sixteen comrades downstairs immediately began to discuss a way of breaking out. Then they decided that Comrade Lo Kuang-pin would be commander-in-chief, and that Mao Hsiao-ch'u (3029 2556 0443) and I would assist. We first released a woman and two children who were upstairs, and then split up into two groups and broke out through one

of the side doors in the wall around Pai-kung-kuan. During our escape, one comrade was careless and pushed over a bamboo fence next to the kitchen. The guards posted on the highway heard the noise and fired a volley of bullets, but because they were far away and because it was night, no one was wounded.

It was an entire night after the escape before we got away from the restricted Chung-mei-so area on the barren slopes below Ko-le-shan.

Throughout our escape, Comrade Kuang-pin completely fulfilled all of the responsibilities which a Communist Party member should fulfill. After we ate that night, some unreliable news was passed around, which was that he might have been recaptured and taken to Taiwan. When the rest were executed, they all told him their wills, and wanted him to forward them to the Party and to their relatives. Writing down everybody's wills, he said sternly, "If we're to die, then let us die together; if we're to live, then let us think of a way to be together in order to complete the requests of our comrades who have already died, and in order to reveal to the people of the world the enormous evil of the U. S. - Chiang pirates. We must make one final effort and find a way to break out. We must put all our efforts into getting one man out, and must not entertain any other fantasies."

A member of the Democratic Party called Chiang Tsai-li (1203 6528 4539) was so frightened during the massacre that he asked for pardon from the enemy, and Comrade Kuang-pin angrily cursed him.

While he was in prison, Comrade Kuang-pin was determined and optimistic, and during the break-out he was brave and quick-witted. He led the singing of the Internationale, the shouting of slogans, and the break out of Pai-kung-kuan. The nineteen comrades who escaped from the danger of Pai-kung-kuan Prison can attest that he did not besmirch the glorious title of Communist Party member, that he was a good son of the Party. If any still has doubts in regard to this point, let him come and inquire of those of us who were there!

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