

Red Guard Accuses Anna Strong

By Mark Gayn

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HONG KONG — Anna Louise Strong, whose admiration for Mao Tse-tung has made her name and face known to millions in China, is in political trouble in Peking.

Arrivals from the Chinese capital report the appearance of Red Guard posters accusing the 83-year-old Communist author of being an "imperialist agent," who has betrayed Chairman Mao and his Cultural Revolution.

Normally, Miss Strong could rely on her 25 years of friendship with Mao to protect her from all evil winds. To attack this white-haired, angelic-looking woman would appear to be unthinkable. However, the severe and sudden purge of the last 90 days has decimated the small, tight band of American and British Communists who, like her, had given their all to China and Mao.

Miss Strong may have had some warning of the trouble. Back in March, while in South China, she mailed the contents of her magazine, "Letter from China," to Peking for publication. When she returned to the capital three weeks later, the material was still lying about unattended.

Miss Strong has been living in Peking in a comfortable, old-fashioned house in what is known as "The Peace Compound," where other foreign followers of Mao reside. Her house has a wide veranda, where she rested in a chaise longue on hot summer evenings. She took her vacations either at the Tsunghua hot springs in the South or at the sea resort of Weihaiwei.

It could thus have been a comfortable retirement.

Miss Strong, never lost either her zest for work or her enthusiasm for the Chinese Revolution, with which she fell in love for the first time in the mid-'20s.

In 1927, when Chiang Kai-shek broke with the Communists, Miss Strong escaped from China with Michael Borodin and other Soviet advisers. Her present fame, however, rests on an interview she had with Mao in 1946 in a cave in the Communist "Apprentice" Yenan.

Mao has immortalized her by reproducing the gist of the interview in an essay called, "All Reactionaries Are Paper Tigers."

The argument that the capitalist world only looks strong, but is in fact a paper monster, has become one of the cardinal concepts of Maoism. As it took hold, so did Miss Strong's name attached to it. The essay has been reproduced in Mao's collected works, of which millions of volumes have been sold.

This spring, though, has been hard on Miss Strong and other members of the Western "Old Guard."

Those detained include Miss Strong's occasional collaborator, Sidney Rittenberg. An American, Rittenberg has been working for the Communists for more than 20 years.

In recent years he has been with Radio Peking. When that became a battleground between two rival bands of leftists, he sided with the more extreme one. His militancy earned him a place on the "revolutionary" triumvirate running Radio Peking. But when the tables were turned on the extreme leftists, Rittenberg was ousted, denounced as an "American spy," and demoted to a lesser job.

Also in trouble are Brooklyn-born Israel Epstein and his English wife, Lady Elsie Fairfax-Cholmondoley. Both had been working for Peking's publishing octopus known as

the Foreign Languages Press. A senior member of the "Old Guard," Epstein was given the exalted task of translating Mao's utterances.

After reports of Mrs. Epstein's arrest, the British government asked Peking for information. It is still waiting.

Those still untouched by the purged include a notable quartet. The most eminent of them is George Hatem, of Buffalo, N.Y. Known as Dr. Ma Haitch, he drifted to the Communist northwest in the mid-'30s, and for a while served as Mao's physician. Today he is engaged in fighting leprosy in the south.

Another is Rewi Alley, who began his China career with the co-operative movement before joining the Communists. He and Hatem have both been used by Peking to court visiting writers.

Two others still in Peking are Frank Goe and Sol Adler, once well known in Washington. Today, from their offices in Academia Sinica, they pro-

vide advice on the economy of the West, and especially the United States.