

# EDGAR SNOW

# THE LONG

# REVOLUTION

EN MIN CHENG SHE WAR 511



\$1.95 V-930

794-71930

# THE LONG REVOLUTION



Edgar Snow



*Vintage Books*  
*A Division of Random House*  
*New York*

VINTAGE BOOKS EDITION, August 1973

Copyright © 1971, 1972 by Lois Wheeler Snow

All rights reserved under International and Pan-American Copyright Conventions. Published in the United States by Random House, Inc., New York, and simultaneously in Canada by Random House of Canada Limited, Toronto. Originally published by Random House, Inc., in 1972.

Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data  
Snow, Edgar, 1905-1972.

The long revolution.

1. China—Description and travel—1949—

I. Title.

[DS711.S57 1973] 951.05 73-4517

ISBN 0-394-71930-1

Portions of this manuscript have been published, in a different form, in *Life* and in *The New Republic*.

Manufactured in the United States of America

*To the doctors and nurses from the People's Republic  
of China who came so fully to the aid of my husband  
and to  
Chairman Mao Tse-tung and Premier Chou En-lai  
who made this gift of love and attention possible,  
I dedicate this book*

**LOIS WHEELER SNOW**

# Acknowledgments

I am deeply grateful to Mary Heathcote, who has worked with my husband as an editor and a friend for many years. She was with him in Switzerland during the writing of this book and continued her work on the manuscript in New York after his death.

I am also grateful to our good friend O. Edmund Clubb, who read the manuscript with the care and attention he previously gave to my husband's other books.

A special note of thanks to Jean Pohoryles, who has somehow bridged time and distance gaps to coordinate the whole.

L.W.S.

## Publisher's Note

Edgar Snow returned from his last trip to China in February of 1971. He died on February 15, 1972. Had he lived, he would undoubtedly have added documentation in the manner of his notes and bibliographies for the new editions of *Red Star Over China* and *Red China Today: The Other Side of the River*. He would certainly have augmented from his notes the accounts of his 1970-71 interviews with Chairman Mao Tse-tung and Premier Chou En-lai.

Edgar Snow's wife, Lois Wheeler Snow, wrote in her letter giving consent to publication of *The Long Revolution*, "The book is an unfinished work—a beginning punctuated by the abrupt ending that death decreed for my husband. In it are the seeds of a new relationship between the people of China and America. If we nourish them they will grow."

# Contents

## Part One: A DIFFERENT COUNTRY?

1. *Encounter at T'ien An Men* 3
2. *A Hint from Premier Chou* 7
3. *Essence of the Cultural Revolution* 13
4. *Outside Citizen Wang* 23

## Part Two: MEDICAL CARE AND POPULATION CONTROL

5. *Abortion with Acupuncture* 31
6. *What Is Acupuncture?* 35
7. *Sex and Demography* 42
8. *Some Special Situations* 51
9. *"Stressing the Rural Areas First"* 55

## Part Three: THE GREAT PROLETARIAN CULTURAL REVOLUTION

10. *Cooling the Cult* 65
11. *The Culture* 72
12. *Conspiracy by Propaganda* 81
13. *Open Warfare* 89

## Part Four: THE ARMY, THE PARTY, AND THE PEOPLE

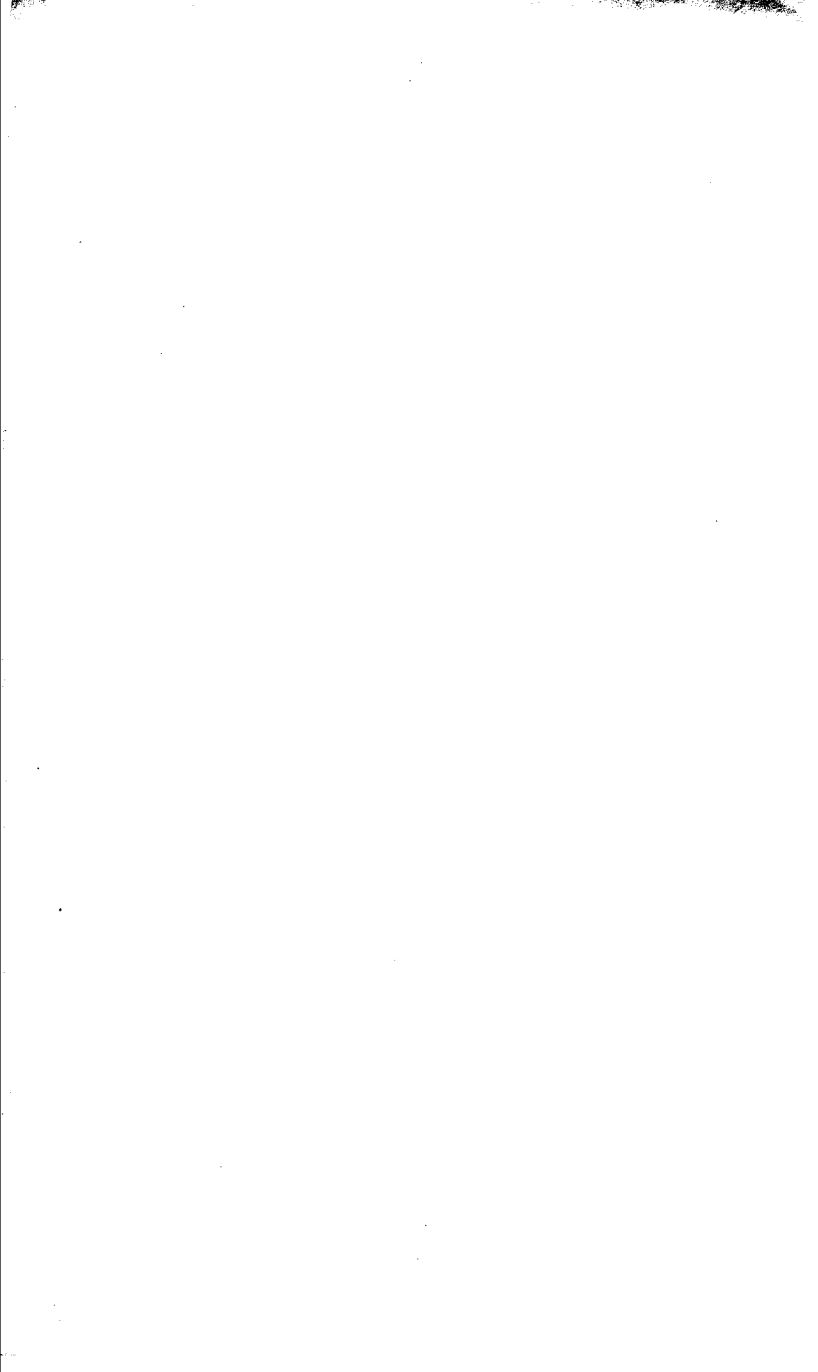
14. *A Military Dictatorship?* 99
15. *"Serving the People"* 106
16. *The Army as Builder* 111
17. *Alice in Nanniwan* 117
18. *The Army and the People* 128

<b>Part Five: PEOPLE'S COMMUNES</b>	
19. <i>Beginnings</i>	137
20. <i>Sentimental Journey</i>	140
21. <i>The Rich and the Poor</i>	146
22. <i>Looking Backward and Ahead</i>	148
<b>Part Six: A NIGHT WITH THE PREMIER</b>	
23. <i>Chou En-lai and the Open Door</i>	153
<b>Part Seven: BREAKFAST WITH THE CHAIRMAN</b>	
24. <i>A Conversation with Mao Tse-tung</i>	167
<b>Part Eight: NIXON'S REACH FOR THE FORBIDDEN CITY</b>	
25. <i>A Position of Strength</i>	179
<b>APPENDIXES</b>	
<i>South of the Mountains to North of the Seas</i>	191
<i>Talks with Chou En-lai, 1964</i>	224
<i>Resolutions of the Eleventh Plenum of the Central     Committee of the C.C.P.—The Sixteen-Point     Program of the Cultural Revolution, 1966</i>	238
<i>Constitution of the Communist Party of China</i>	250
<b>INDEX</b>	261



# Part One

## *A Different Country?*



# I

## Encounter at T'ien An Men

It was a perfect October day in Peking for the twenty-first anniversary celebration of the founding of the People's Republic. Seated unsuspectingly on the crowded balcony of T'ien An Men (Heavenly Peace Gate), I felt a tug at my sleeve and turned to see Premier Chou En-lai there. He quickly led me and my wife, Lois, to stand beside Chairman Mao, where for some minutes we occupied positions at the center of China's one fourth (or is it one fifth?) of mankind. Nothing the Chinese leaders publicly do is without purpose. Something significant was happening, but what was it?

Across the wide square, which holds half a million people, a large signboard proclaimed, in letters readable a block away, an excerpt from Mao Tse-tung's statement of May 20, 1970. The occasion then was the declaration of China's firm support for Prince Sihanouk's resistance to the Lon Nol coup d'état and to Lon Nol's American allies in Cambodia, and for the newly formed anti-American alliance of the Indochinese peoples. To emphasize the point, Prince Sihanouk stood there too, on the other side of the Chairman. The Prince was smiling—he likes to smile—and to my wife's remark that we were not the only

Americans who opposed the Cambodian invasion he proffered a warm reply, "The American people are our friends!"

"Peoples of the world," read Mao's summons, "unite to defeat the U.S. aggressors and all their running dogs [tsou-kou]!"

In Chinese propaganda clichés, running dogs means servile accomplices.

When our balcony photograph was later published by the *People's Daily* on the Chairman's seventy-seventh birthday I was described as a "friendly American." In the upper right-hand corner, which contains the Mao Thought for the day, was a box which enclosed the words, "Peoples of the world, including the American people, are all our friends."

Chairman Mao takes pains to separate people from governments and their policies. If a symbol was needed for that, I was pleased to be it: that is, to represent the many Americans against the armed invasion and destruction of Vietnam and other Indochinese countries. Was I there to receive a salute to the war resisters in the United States who were at last bringing a halt to what General Matthew Ridgway had prophetically called a "tragic blunder"? Yes, it was that—but something more, too. . . .

Foreign press canards had described Mao's hand as palsied and kept hidden in his sleeve but I noticed that his handshake was as firm as ever. He had lost some extra weight and looked fitter than when I had last seen him in 1965—at a moment, I now realized, when he had been making perhaps the most crucial and daring decision of his life as a revolutionary leader. That decision was to purge his Party-chosen successor, Liu Shao-ch'i, vice-chairman of the Communist Party and chairman of the Republic, along with other Party members "in authority who are taking the capitalist road"—and all *their* running dogs—targets of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution.

Mao spoke about it briefly as we watched the ingenious floats and *tableaux vivants* roll past. What organization! And what color and variety of costume in contrast to drab everyday clothes worn by workers and intellectuals alike. Most of China's minority nationalities were there, some forty-seven of them, who speak over twenty different languages and make up 5 or 6 percent of the total population—now between 750 and 800 million. The day's theme was production and preparedness: blue and gray uniforms were everywhere but one saw few weapons except in the hands of teenage militia, including girls with their hair in pony tails.

Each tableau exceeded the other in glorification of Mao's works, maxims, and directives, as followed in commune, factory, cultural, and military life. Most spectacular: a range of mountains pierced by tunnels joined by bridges supporting a rapidly moving model train represented completion of the last link in a rail system which now joined farthest Chinese Turkestan with the southern frontier at Vietnam. Never out of sight were statues and busts, some of great size, which reproduced the erect figure beside me, leader and initiator of the second or cultural liberation, aimed to restore the purity of the revolution and involve the masses in its direction as never before.

"*Mao Chuhsi wansui! Mao Chuhsi wansui wansui! Mao Chuhsi wansui wansui wansui!*" "Chairman Mao, ten thousand times ten thousand times ten thousand years!" rang the chorus below, where tears sprang to many eyes, and not only among the young.

"How does it look to you?" I could not resist asking, as I waved toward the adoring marchers. "How does it *feel?*"

Mao grimaced, shook his head, and said that it was better but he was not satisfied. In what way? Before he could reply we were interrupted by new arrivals. Only some weeks later, in a lengthy talk, was I able to repeat the question—and then he spoke quite frankly about the "nuisance" of the personality cult. But I discovered that

on that October day his mind had not been on the images and flags and flowers with which human hands and heads animated Mao quotations. He was thinking about the problems of rebuilding the Party and the state superstructure, about recovering the rhythm of production lost during the cultural upheaval, about hastening the end of the Vietnamese war, and about widening China's contacts with the outside world. Was he also thinking about a possible dialogue with Richard Nixon?

We were having a rebellion of sorts in the United States now, were we not? he asked me. He was impressed by the American war-resistance movement—which he had applauded in that May 20 statement—and he wanted to hear more about its political meaning. We would, he said, soon meet again.

## A Hint from Premier Chou

I had lived and worked in China during the first Nationalist-Communist civil war and during part of the Second World War.<sup>1</sup> Finally in 1960 I was able to return, as again in 1964-65 and now in 1970. Lois Wheeler, my actress wife, had never been to China before, although she had been offered a visa with me. On earlier occasions, however, our U.S. State Department had refused to "validate" her passport for travel in China, held to be "not in the national interest." This time she came without waiting for Washington's permission.

My own 1960 and 1965 "validations" had been yielded only after pressure applied at a high level in Washington by my publishers. At the same level my subsequent reports had of course been ignored. But that story of a decade of lost effort to penetrate the lofty realms of policy making with a few pieces of useful information—and the chance to "begin anew with China," as John Kennedy put it in his inaugural speech in 1963 and quickly forgot, instead to take his presidential turn at entrapping us in the Vietnam jungles—has been told elsewhere.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> As a correspondent: see *Journey to the Beginning* (Random House, New York, 1957; Vintage Books, 1972).

<sup>2</sup> See *Red China Today: The Other Side of the River* (Random House, New York, 1962; Vintage Books, 1971).

Now here was Lois by my side, and among the very few American women ever to enter the People's Republic, with a pair of alert and receptive brown eyes to help my own. We reached Peking in early August, entering what Pekingese call the Tiger Heat—mitigated somewhat nowadays by the shade of myriad trees and neighboring afforestation.

Hardly any foreigners, even among old-time resident sympathizers, had been permitted to travel outside Peking since early in the cultural revolution.<sup>3</sup> Formerly routine tourist sights—the Great Wall, the Ming Tombs, the Western Hills, even the grand museums and palaces of Peking—had been closed to visitors. When I began to retrace old paths to such places with Lois, diplomats and foreign residents were encouraged to hope—and they were right—that the “worst of the tension” was about over.

We spent a whole week at two universities I used to know well—Yenching, where I once lectured, and nearby Tsing Hua, a noted engineering school. There we heard first-hand accounts of the years of cultural combat and the university upheaval, with the Red Guard story and its sequels. We saw modern and rural hospitals, a locomotive plant, a steel mill, and heard other sides of the cultural revolution. We flew to Shensi province, in the Northwest, and from its capital, Sian, went on to Yen-an, the celebrated wartime guerrilla capital. Westward then to Pao An (Tze Dan)—the first foreigners to go there since 1945—and deep into the hills where in 1936 I first met Mao Tse-tung, then a hunted “Red bandit.”<sup>4</sup> We saw a state farm run by the army and a political reform school

<sup>3</sup> One exception was my oldest foreign friend in China, the New Zealander Rewi Alley, who is possibly the most traveled man in Chinese history. He is soon bringing out a book devoted to his travels during the cultural revolution.

<sup>4</sup> See *Red Star Over China* (Random House, New York, 1937; rev. ed., Grove Press, New York, 1968, 1971).



where a former Sian Party Committee chairman showed us the piggeries of which he was now in charge. And back to Sian and Peking, and lots of theater and lots of talk with old friends over good food, and then on to the Northeast, above the Great Wall. More industry, a deaf-mute school run by army acupuncturists, the great Anshan steel complex—and then far down south to see the Trade Fair at Canton. Up again to the east coast and tea-planted Chekiang, on to Shanghai and the Lower Yangtze, and more communes and friendly people.

Altogether, I visited eleven communes in six months before I left China in February, making a total of thirty-three communes—at all points of the Chinese compass—where I have been welcomed during the past decade. Now everywhere the land lay green, more leveled off, better terraced, thickly tree-planted, and nearer the garden state Mao promised years ago. And everywhere we provoked crowds startled at the vision of the first Occidentals seen for years. That was, of course, still a few months Before Ping-Pong.

And ping-pong was where I was first welcomed back by Premier Chou En-lai.

It was August 18, 1970. We had been invited to a table-tennis match between North Korean and Chinese teams but had declined owing to a previous dinner engagement. In the midst of some roast duck my friend Yao Wei (with whom I had shared many earlier adventures<sup>5</sup>) phoned to say, simply, "Get ready for a trip." That meant a command appearance: I guessed it might be from the Premier, and so it was. We found him at the Table Tennis Stadium—a beautiful new building which seats 18,000—presiding at the match with octogenarian Vice-Chairman (of the People's Republic) Tung Pi-wu, Prince Sihanouk and his charming consort, chief of the army general staff Huang Yung-sheng, Vice-

<sup>5</sup> See *Red China Today*, *op. cit.*