Early History of Spacecraft and Rocketry

GREAT PROLETARIAN CULTURAL REVOLUTION

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There was never a clear aim to eliminate a whole section of the population. Even intellectuals, who were particularly affected at the outset, were not for long the prime targets of persecutions. Moreover, the persecutors often came from their own ranks....

...For the whole period of the Cultural Revolution, between 3 and 4 million of the 18 million cadres were imprisoned, as were 400,000 soldiers, despite banning of Red Guards in the PLA. Among intellectuals, 142,000 teachers, 53,000 scientists and technicians, 500 teachers of medicine, and 2,600 artists and writers were persecuted, and many of them were killed or committed suicide. These latter figures, which are not entirely reliable are those used in the trial of the Gang of Four in 1981...

S. Courtois et al. (1999, 513, 514, 524, 795)

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