

596

HOW TO BE  
A GOOD COMMUNIST

LIU SHAO-CHI

FOREIGN LANGUAGES PRESS  
PEKING, CHINA

How To Be A Good Communist

Liu Shao-chi:

Scanned / Transcribed by  
The Socialist Truth in Cyprus – London Bureaux

<http://www.st-cyprus.co.uk/intro.htm>

<http://www.st-cyprus.co.uk/english/home/index.php>



**Publisher's Note**

The present English translation of Liu Shao-chi's *How to Be A Good Communist* has been made from the text of the Chinese edition published by the Hsin Hua (New China) Bookstore in December, 1949.

First Edition.....October 1951



LIU SHAO-CHI

HOW TO BE  
A GOOD COMMUNIST

BY

LIU SHAO-CHI

FOREIGN LANGUAGES PRESS  
PEKING, CHINA

# CONTENTS

## CHAPTER ONE

	PAGE
INTRODUCTION .....	1
Why Must Communist Party Members Undertake Self-cultivation? .....	1
Strive to Become the Best Pupils of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin .....	13
The Aspects and Methods of Cultivation .....	22
The Relation Between the Study of Marxist- Leninist Theory and the Ideological Cultiva- tion of Party Members .....	31

## CHAPTER TWO

THE IDEOLOGICAL CULTIVATION OF PARTY MEMBERS .....	37
It Is Necessary to Understand that the Cause of Communism Is the Greatest and Most Arduous Cause in the History of Mankind ..	39

	PAGE
The Unconditional Subordination of the Personal Interests of a Party Member to the Interests of the Party .....	51
Examples of Various Kinds of Erroneous Ideologies in the Party .....	62
The Origin of the Various Erroneous Ideologies in the Party .....	82
The Attitude Towards Various Erroneous Ideologies in the Party and Inner-Party Struggle	88

*APPENDICES*

THE CLASS CHARACTER OF MAN .....	113
A BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE ABOUT THE AUTHOR..	121

## How to Be A Good Communist

(A series of lectures delivered by Liu Shao-chi in July 1939 at the Institute of Marxism-Leninism in Yen-an)

## CHAPTER ONE

---

### INTRODUCTION

**C**OMRADES! I MUST APOLOGISE. It is quite some time since you asked me to give you a talk but I have had to delay coming until today. The question I am going to talk about is the cultivation of Communist Party members. I think that it may not be unprofitable for us to talk about this question at a time when we are facing the basic task of building and consolidating the Party. I want to divide my talk into several parts, so today I shall deal with one part only, leaving the rest for next time. In order to enable many of the younger comrades to understand, I shall have to give more explanations and examples on certain questions. Consequently, I cannot make my talk very succinct. This I must make clear at the very beginning.

#### **Why Must Communist Party Members Undertake Self-cultivation?**

Comrades, why must Communist Party members undertake self-cultivation?



---

Ever since man came into the world, in order to be able to live, he has had to struggle against nature to produce the material values essential to his existence.

However, men carry on a struggle against nature and utilise nature for the production of material values not in isolation from each other, not as separate individuals, but in common, in groups, in societies. Production, therefore, is at all times and under all conditions *social* production. In the production of material values men enter into mutual relations of one kind or another within production, into relations of production of one kind or another. (*The History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (B) Short Course*, English edition, 1951, pp. 188-189)

Thus, the struggle carried on by men against nature for production is social in character. It is a struggle of men as social beings against nature. It is in this ceaseless struggle against nature that human beings have been continuously changing nature and simultaneously themselves and have changed their relations with one another. It is in the course of the long struggle of men as social beings against nature, that men's physical forms (hands, feet, posture, etc.), their social relations, their forms of social organisation as well as their brains, ideology, etc. are all continuously being changed and improved. This is because:

The first feature of production is that it never stays at one point for a long time and is always in a state of change and development, and that, furthermore, changes in the mode of production inevitably call forth changes in the whole social system, social ideas, political views and political

---

institutions. (*The History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (B) Short Course*, English edition, 1951, pp. 189-190)

Man has evolved from animals. In ancient times, man's mode of life, social organisation and ideology, etc. were different from what they are today. In the future, man's mode of life, social organisation, ideology, etc. will also be different from what they are today.

Humanity itself and human society are a kind of process of historical evolution. They are developing and changing and they can be, and have already been, continuously changed in the course of struggle.

When human society developed to a certain historical stage, class society arose. Thereafter, men in a class society existed as men of a given class. According to the principles of Marxist philosophy, men's social being determines their ideology. Thus, in a class society men's ideology represents the ideology of a given social class. In a class society there are ceaseless class struggles. Thus, in the course of constant struggle against nature and constant class struggle in society, men change nature, change society and at the same time change their own ideology.

Marx once told the workers:

It is not only for the purpose of changing the existing social relations but also for the purpose of changing yourselves and making yourselves into talented people capable of carrying on political rule that you will have to go through fifteen, twenty, or fifty years of civil and international wars.

---

In other words, men change themselves not only in their struggle against nature but also in constant social struggle. The proletariat will also have to consciously go through a long period of social struggle to change society and itself.

Thus, men should regard themselves as being in need of, and capable of, being changed. They should not look upon themselves as something unchanging, perfect, holy and beyond reform. It is no disgrace to regard this as necessary because it conforms to the inevitable laws of natural and social evolution; otherwise, men cannot make progress.

We Communist Party members are the most advanced revolutionaries in modern history and are the contemporary fighting and driving force in changing society and the world. Revolutionaries exist because counter-revolutionaries still exist. Therefore, to conduct a ceaseless struggle against the counter-revolutionaries constitutes an essential condition for the existence and development of the revolutionaries. If they fail to carry on such a struggle, they cannot be called revolutionaries and still less can they advance and develop. It is in the course of this ceaseless struggle against the counter-revolutionaries that Communist Party members change society, change the world and at the same time change themselves.

A Communist Party member changes himself through the struggle against counter-revolution in various fields. It means that to achieve one's own progress and to raise

---

one's revolutionary qualities and technique requires the unification of the following two aspects: one's steeling in the practical struggle and the cultivation of one's ideas. To pass from a novice to a mature and well-experienced revolutionary able to cope with any situation calls for a very long process of revolutionary steeling and cultivation, that is, a long process of reformation. A comparatively inexperienced revolutionary is still unable to acquire a really profound understanding of the enemy, of himself, of the laws of social development and the laws of the revolution because he has grown up in the old society and naturally has brought with him remnants of various ideologies, prejudices and habits of the old society and because he is still inexperienced and has not yet undergone a long period of revolutionary practice.

In order to change this situation, besides studying revolutionary experiences from history (the practice of our forefathers) he must himself participate in the contemporary revolutionary practice. In this revolutionary practice, that is, in the struggle against various counter-revolutionary elements, he should develop his subjective initiative and redouble his efforts in study and cultivation. Only then will he be able to gradually learn from his experience and to understand more profoundly the laws of social development and the laws of the revolution; be able to understand the enemy and himself; be able to discover the incorrectness of his own former ideas, habits and prejudices and to correct them; be able to raise the level of his consciousness, and his revolutionary

---

qualities and improve his revolutionary methods, etc. Therefore, in order to change himself and raise the level of his consciousness, a revolutionary should not of course isolate himself from revolutionary practice, or abandon his own subjective efforts to carry on self-cultivation and to learn through practice (both his own practice and that of others). Without the latter it will still be impossible for a revolutionary to improve himself.

For example, several Communist Party members go together to take part in a certain revolutionary mass struggle, undergo almost the same revolutionary practice and yet in the end the influence exerted on these Party members might be entirely different. Some may advance very quickly and some formerly backward members may even overtake others. Some may advance very slowly. Others may even begin to vacillate in the course of the struggle, and the revolutionary practice, instead of enabling them to advance, has left them behind. What is the cause of all this?

Again for example, many of our Communist Party members took part in the Long March, which was a severe test for our Party members and which exercised an extremely progressive and positive influence among Party members and even among the broad masses of the people. However, in the case of a very small number of Party members the influence was just the opposite. Having gone through the hard struggle of the Long March and the 10 years' Civil War, they grew fearful of this hard struggle. They attempted to retreat and run away.

---

Finally, they deserted the revolutionary ranks as a result of outside inducement. Many Party members took part in the Long March and yet the influence upon them and the results thus obtained were vastly different. What is the cause of all this?

This is because these Party members possessed different revolutionary qualities, because they developed in different directions in revolutionary practice and because they differed in their subjective efforts in revolutionary practice, and in their degree and methods of self-cultivation. Because of the different qualities possessed by revolutionaries and the variation in their subjective efforts and self-cultivation, entirely different or even opposite results and influences may ensue. Such cases can be found even in your school. In the school you all receive the same kind of education and training. However, because of your different qualities, experiences, cultural levels, subjective efforts and the degree and methods of self-cultivation, you may get different or even opposite results. Have you not noticed that a small number of people have moved further away from the revolution after receiving education and training in schools in Yen-an? This is due to the same cause. Hence, for a revolutionary to change and improve himself, subjective effort, self-cultivation and learning in the course of the revolutionary struggle are absolutely necessary and indispensable.

Not every revolutionary who has undergone the steeling of long years of revolutionary struggle can de-

---

velop into a very good and experienced revolutionary, chiefly because his own efforts and self-cultivation are insufficient. But all those who have succeeded in becoming very good and experienced revolutionaries must certainly have gone through long years of steeling and self-cultivation in the revolutionary struggle. Hence, our Party members can make themselves politically inflexible revolutionaries of high quality only by steeling themselves, strengthening their self-cultivation, not losing their sense of the new and by improving their thinking ability in the course of the revolutionary struggle of the broad masses under all difficulties and hardships.

Confucius said:

At fifteen, I had my mind bent on learning. At thirty, I stood firm. At forty, I had no doubts. At fifty, I knew the decree of Heaven. At sixty, my ear was an obedient organ for the reception of truth. At seventy, I could follow my heart's desire, without transgressing what was right.

Here Confucius was relating the process of his steeling and self-cultivation. He did not regard himself as a born 'sage'.

Mencius said:

When Heaven is about to confer a great office on any man, it first exercises his mind with suffering, and his sinews and bones with toil. It exposes his body to hunger, and subjects him to extreme poverty. It confounds his undertakings. By all these methods it stimulates his mind, hardens his nature, and remedies his incompetencies.

---

What Mencius said also refers to the process of steeling and self-cultivation that a great man must undergo. As Communist Party members have to shoulder the unprecedentedly 'great office' of changing the world, it is all the more necessary for them to go through such steeling and self-cultivation.

The cultivation of Communist Party members is a revolutionary cultivation. We cannot carry on our cultivation by divorcing ourselves from revolutionary practice or the practical revolutionary movement of the broad toiling masses, particularly the proletarian masses. The aim of our cultivation is solely to serve the interests of revolutionary practice and to direct more effectively the practical revolutionary movement of the masses. Herein lies the difference between our cultivation and other idealistic, formal and abstract cultivations which are divorced from social practice. I shall make a further brief explanation on this point later on.

Our Party members should steel themselves and intensify their self-cultivation not only in the course of arduous, difficult and even unsuccessful revolutionary practice but also in the course of favourable, successful and victorious revolutionary practice. Some Party members cannot keep their balance when they are heartened by success and victory and become dizzy with victories. Victory, success, the tribute paid them by the broad masses of the people as well as a certain amount of prestige which they enjoy among the masses make them unscrupulous, arrogant, bureaucratic or even vacillating,

---

corrupt and degenerate, thus completely losing their former revolutionary spirit.

These are individual cases which are frequently found among our Communist Party members. The existence of such phenomena within the Party should serve as a serious warning to our Party members for it was almost an inevitable rule that such phenomena existed among the revolutionaries of past generations. But such phenomena definitely will not be tolerated in our Party. The revolutionaries of past generations, prior to the success and victory of the revolution and their own success and victory, were able to represent the demands of the progressive and oppressed masses and retain their revolutionary qualities, but as soon as the revolution and they themselves were crowned with success and victory they would more often than not become corrupt, bureaucratic and degenerate, thus losing their revolutionary qualities and their progressive character and becoming obstacles to the revolution and social evolution.

We know that many revolutionaries in China in the past hundred years, or more recently in the past fifty years, began to show signs of corruption and degeneration the moment they had achieved a certain measure of success and risen to some responsible position. This is due to the class basis of those revolutionaries of past generations. Because the revolutionaries of the past represented the exploiting classes they naturally turned around and oppressed the exploited masses after the victory of their revolution and thus became obstacles to the

---

continuous progress of the revolution and social evolution. It is an inevitable rule that the revolutionaries of the past would become corrupt, bureaucratic and even degenerate and lose their revolutionary qualities after the victory and success of the revolution.

However, this cannot and will not be the case with us Communists. As the exploited proletariat which we represent does not exploit anybody, it can carry on the revolution to the very end, completely liberate mankind as a whole and eventually make a clean sweep of all forms of corruption, bureaucracy and degeneracy in human society. It can build up a party and State apparatus with strict organisation and discipline for the purpose of carrying on an irreconcilable struggle against all forms of corruption, bureaucracy and degeneracy and to ceaselessly purge the Party and the State apparatus of those elements who are corrupt, bureaucratic and degenerate in their work (no matter what 'big-wigs' such elements are), so that the purity of the Party and the State apparatus can be preserved.

This outstanding feature of the revolutionary Party of the proletariat was not, and could not be, found in any of the revolutionary parties of the past. Therefore, our Party members must clearly understand this outstanding feature and see to it that even in the course of the success and victory of the revolution and in the course of the infinite rise of our popularity and authority special care is taken to intensify our self-cultivation and preserve our pure revolutionary qualities so as to avoid

---

at the very end going the way of the revolutionaries of the past who became degenerate after they had been crowned with success.

Such revolutionary steeling and cultivation are important for every one of our Party members and particularly so for those new Party members of non-proletarian origin. Why are they particularly important for new Party members of non-proletarian origin? (1) Precisely because such Party members are of non-proletarian origin. Lenin said that Party members of worker origin have the innate qualities of the proletariat. It follows then that Party members of other class origin naturally have the innate qualities of other classes. Although they have accepted the Communist ideology today, they more or less still retain remnants of non-Communist ideology and habits. (2) Precisely because they are new Party members and have not yet undergone much steeling. Therefore, they have to steel and cultivate themselves in the course of the revolutionary struggle before they can become good revolutionaries.

Steeling and cultivation are important for every Party member, whether he be a new member of non-proletarian origin or even a veteran member or a member of proletarian origin. This is because our Communist Party did not drop from the heavens but was born out of Chinese society and because every member of our Party came from this squalid old society of China and are still living in this society today. Hence, our Party members have more or less brought with them remnants of the

---

ideology and habits of the old society and they remain in constant association with all the squalid things of the old society. We are still in need of steeling and cultivation in every respect for the sake of enhancing and preserving our purity as the proletarian vanguard and for the sake of raising our social qualities and revolutionary technique.\*

That is the reason why Communist Party members must undertake self-cultivation.

**Strive to Become the Best Pupils  
of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin**

To become a Communist Party member one is only required to possess the qualifications as laid down in the Party Constitution—namely, any person may become a member of the Party who accepts the Programme and Constitution of the Party, pays Party membership dues and undertakes assigned tasks in one of the Party's organisations. These are the minimum qualifications that every Party member must possess. Without these qualifications one cannot become a Party member. But every one of our Party members should not merely be a member of minimum qualifications, should not merely be satisfied with and should not confine himself to these minimum qualifications but should rather seek to make progress and ceaselessly raise his or her own consciousness and understanding of Marxism-Leninism. This is also a duty to the Party and to the revolution, which must not be shirked by any member of the Party. This duty

---

has also been included in the new Party Constitution recently adopted by the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (B). However, in order to fulfill this duty satisfactorily our Party members must intensify their own steeling and cultivation.

Therefore, the goal of Party members in steeling and cultivation should not merely be the standard of minimum qualifications but should be the standard of maximum qualifications. At present we find it very difficult to define these maximum qualifications. However, we have before us the words and deeds, the achievements and qualities of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin throughout their lives as our examples and as the criterion of our cultivation. By cultivation is meant raising our own qualities in every respect to the same level as those of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin. Let us strive to become their best pupils. In his speech concerning the elections to the Supreme Soviet Comrade Stalin said:

The electors, the people, must demand that their Deputies should remain equal to their tasks; that in their work they should not sink to the level of political philistines; that in their posts they should remain political figures of the Lenin type; that as public figures they should be as clear and definite as Lenin was; that they should be as fearless in battle and as merciless towards the enemies of the people as Lenin was; that they should be free from all panic, from any semblance of panic as Lenin was, when things begin to get complicated and some danger or other looms on the horizon; that they should be as wise and deliberate in deciding complex problems requiring a comprehensive orientation and a comprehensive weighing of all pros and cons as Lenin was;

---

that they should be as upright and honest as Lenin was; that they should love their people as Lenin did.

This is a simple description of how to learn from Lenin, a picture of Lenin's best pupil. The cultivation of Communist Party members is for the purpose of learning from Lenin exactly in such a way in order to be such a pupil of Lenin.

Some say that it is impossible to acquire the great qualities of revolutionary geniuses like Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin and that it is also impossible to raise our own qualities to the same level as that of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin. They regard Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin as mysterious beings by birth. Is it correct to say this? I think not.

For so long as our comrades genuinely, resolutely, consciously and consistently take up their stand as the vanguard fighting for the liberation of the proletariat, have a truly Communist outlook on life and world outlook, and never divorce themselves for a single moment from the present-day great and profound revolutionary movements of the proletariat and the masses of the people, and make great efforts to learn, and to steel and cultivate themselves, they will be perfectly able to raise their qualities and become as 'clear and definite', as 'fearless in battle and merciless towards the enemies of the people', as 'free from all panic and from any semblance of panic' amidst difficulties and dangers, and as 'upright

---

and honest' as Lenin was, and to 'love the people' as Lenin did, and they will also be perfectly able to employ the Marxist-Leninist method and approach in solving complicated problems, in thinking over the problems from all angles and in weighing all pros and cons notwithstanding the fact that today our ordinary comrades are far from having such great talents, such wide scientific knowledge, such an environment and good stamina for learning as had Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin and that a great many of our comrades cannot expect to achieve such profound erudition in the study of the theory of the proletarian revolution as did Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin. In other words, so long as we are determined to study hard, and cultivate and steel ourselves, do not divorce ourselves from the revolutionary movement of the masses of the people, and master the method of Marxism-Leninism, we will be perfectly able to raise our qualities to the level of those of the statesmen of the Lenin type, so that in our work and struggle we can employ the style of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin, that is, to 'remain political figures of the Lenin type' and not to 'sink to the level of political philistines'.

Mencius said: 'Everybody can be a Yao or a Shun.'\* It means the same thing. We should not resign ourselves to despair and hesitate to go ahead when we first perceive the qualities of such great revolutionaries as

---

\* Yao and Shun are legendary figures in ancient Chinese history renowned for their benevolence and wisdom.

---

Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin. To do so is to become just such a 'political philistine', 'rotten wood that cannot be carved', and 'a mud wall'.\*

But different kinds of people adopt different kinds of attitudes towards learning from Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin.

The first kind learns from Marx and Lenin without penetrating into the essence of Marxism-Leninism but merely acquires a smattering of Marxism-Leninism. Although they read Marxist-Leninist literature over and over again and learn by heart many ready-made principles and conclusions from Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin, yet they are unable to use these principles and conclusions as methods to solve concrete and practical problems. They feel content with reciting these principles and conclusions, which they jot down and make use of mechanically. Although they work under the banner of Marxism and consider themselves as 'genuine' Marxists, nevertheless they are not genuine Marxists and their methods of work are exactly the opposite of Marxism-Leninism.

---

\* Ninth Chapter of the Book of Confucian Analects: "Tsai Yu being asleep during the daytime, Confucius said, 'Rotten wood cannot be carved; a mud wall will not receive the trowel. This Yu!—What is the use of my reproving him?'"



---

Comrade Stalin wrote in an article in commemoration of the 50th anniversary of Lenin's birthday:

There are two groups of Marxists. Both work under the banner of Marxism and consider themselves 'genuine' Marxists. Nevertheless, they are by no means identical. More, a veritable gulf divides them, for their methods of work are diametrically opposed to each other.

The first group usually confines itself to an outward acceptance, to a ceremonial avowal of Marxism. Being unable or unwilling to grasp the essence of Marxism, being unable or unwilling to translate it into reality, it converts the living and revolutionary principles of Marxism into lifeless and meaningless formulas. It does not base its activities on experience, on what practical work teaches, but on quotations from Marx. It does not derive its conclusions and directions from an analysis of actual realities, but from analogies and historical parallels. Discrepancy between word and deed is the chief malady of this group.

This is one kind of attitude toward learning from Marx and Lenin.

The first kind of people once constituted a not inconsiderable number within the Communist Party of China. The worst representatives among them were even worse than those mentioned above. In fact, they never really had any intention of 'studying' Marxism-Leninism. They did not concern themselves with the great proletarian character and the supreme qualities of Marx and Lenin. They attempted to imitate in a superficial way certain styles of Marx and Lenin, picked up at random some Marxist-Leninist terminology, regarded themselves as the Marx and Lenin of China, posed as

---

Marx and Lenin within the Party, and had the impudence to ask our Party members to respect them as we do Marx and Lenin, to support them as 'leaders' and to offer them loyalty and devotion. They also made bold to appoint themselves as 'leaders', climbed into responsible positions without waiting to be nominated by others, issued orders like patriarchs within the Party, attempted to teach our Party, abused everything within the Party and wilfully attacked, punished and rode roughshod over Party members. This kind of people had no intention of 'studying' Marxism-Leninism or fighting for the realisation of Marxism-Leninism but rather they were opportunists within the Party and brokers and black sheep in the cause of Communism. It is beyond doubt that this kind of people within the Party should be opposed, exposed and buried in oblivion by our Party members. And our Party members have already buried them in oblivion. However, can we say with full confidence that there are no more people of this kind within the Party? We cannot yet say so.

The second kind of people is just the opposite of the first. They regard themselves first and foremost as pupils of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin and try to master the essence, spirit and methods which made Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin what they are. They look up to the great personal characteristics of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin and their qualities as proletarian revolutionaries and painstakingly carry on their own cultivation in the course of the revolutionary struggle and examine them-

---

selves to see whether their way of dealing with matters and people and the way they themselves behave are in conformity with the spirit of Marxism-Leninism. They likewise read over and over again the works of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin; but they lay great emphasis on analysing the living realities, ponder upon the special features of all aspects of the situation facing the proletariat at the time and in the country in which they live and draw their own conclusions therefrom. They do not content themselves with committing to memory the principles and conclusions of Marxism-Leninism but strive to stand firm on Marxism-Leninism and master the methods of Marxism-Leninism and put them into practice in order that they may energetically direct all revolutionary struggles, change the existing state of affairs and at the same time change themselves. Their entire activities and the whole of their lives are guided by the principles of Marxism-Leninism and are aimed at one thing—the victory of the proletariat, national liberation, the liberation of mankind, the success of Communism, and nothing else.

Comrade Stalin said:

The second group, on the other hand, attaches prime importance not to the outward acceptance of Marxism, but to its realisation, its translation into reality. What this group chiefly concentrates its attention on is determining the ways and means of realising Marxism that best answer the situation and changing these ways and means as the situation changes—to this group may be fully applied Marx's saying that Marxists cannot rest content with interpreting

---

the world, but must go farther and change it. This group is known as the Bolsheviks, the Communists.

This is another attitude towards learning from Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin.

Only the second attitude is correct. Only by adopting this attitude towards studying Marxism-Leninism can one avoid the mistake of 'drawing a tiger which looks like a dog' and improve one's own qualities so as to become a proletarian, Communist revolutionary of the Marx-Engels-Lenin-Stalin type.

Those who really carry on painstaking self-cultivation and who are faithful pupils of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin pay special attention to nothing other than the mastery of the Marxist-Leninist standpoint and methods and the solution of various problems facing the proletariat in the revolution in the same manner as did Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin. Apart from this, they simply don't care whether their position and prestige within the Party are high or low. They never claim to be the Marx or Lenin of China and never demand or harbour any illusion that others should respect them as they respect Marx and Lenin. They do not consider themselves entitled to such a right and they know that to think so would be betraying Marx and Lenin and sinking to the level of political philistines. However, it is precisely because of this and because of their courage and unrivalled ability in the revolutionary struggle that they win spontaneous respect and support from the rank and file of the Party.

---

Comrades! Of course it is no easy matter to take Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin as our models in self-cultivation and to become their most faithful and best pupils. It calls for an iron will and firm determination in the arduous struggle for the cause of the proletariat. It calls for a life-long devotion to studying Marxism-Leninism and putting it into practice in the course of the revolutionary struggles of the broad masses, and for steeling and cultivation in every aspect.

#### **The Aspects and Methods of Cultivation**

Comrades! In order to become the most faithful and best pupils of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin we need to carry on cultivation in all aspects in the course of the long and great revolutionary struggle of the proletariat and the masses of the people. We need to carry on cultivation in the theories of Marxism-Leninism and in applying such theories in practice; cultivation in revolutionary strategy and tactics; cultivation in studying and dealing with various problems according to the standpoint and methods of Marxism-Leninism; cultivation in ideology and moral character; cultivation in Party unity, inner-Party struggle and discipline; cultivation in hard work and in the style of work; cultivation in being skilful in dealing with different kinds of people and in associating with the masses of the people and cultivation in various kinds of scientific knowledge, etc. We are all Communist Party members and so we have a general cultivation in common. But there exists a wide discrepancy today between our Party members. Wide discrepancy

---

exists among us in the level of political consciousness, in work, in position, in cultural level, in experience of struggle and in social origin. Therefore, in addition to cultivation in general we also need special cultivation for different groups and for individual comrades.

Accordingly, there should be different kinds of methods and forms of cultivation. For example, many of our comrades keep a diary in order to have a daily check on their work and thoughts or they write down on small posters their personal defects and what they hope to achieve and paste them up where they work or live, together with the photographs of persons they look up to and ask comrades for criticism and supervision. In ancient China, there were many methods of cultivation. There was Tseng Tze\* who said: 'I reflect on myself three times a day.' *The Book of Odes* has it that one should cultivate oneself 'as a lapidary cuts and files, carves and polishes.' Another method was 'to examine oneself by self-reflection' and to 'write down some mottoes on the right hand side of one's desk' or 'on one's girdle' as daily reminders of rules of personal conduct. The Chinese scholars of the Confucian school had a number of methods for the cultivation of their body and mind. Every religion has various methods and forms of cultivation of its own. The 'investigation of things, the extension of knowledge, sincerity of thought, the rectification of the heart, the cultivation of the person, the regulation of the family, the ordering well of the state and the

---

\* A disciple of Confucius.

---

making tranquil of the whole kingdom' as set forth in *The Great Learning*\* also means the same. All this shows that in achieving one's progress one must make serious and energetic efforts to carry on self-cultivation and study. However, many of these methods and forms cannot be adopted by us because most of them are idealistic, formalistic, abstract and divorced from social practice. These scholars and religious believers exaggerate the function of subjective initiative, thinking that so long as they keep their general 'good intentions' and are devoted to silent prayer they will be able to change the existing state of affairs, change society and change themselves under conditions separated from social and revolutionary practice. This is, of course, absurd. We cannot cultivate ourselves in this way. We are materialists and our cultivation cannot be separated from practice.

What is important to us is that we must not under any circumstances isolate ourselves from the revolutionary struggles of different kinds of people and in different forms at a given moment and that we must, moreover, sum up historical revolutionary experience and learn humbly from this and put it into practice. That is to say, we must undertake self-cultivation and steel ourselves in the course of our own practice, basing ourselves on the

---

\* *The Great Learning* is said to be 'a Book handed down by the Confucian school, which forms the gate by which beginners enter into virtue.'

---

experiences of past revolutionary practice, on the present concrete situation and on new experiences. Our self-cultivation and steeling are for no other purpose than that of revolutionary practice. That is to say, we must modestly try to understand the standpoint, the method and the spirit of Marxism-Leninism, and understand how Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin dealt with people. And having understood these, we should immediately apply them to our own practice, i.e., in our own lives, words, deeds and work. Moreover, we should stick to them and unreservedly correct and purge everything in our ideology that runs counter to them, thereby strengthening our own proletarian and Communist ideology and qualities. That is to say, we must modestly listen to the opinions and criticisms of our comrades and of the masses, carefully study the practical problems in our lives and in our work and carefully sum up our experiences and the lessons we have learnt so as to find an orientation for our own work. In addition, on the basis of all these, we must judge whether we have a correct understanding of Marxism-Leninism and whether we have correctly applied the method of Marxism-Leninism, found out our own shortcomings and mistakes and corrected them. At the same time, we must find out in what respects specific conclusions of Marxism-Leninism need to be supplemented, enriched and developed on the basis of well-digested new experiences. That is to say, we must combine the universal truth of Marxism-Leninism with the concrete practice of the revolution.

---

These should be the methods of self-cultivation of us Communist Party members. That is to say, we must use the methods of Marxism-Leninism to cultivate ourselves. This kind of cultivation is entirely different from other kinds of cultivation which are idealistic and are divorced from social practice.

In this connection, we cannot but oppose certain idle talk and mechanicalism on the question of cultivation and steeling.

First of all, we must oppose and resolutely eliminate one of the biggest evils bequeathed to us by the education and learning in the old society—the separation of theory from practice. In the course of education and study in the old society many people thought that it was unnecessary or even impossible to act upon what they had learned. Despite the fact that they read over and over again books by ancient sages they did things the sages would have been loath to do. Despite the fact that in everything they wrote or said they preached righteousness and morality they acted like out-and-out robbers and harlots in everything they did. Some 'high-ranking officials' issued orders for the reading of the *Four Books* and the *Five Classics*,\* yet in their everyday administrative work they ruthlessly extorted exorbitant requisitions, ran amuck with corruption and killing, and did

---

\*The *Four Books* and *Five Classics* are nine ancient Chinese classics of philosophy, history, poetry, etc. of the Confucian Canon.

---

everything against righteousness and morality. Some people read the *Three People's Principles* over and over again and could recite the *Will of Dr. Sun Yat-sen*, yet they oppressed the people, opposed the nations who treated us on an equal footing, and went so far as to compromise with or surrender to the national enemy. Once a scholar of the old school told me himself that the only maxim of Confucius that he could observe was: 'To him food can never be too dainty; minced meat can never be too fine,' adding that all the rest of the teachings of Confucius he could not observe and had never proposed to observe. Then why did they still want to carry on educational work and study the teachings of the sages? Apart from utilising them for window-dressing purposes, their objects were: (1) to make use of these teachings to oppress the exploited and to make use of righteousness and morality for the purpose of hoodwinking and suppressing the culturally backward people, (2) to attempt thereby to secure better government jobs, make money and achieve fame and reflect credit on their parents. Apart from these objects, their actions were not restricted by the sages' teachings. This was the attitude and return of the 'men of letters' and 'scholars' of the old society to the sages they 'worshipped'. Of course we Communist Party members cannot adopt such an attitude in studying Marxism-Leninism and the excellent and useful teachings bequeathed to us by our ancient sages. We must live up to what we say. We are honest and pure and we cannot deceive ourselves, the people or our forefathers. This is

---

an outstanding characteristics as well as a great merit of us Communist Party members.

Comrades! Is it not possible that the evil legacy of the old society still exerts some influence upon us? It does influence us. Among you students there are, of course, none who try to study Marxism for the sake of obtaining higher government posts, making money or oppressing the exploited. You are studying Marxism for the sake of eliminating the system of exploitation of man by man. However, I cannot guarantee that you have lived up to what you have learnt. Are there none among you who think in the following way? That is to say that their thoughts, words, deeds and lives need not be guided by the principles of Marxism-Leninism and that the principles they have learnt need not be put into practice. Again are there none among you who think that they study Marxism-Leninism and study profound theory in order that they may get promotion, to show themselves off and to make themselves celebrities? I have no guarantee that there are absolutely none among you who think this way. Yet this way of thinking does not conform to Marxism and it represents a gap between Marxist theory and Marxist practice. We have no objection to the study of theory and moreover we must study theory, but what we have learnt we must put into practice. We study for the sole purpose of putting into practice what we have learnt. It is for the Party and for the victory of the revolution that we study.

---

For example, you have very often shouted the slogan 'combine theory with practice' but have you combined the theory you have learnt with your own practice? Are there not still some people among you whose practice is entirely divorced from the principles of Marxism-Leninism? It seems that there are still people among you who understand the combination of theory and practice in the following way: They want comrades working outside the school to come to report on their experiences so as to see how others combine theory with practice. This is of course a combination of theory and practice but it is theirs and not yours. I think the fact that you shout the slogan ought to mean that you should combine the theory you study with your own practice. If you do not understand this point in such a way, then what is the use of your shouting the slogan? I will give another example. You have shouted many slogans about the need for steeling yourselves, but are there not some people among you who have shown themselves anything but steeled or have shown that they could not stand up to being steeled when the hour of real test came, when they met with a rebuff, or when they were subjected to criticism and punishment, to the pressure of public opinion, and to the correct or incorrect supervision of the great majority of the people? They forgot that a Communist Party member should have a firm will and clear standpoint, etc. They looked dejected, not knowing what to do. Are these not examples of empty talk about steeling and cultivation?

---

As a matter of fact, the training you receive and the study you make in school are also forms of steeling and cultivation. We are trying to make you into useful cadres and Party workers through training and studying in school, not just to get you to learn only some abstract 'theory' and Marxist-Leninist terminology and formulas. Moreover, we want you to cultivate and steel yourselves so as to become cadres who can think correctly, have a firm will and be able to solve in a practical way all kinds of complex problems. However, I have often heard it said that to study in school is not the way to become steeled and that in order to steel and cultivate oneself one must leave school and take up practical work. Comrades! Steeling and cultivation are a life-long and many-sided task. They are needed everywhere at all times and in relation to all problems. We cannot say that we can undertake steeling and cultivation only at certain times, in certain places, in connection with certain matters but not at other times, in other places and in connection with other matters, although we don't deny the fact that Communist Party members should steel and cultivate themselves mainly in the course of the practical struggle of the masses.

That is to say we are opposed to idealism, idle talk, and mechanicalism on the problem of cultivation. That is to say we should be able to stand up to being steeled. We should steel ourselves in school, among the masses, and in the struggles both inside and outside the Party. We should study and cultivate ourselves under all circumstances, both of victory and defeat.

---

### The Relation Between the Study of Marxist-Leninist Theory and the Ideological Cultivation of Party Members

Among our Communist Party members a comparatively prevalent way of thinking is the following: The firm and pure proletarian Communist standpoint has nothing to do with a Communist Party member's understanding and mastery of the theory and method of Marxism-Leninism. They think that although their class standpoint is not very firm and their ideology not very pure (they still retain remnants of the ideology of other classes, and they are still selfish and have material desires and so on), they can nevertheless thoroughly understand and master the theory and method of Marxism-Leninism all the same. Some comrades think that it is possible to thoroughly master the theory and method of Marxism-Leninism merely by means of one's own intellect, ability and study. Comrades! This way of thinking is wrong.

Mitin, a Soviet philosopher, is quite right when he says:

Differences in profundity of understanding require a class explanation. For example, at the present time, in the epoch of the decay of capitalism, no matter how talented some ideologist of the bourgeoisie may be, his creative ability, his ability to obtain a penetrating understanding of the laws of development are 'constrained' by his class nature, by the conservatism of the class he represents. The inability of the bourgeoisie to foresee the future, determines, narrows down the limits and reduces the depth of understanding of the phenomena of social development by bourgeois theoreticians. Notwithstanding all their talents, ideologists of those classes which are passing from the stage of history are not in a

---

position to make really profound scientific conclusions and discoveries. This Marxist truth has been confirmed by the whole history of the development of science and philosophy. (*Dialectical and Historical Materialism*, Part I, p.285 of the Russian edition, edited by M. Mitin. OGIZ, Moscow 1934)

Marxism-Leninism is the science of the proletarian revolution. It can be thoroughly understood and mastered only by those who fully take the proletarian standpoint and who adopt the ideals of the proletariat as their own. It is impossible for anyone to thoroughly understand and master the Marxist science of the proletariat, only by means of his intellect and strenuous study if he lacks the firm standpoint and pure ideals of the proletariat. This is also an obvious truth. Therefore, in studying the theory and method of Marxism-Leninism today it is necessary that our study proceeds simultaneously with our ideological cultivation and steeling because without the theory and method of Marxism-Leninism, we should have nothing to guide our thoughts and actions and our ideological cultivation would also be impossible. These two are closely related to each other and are inseparable.

We have often come across some of the best Party members of working class origin who are less developed in the theory of Marxism-Leninism as compared with those who are making a special study of theory. They would certainly prove less proficient if asked to recite Marxist-Leninist formulas or quotations from Marxist-Leninist works. But when it comes to studying the theory of Marxism-Leninism, quite often their interest is keener and their understanding deeper than those Party

---

members of student origin, provided it is explained to them in words they understand. For example, the chapter in *Capital* dealing with the theory of surplus value is most difficult for some Party members to understand but it is not so difficult for members of working class origin, because workers fully understand how in the process of production the capitalists calculate wages and working hours, how they make profits and how they expand reproduction, etc. Therefore, it often happens that they are able to understand Marx's theory of surplus value more deeply than other Party members. Especially in observing and dealing with various practical problems, they often prove more apt, more correct and more in conformity with the principles of Marxism-Leninism than others. Why is this so? It is because they have the firm, pure proletarian and Communist standpoint and ideals, an objective attitude toward things, and in their minds they have no pre-conceived ideas whatever, no worries about personal problems or about impure matters. Therefore, they can immediately perceive the truth of things and courageously uphold the truth without any hesitation or difficulty.

If among us Communist Party members there are still some whose class standpoint is not very clear-cut and firm, whose ideology is not correct and pure, who still retain to some degree remnants of various kinds of ideology, habits and prejudices of other classes and of the old society and who still have personal interests and private ends and all kinds of material desires and selfish ideas, Marxist-Leninist principles and conclusions are



---

certain to clash with all such things of theirs when they come to study the theory and method of Marxism-Leninism. In that case, they will either try to overcome such things of theirs or try to distort the principles and conclusions of Marxism-Leninism to suit their prejudices, thus preventing them from understanding Marxism-Leninism. They will be unable to penetrate deeply into the essence of Marxism-Leninism, to absorb the quintessence of Marxism-Leninism which has a distinct class character and to make this quintessence a weapon of their own because such a weapon has nothing in common with their former class ideology.

Again, when they deal with various practical problems in the course of the proletarian revolution, the solution of these problems in accordance with Marxism-Leninism will often be incompatible with their habits and prejudices and will be in conflict with their personal interests. Under such circumstances, they will show themselves to be petty-minded, irresolute, hesitant and wavering. They will be unable to deal with problems aptly, correctly and in an objective way, or to perceive truth without difficulty or to courageously uphold the truth. They will go so far as to cover up or distort the truth consciously or unconsciously. Comrades! Such cases are by no means rare and strange but are of common occurrence.

Thus we can say: If a Communist Party member lacks the clear-cut, firm, correct and pure standpoint and ideology of the proletariat, it will be impossible for him to thoroughly understand and master the theory and

---

method of Marxism-Leninism and to make of it a weapon in his own revolutionary struggle.

Therefore, first and foremost in the cultivation of Communist Party members should be ideological cultivation which is the foundation of all other cultivations. This I shall speak about in the following.

## CHAPTER TWO

---

### THE IDEOLOGICAL CULTIVATION OF PARTY MEMBERS

**C**OMRADES! IN DEALING WITH the ideological cultivation of Communist Party members, I shall try to discuss this problem on the basis of certain phenomena as manifested in the ideology of some members of our Party. What I am going to talk about in this connection is only the most basic ideology of Party members.

What, after all, is meant by ideological cultivation? I consider that it is in the main a struggle in our minds between the ideology of the proletariat and other ideologies; a struggle in our minds between the Communist outlook on life and the Communist world outlook on the one hand, and all other outlooks on life and world outlooks on the other; and a struggle between two concepts: the personal interests and aims of Party members and the interests and aims of the Party and of the people.

I consider that this is a struggle of conflicting ideas reflecting the economic and political demands of different classes in a given society. The outcome of this struggle,

---

so far as the ideology of our Party members is concerned, should be the conquest and even elimination of all other ideologies by the proletarian ideology; the conquest and even elimination of all other outlooks on life and world outlooks by the Communist outlook on life and the Communist world outlook; the conquest and absorption of the idea of the Party members' personal interests and aims by the idea of the common interests and aims of the Party, of the revolution, and of the liberation of the proletariat and mankind. Should the outcome prove to be otherwise, then it would mean the conquest of the latter by the former and the Party member would become backward and even lose his qualifications as a Communist Party member. To us Party members, this would indeed be a dreadful and disastrous outcome.

It is in the course of all the ideological, political and economic struggles both inside and outside the Party that we Communists temper our own ideas and come to understand the realities of the revolution. At the same time we should constantly sum up and absorb the experiences gathered from revolutionary practice and examine our own ideas to see whether they are completely in conformity with Marxism-Leninism and with the interests of the struggle for the liberation of the proletariat. To eliminate in the course of such a study, reflection and self-examination all our incorrect ideas and to nip in the bud even the faintest idea which runs counter to the interests of Communism—this is what we mean by ideological cultivation. It is also a form of ideological self-steeling.

---

Comrades! As you are aware, all the actions of man are guided by his ideology. Furthermore, every man has his outlook on life and his world outlook as a general guide to his ideas and actions. Therefore, in carrying on ideological cultivation we Communists must, first of all, clearly define our outlook on life and our world outlook because all our ideas and activities are connected with our outlook on life and our world outlook.

**It Is Necessary to Understand that the Cause of Communism Is the Greatest and Most Arduous Cause in the History of Mankind**

The outlook on life and world outlook of us Communists should represent the system of ideology of the proletariat. They are the Communist outlook on life and world outlook and are also the methodology of us Communists. Since this subject has been treated at great length in Marxist-Leninist literature and especially in the works of Marx and Lenin on philosophy and since you have learnt a great deal about it, I am not going to talk about this today. Here I shall speak only briefly about how we should understand our own cause—what, after all, is the cause of Communism and how should we Communist Party members further our cause?

What is the most fundamental and common duty of us Communist Party members? As everybody knows, it is to establish Communism, to transform the present world into a Communist world. Is a Communist world good or not? We all know that it is very good. In such a world there will be no exploiters, oppressors, landlords,

---

capitalists, imperialists or fascists. There will be no oppressed and exploited people, no darkness, ignorance, backwardness, etc. In such a society all human beings will become unselfish and intelligent Communists with a high level of culture and technique. The spirit of mutual assistance and mutual love will prevail among mankind. There will be no such irrational things as mutual deception, mutual antagonism, mutual slaughter and war, etc. Such a society will, of course, be the best, the most beautiful and the most advanced society in the history of mankind. Who will say that such a society is not good? Here the question arises: Can Communist society be brought about? Our answer is 'yes.' About this the whole theory of Marxism-Leninism offers a scientific explanation that leaves no room for doubt. It further explains that as the ultimate result of the class struggle of mankind, such a society will inevitably be brought about. The victory of Socialism in the U.S.S.R. has also given us factual proof. Our duty is, therefore, to bring about at an early date this Communist society, the realisation of which is inevitable in the history of mankind.

This is one aspect. This is our ideal.

But we should understand the other aspect, that is, in spite of the fact that Communism can and must be realised it is still confronted by powerful enemies that must be thoroughly and finally defeated in every respect before Communism can be realised. Thus, the cause of Communism is a long, bitter, arduous but victorious process of struggle. Without such a struggle there can

---

be no Communism. Of course, this struggle is not, as some people have said, an 'accidental' social phenomenon or something engineered by certain Communists who are 'rebellious by nature.' On the contrary, it is an inevitable phenomenon in the course of the development of a class society. It is a class struggle which is unavoidable. The birth of the Communist Party, the participation of the Communists in the struggle, their organisation and direction of the struggle are also inevitable phenomena, which are in conformity with the laws of social development. Because imperialists, fascists, capitalists and landlords—in short, the exploiters—have oppressed and exploited the overwhelming majority of mankind to such an extent that the oppressed and exploited people can hardly live, they cannot but unite to oppose this oppression and exploitation; otherwise they cannot live and develop. Consequently, this struggle is an entirely natural and unavoidable phenomenon. On the one hand, we must understand that the cause of Communism is the greatest cause in the history of mankind, because Communism will eventually abolish classes, liberate the whole of mankind and raise human society to heights of happiness unparalleled in the history of mankind. On the other hand, we must also understand that the cause of Communism is the most arduous cause in the history of mankind because Communism must triumph over an extremely powerful enemy—the exploiting classes, along with all their influences, traditions and customs, etc. among the people.

---

By relying on the proletariat and on the broad masses of the exploited and oppressed people and employing the strategy and tactics of Marxism-Leninism in directing the revolutionary struggle of the broad masses and in advancing society toward the great goal of Communism, the Communist Party is certain to win final victory. This is because the historical process of the social evolution of mankind is advancing toward Communist society, because in the ranks of the world proletariat and the masses of the exploited and oppressed people the greatest revolutionary forces lie latent which, when mobilised, united and organised, are capable of defeating all the reactionary forces of the exploiting classes and decaying capitalism throughout the world; and because the Communist Party and the proletariat are forces that are arising and developing. 'Only that which is arising and developing is invincible' (*The History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (B) Short Course*). This can be fully proved by the entire history of the Communist Party of China and by the entire history of the international Communist and working class movements.

So far as the present situation is concerned, Communism has already won a great victory on one-sixth of the surface of the globe—in the Soviet Union. The Communist movements in all countries of the world are in the process of rapid growth and development. Militant Communist parties, armed with the theory of Marxism-Leninism, have already been established in all countries, and the strength of the world proletariat and the

---

exploited, oppressed masses is being rapidly mobilised and united in ceaseless struggles. Therefore, the cause of Communism has become a powerful, invincible force throughout the world. There is not the slightest doubt that this force will continue to develop and advance and will win final and complete victory. Despite this, however, the strength of the international reactionary forces and of the exploiting classes are nevertheless still more powerful than ours and for the time being are still predominant in many respects. Consequently, we shall have to go through a long, bitter, circuitous and arduous process of struggle before we defeat them.

As exploiting classes have ruled over mankind for thousands of years, they have not only made themselves extremely powerful in every respect by seizing everything under the sun but have also exerted an extremely bad influence upon the masses of the exploited classes and people in society. These influences account for all kinds of backwardness, ignorance, selfishness, mutual deception, mutual antagonism, mutual slaughter, etc. in human society. This phenomenon is bound to occur in class society, especially in a society of commodity economy and in capitalist society. This is an inevitable phenomenon created by the exploiting classes for the sake of their class interests and class rule, because without the backwardness, ignorance, dispersion and disunity of the masses of the exploited classes and of the colonial peoples it would be impossible for the exploiting classes to maintain their position as exploiters. Hence, in order to achieve victory we must conduct a sharp struggle not

---

only against the exploiting classes but also against the prolonged influences of the exploiting classes among the masses, against the backward ideology and phenomena among the masses so that we can raise their consciousness and unite them to defeat the exploiting classes. Herein lies the difficulty we face in the struggle for the cause of Communism.

Comrades! If the masses were all conscious, united and free from the influences of the exploiting classes and from backward phenomena as certain people imagine, then what difficulties would still remain in the revolution? Such influences of the exploiting classes not only existed long before the revolution but will continue to exist for a very long time after the victory of the revolution and after the exploiters have been kicked out of their position of political power by the exploited classes. Just pause to think: how many complicated and difficult tasks and struggles shall we have to undertake if we are to liberate and change the whole of mankind, to finally defeat the exploiting classes and their influences among the people, to reform tens of millions of small commodity producers, to eventually abolish classes and to raise, step by step, mankind which for thousands of years has lived in class society with all kinds of old customs, traditions and backward phenomena (in such a society mankind is divided into classes and nations who fight and kill one another and thus create the ideas and customs of selfishness, mutual deception and mutual antagonism) and to raise it to the height of an intelligent, unselfish, Com-

---

unist mankind with a high level of culture and technique?

Lenin said:

The abolition of classes means not only driving out the landlords and capitalists—that we have accomplished with comparative ease—it also means abolishing the small commodity producers, and they cannot be driven out, or crushed; we must live in harmony with them; they can (and must) be remoulded and re-educated only by very prolonged, slow, cautious organisational work. They encircle the proletariat on every side with a petty-bourgeois atmosphere, which permeates and corrupts the proletariat and causes constant relapses among the proletariat into petty-bourgeois spinelessness, disunity, individualism, and alternate moods of exaltation and dejection. The strictest centralism and discipline are required within the political party of the proletariat in order to counteract this, in order that the organisational role of the proletariat (and that is its principal role) may be exercised correctly, successfully, victoriously.... The force of habit of millions and tens of millions is a most terrible force.... It is a thousand times easier to vanquish the centralised big bourgeoisie than to 'vanquish' the millions and millions of small owners; yet they, by their ordinary, everyday, imperceptible, elusive, demoralising activity, achieve the very results which the bourgeoisie need and which tend to restore the bourgeoisie....

Lenin continued:

...the bourgeoisie, whose resistance is increased tenfold by its overthrow (even if only in one country), and whose power lies not only in the strength of international capital, in the strength and durability of the international connections of the bourgeoisie, but also in the force of habit, in the strength of small production. For, unfortunately, small

---

production is still very, very widespread in the world and small production engenders capitalism and the bourgeoisie continuously, daily, hourly, spontaneously, and on a mass scale. For all these reasons the dictatorship of the proletariat is essential, and victory over the bourgeoisie is impossible without a long, stubborn and desperate war of life and death, a war demanding perseverance, discipline, firmness, indomitableness and unity of will.

This was written by Lenin two years after the victory of the October Revolution in the Soviet Union. (This most difficult task has now already been solved in the Soviet Union). Hence, the proletariat still has the most difficult task to solve even after the victory of the revolution, because our revolution is different from all other revolutions in history. The bourgeois revolution, for example, is usually accomplished by the seizure of State power; but to the proletariat, political liberation and victory mean only the beginning of the revolution. Gigantic tasks still lie ahead after political victory has been attained.

Lenin also said:

The bourgeois revolution is confronted only with one task—that of breaking, discarding and destroying all the shackles of the old society. Any bourgeois revolution which has completed this task will have done all that it should do, because the bourgeois revolution strengthens the development of capitalism. The Socialist revolution is in an entirely different situation. The more backward is a country which, as a result of a turning point in history, is compelled to embark on Socialist revolution, the more difficult will it be to pass from the old capitalist relationship to the Socialist

---

relationship. In this connection, to the task of destruction, there is added a new and unprecedentedly difficult task—the task of organisation. (translated from the Chinese text—Translator.)

Hence, the proletariat still has difficult tasks even after the victory of the revolution. Hence, the cause of Communism is comparable to 'a 100-year great task' as we say, and can never be 'accomplished at one stroke.' The proletariat in different countries must go through different stages of development and defeat different enemies before Communist society can be finally established. For example, China is still in the stage of a democratic revolution of a bourgeois character and its enemies are imperialism which conducts aggression against China, and the feudal forces in collusion with imperialism. These enemies must be defeated before the revolution of a bourgeois character can be completed. In the present stage, the broad masses of the small producers still constitute a very great motive force of the revolution. Our country must undergo a prolonged period of Socialist reconstruction before it can finally pass, through gradual transition, into Communist society.

Comrades! To establish Communism is our most fundamental duty. Therefore, to overcome the various above-mentioned difficulties confronting the cause of Communism is naturally the bounden duty of us Communists.

Just because the cause of Communism is such a great and difficult cause there are today still many people

---

(here we speak of those who have a sense of righteousness and who seek truth) who doubt Communism or withdraw from the cause of Communism because they have lost faith in the possibility of establishing Communism. They do not believe that mankind can be developed and transformed into an exceedingly pure Communist mankind and that such difficulties can be overcome. Or they have not anticipated such difficulties so the moment they meet with difficulties they become pessimistic, disappointed and even wavering.

We Communists must possess the greatest courage and revolutionary determination of mankind. Every Party member should gladly and seriously make up his mind about shouldering this unprecedentedly great and difficult task in human history—the realisation of Communism. While we clearly see the difficulties confronting the cause of Communism, we are not in the least daunted by them for we also clearly understand that these difficulties can certainly be overcome in the course of drawing into the revolution countless millions of people. We clearly understand that the cause of Communism is a '100-year great task.' We must fulfill the great mission which historical evolution has devolved upon us. We have the support of the great masses. We must accomplish a great part of the task of the cause of Communism in our generation and leave to posterity the final completion of the task. Comrades! The great vision and courage of us Communists has never been matched by that of any past heroes in the annals of man-

---

kind. In this respect we have every reason to be proud of ourselves.

I remember a learned bourgeois biographer from Western Europe who visited the Soviet Union and asked Comrade Stalin what he thought about comparing Lenin with Peter the Great of Russia. According to this biographer, Comrade Stalin replied that Lenin could be compared to the waters of a mighty ocean while Peter the Great was only a single drop in the ocean. Comrades! Such is the comparison between a leader of the Communist cause of the proletariat and a leader of the cause of the feudal-bourgeois class in relation to their place in history. From this comparison we can understand that a leader who fights for the success of Communism and for the cause of the liberation of mankind appears so very great while a leader who fights for the cause of a handful of exploiters and parasites appears so very small.

Communist Party members have the greatest ideals, greatest objective of struggle and the most practical spirit of 'searching for the truth from concrete facts' and also carry on practical work. These are the characteristics of us Communists.

Comrades! If you only possess great and lofty ideals but not the spirit of 'searching for the truth from concrete facts' and do not carry on genuinely practical work, you are not a good Communist Party member. You can only be a dreamer, a prattler or a pedant. If on the contrary, you only do practical work but do not possess the



---

great and lofty ideals of Communism, you are not a good Communist, but a common careerist. A good Communist Party member is one who combines the great and lofty ideals of Communism with practical work and the spirit of searching for the truth from concrete facts.

The Communist ideal is beautiful while the existing capitalist world is ugly. It is precisely because of its ugliness that the overwhelming majority of the people want to change it and cannot but change it. In changing the world we cannot divorce ourselves from reality, or disregard reality; nor can we escape from reality or surrender to the ugly reality. We must adapt ourselves to reality, understand reality, seek to live and develop in reality, struggle against the ugly reality and transform reality in order to realise our ideals. Therefore, we Communist Party members should begin our great Communist task of changing the world by starting from the very people in close contact with us and from the very work that we can immediately undertake. Here I shall have to criticize some errors frequently made by certain young comrades—their attempts to escape from or to disregard reality. It is very good that they have lofty ideals. But they often complain that this place is no good and that place is no better; that this kind of work is no good and that kind is no good, either. All the while they are looking for some kind of ideal place and work so as to enable them to smoothly 'change the world.' However, such places and such work do not exist except in their wishful thinking.

---

This is my understanding of the cause of Communism, which is our life-long work. It also constitutes the most important part of our outlook on life and our world outlook. Our activities throughout our whole lives are for the sake of this and nothing else.

**The Unconditional Subordination of the Personal Interests of a Party Member to the Interests of the Party**

Apart from clearly establishing his Communist outlook on life and his Communist world outlook, a Communist must also clearly define the correct relationship between his personal interests and the interests of the Party. The Marxist-Leninist principle is that personal interests must be subordinated to the Party's interests, partial interests to total interests, temporary interests to long-range interests, and the interests of one nation to the interests of the world as a whole.

The Communist Party is the political party representing the proletariat. Apart from the interests of the emancipation of the proletariat, the Party has no other interests and aims of its own. The ultimate emancipation of the proletariat, however, must needs be the ultimate emancipation of mankind as a whole, because the proletariat cannot emancipate itself if it fails to emancipate all the working people and all nations, in other words, if it fails to emancipate mankind as a whole. Hence, the proletariat must loyally assist and lead all working people, all oppressed nations and peoples, in fighting for their own emancipation and raising their own living standards and their own cultural and political levels.

---

Therefore, the interests of the emancipation of the proletariat are identical with, and inseparable from, the interests of the emancipation of the whole of mankind and of all the oppressed nations. Therefore, the interests of the Communist Party are the very interests of the emancipation of the proletariat and mankind as a whole. They are also the interests of Communism and social evolution. Therefore, the subordination of a Party member's personal interests to the Party's interests means subordination to the interests of class and national emancipation and to the interests of Communism and social evolution.

Whether or not a Communist Party member can absolutely and unconditionally subordinate his personal interests to the Party's interests under all circumstances is the criterion with which to test his loyalty to the Party, to the revolution and to the Communist cause. Since the realisation of Communism must depend upon the proletariat and the Communist Party, Communism will never be brought about if the interests of the proletariat and the Communist Party are impaired.

At all times and on all questions, a Communist Party member should take into account the interests of the Party as a whole, and place the Party's interests above his personal problems and interests. It is the highest principle of our Party members that the Party's interests are supreme. Every Party member should firmly build up this conception in his ideology. This is what we have often spoken of as 'Party spirit', 'Party conception' or

---

'organisational conception'. He should have only the Party and the Party's interests uppermost in his mind and not considerations of a personal character. He should ensure that his personal interests accord with the Party's interests or even merge with them. Thus when his personal interests conflict with the Party's interests he will be able to submit to the Party's interests and sacrifice his personal interests without the slightest hesitation or reluctance. To sacrifice one's personal interests and even one's life without the slightest hesitation and even with a feeling of happiness, for the cause of the Party, for class and national liberation and for the emancipation of mankind is the highest manifestation of Communist ethics. This is a Party member's highest manifestation of principle. This is the manifestation of the purity of proletarian ideology of a Party member.

In the Party our members should not have personal aims independent of the Party's interests. The personal aims of our Party members can only be part of the Party's aims. For example, our Party members want to study Marxist-Leninist theory, enhance their ability, lead the victorious revolutionary struggle of the broad masses and establish various kinds of revolutionary organisations, etc. If all these are their personal aims they are part of the Party's aims as well since they are also in the interests of the Party. And the Party certainly needs large numbers of such Party members and cadres. But apart from this our Party members should not have independent aims of their own such as personal position, individual heroism and so forth. If they have

---

such aims, they may depart from the Party's interests to such an extent as to become opportunists in the Party.

If a Party member has only the interests and aims of the Party and Communism in his ideology, if he has no personal aims and considerations independent of the Party's interests, and if he is really unbiased and unselfish, then he will be capable of the following:—

(1) He will be capable of possessing very good Communist ethics. Because he has a strict standpoint he 'can both love and hate people'. He can show loyalty to and ardent love for all his comrades, revolutionaries and working people, help them unconditionally, treat them with equality and never harm any one of them for the sake of his own interests. He can deal with them in a 'faithful and forgiving' spirit and 'put himself in the position of others'. He can consider others' problems from their points of view and be considerate to them. 'He will never do to others anything he would not like others to do to him.' He can deal with the most vicious enemies of mankind in a most resolute manner and conduct a persistent struggle against the enemy for the purpose of defending the interests of the Party, the class and the emancipation of mankind. As the Chinese saying goes: 'He will worry long before the rest of the world begins to worry and he will rejoice only after the rest of the world has rejoiced.' Both in the Party and among the people he will be the first to suffer hardship and the last to enjoy himself. He never minds whether his conditions are better or worse than

---

others', but he does mind as to whether he has done more revolutionary work than others or whether he has fought harder. In times of adversity, he will stand out courageously and unflinchingly and in the face of difficulties he will demonstrate the greatest sense of responsibility. Therefore, he is capable of possessing the greatest firmness and moral courage to resist corruption by riches or honours, to resist tendencies to vacillate in spite of poverty and lowly status and to refuse to yield in spite of threats or force.

(2) He will also be capable of possessing the greatest courage. Since he is free from any selfishness whatever and has never done 'anything against his conscience', he can expose his mistakes and shortcomings and boldly correct them in the same way as the sun and the moon emerge bright and full following a brief eclipse. He is 'courageous because his is a just cause'. He is never afraid of truth. He courageously upholds truth, expounds truth to others and fights for truth. Even if it is temporarily to his disadvantage to do so, even if he will be subjected to various attacks for the sake of upholding truth, even if the opposition and rebuff of the great majority of people forces him into temporary isolation (glorious isolation) and even if on this account his life may be endangered he will still be able to stem the tide and uphold truth and will never resign himself to drifting with the tide. So far as he himself is concerned, he has nothing to fear.

(3) He will be best capable of acquiring the theory and method of Marxism-Leninism, viewing problems and

---

perceiving the real nature of the situation keenly and aptly. Because he has a firm and clear-cut class standpoint, he is free from personal worries and personal desires which may blur or distort his observation of things and understanding of truth. He has an objective attitude. He tests all theories, truths and falsehoods in the course of revolutionary practice and is no respecter of persons.

(4) He will also be capable of being the most sincere, most candid and happiest of men. Since he has no selfish desires and since he has nothing to conceal from the Party, 'there is nothing which he is afraid of telling others' as the Chinese saying goes. Apart from the interests of the Party and of the revolution, he has no personal losses or gains or other things to worry about. He can 'look after himself when he is on his own'. He takes care not to do wrong things when he works independently and without supervision and when there is ample opportunity for him to do all kinds of wrong things. His work will be found in no way incompatible with the Party's interests no matter how many years later it is reviewed. He does not fear criticism from others and he can courageously and sincerely criticize others. That is why he can be sincere, candid and happy.

(5) He will be capable of possessing the highest self-respect and self-esteem. For the interests of the Party and of the revolution, he can also be the most lenient, most tolerant and most ready to compromise and he will even endure, if necessary, various forms of humiliation and injustice without feeling hurt or bearing

---

grudges. As he has no personal aims or designs, he has no need to flatter others and does not want others to flatter him, either. He has no personal favours to ask of others, so he has no need to humble himself in order to ask help from others. For the interests of the Party and the revolution he can also take care of himself, protect his life and health, raise his theoretical level and enhance his ability. But if for the sake of certain important aims of the Party and of the revolution he is required to endure insults, shoulder heavy burdens and do work which he is reluctant to do, he will take up the most difficult and important work without the slightest hesitation and will not pass the buck.

A Communist Party member should possess all the greatest and noblest virtues of mankind. He should also possess the strict and clear-cut standpoint of the Party and of the proletariat (that is, Party spirit and class character). Our ethics are great precisely because they are the ethics of Communism and of the proletariat. Such ethics are not built upon the backward basis of safeguarding the interests of individuals or a small number of exploiters. They are built, on the contrary, upon the progressive basis of the interests of the proletariat, of the ultimate emancipation of mankind as a whole, of saving the world from destruction and of building a happy and beautiful Communist world. To a Communist, it is most unworthy and inadvisable to make sacrifices for the interests of any individual or a small number of people. But if sacrifice has to be made for the Party, for class and national liberation, that is, for the emancipation of

---

mankind, for social evolution and for the interests of the greatest majority of mankind embracing countless millions of people, countless Communist Party members will face death with equanimity and make any sacrifice without the slightest hesitation. To the majority of Communist Party members, it will be accepted as a matter of course 'to lay down one's life for a noble cause' or 'to die for righteousness', if necessary. This is not because they live in fantasy or are ambitious for praise and fame but because of their scientific understanding of social evolution and their consciousness. This is exactly why our ethics are the greatest and the most scientific. Apart from this, we do not admit that there are so-called greater, more scientific 'super-class' and general ethics in a class society. This is only deceptive nonsense. These so-called 'ethics' are, in fact, built upon the basis of safeguarding the interests of a small number of exploiters. This concept of 'ethics' has always been idealist in character. It is only we Communists who build ethics upon the scientific basis of historical materialism and it is only we Communists too who openly build ethics upon the material basis of the interests of the struggle for the emancipation of the proletariat and mankind.

The Communist Party represents not only the interests of individual Party members but also the long-range interests of the entire body of workers and the emancipation of mankind. The Party's interests are the crystallisation of the interests not only of individual Party members but also of the entire body of workers and the emancipation of mankind. Apart from the interests of

---

the proletariat and the emancipation of mankind, the Communist Party has no other interests and aims. Therefore, the Communist Party must not be regarded as a narrow, small group like a guild which seeks only the personal interests of its members. Whoever holds such a view is not a Communist.

Of course, a Party member has his personal interests and personal development. At certain times such personal interests may come in conflict with, or become antagonistic to, the Party's interests. Should this happen, a Party member is required to sacrifice his personal interests unconditionally and should not sacrifice the Party's interests to meet his personal interests (no matter under what cloak or pretext). Since the personal interests and development of the Party member are included in the interests and development of the Party, the success and victory of the Party and class also mean the success and victory of a Party member. Therefore, only in the struggle for the development, success and victory of the Party can a Party member hope to develop himself. He cannot divorce himself from the development of the Party in order to strive for his personal development. In short, only in the course of the struggle for the development, success and victory of the Party can a Party member develop himself; without this, he cannot develop himself at all. Therefore, the personal interests of a Party member must and can be made completely identical with the Party's interests and development.

A member of our Party is no longer just an ordinary person. He is a conscious vanguard fighter of the pro-

---

letariat. He should not only represent his personal interests. He should prove himself a conscious living representative of the interests and ideology of the proletariat. Since he has already become one of the representatives of the proletariat, his personal interests should never stand out as against the interests of the Party and proletariat. As to the cadres and leaders of the Party, it is all the more necessary for them to become the living representatives of the general interests of the Party and of the proletariat and to thoroughly merge their personal interests and aims in the general interests and aims of the Party and the proletariat. As circumstances now exist in China, the proletariat alone can best represent the interests of national liberation. Therefore, our Party members have proved themselves the best representatives of the interests of the nation as a whole.

This is one aspect of the problem to which our Party members should pay attention. But there is another aspect.

Although the general interests of the Party include the personal interests of a Party member, yet the former cannot embrace the whole of the latter. The personality of a Party member cannot and should not be eliminated. In any case a Party member will still have some personal problems to solve. Furthermore, he still needs to develop himself according to his personality and his special ability. Therefore, the Party permits its members to build up their personal and family life and to develop their personalities and special abilities so long as these

---

do not violate the Party's interests. Moreover, under all possible conditions, the Party will help a Party member to develop his personality and special ability in the interests of the Party, provide him with appropriate work and working conditions and even give him all possible encouragement. Also under all possible conditions, the Party will look after and safeguard the personal, indispensable interests of a Party member—for instance, the Party will give him opportunities to receive education and to study, help to solve his domestic and health problems and, if necessary, even give up certain Party work in order to preserve comrades, etc. However, all such measures are taken with no other purpose than that of safeguarding the interests of the Party as a whole because the tasks of the Party cannot be accomplished if the Party fails to guarantee its members the minimum conditions as regards living, work and education in order to enable them to work enthusiastically and without worries. In dealing with the problems of Party members the responsible leaders of the Party must pay attention to this point. This is the other aspect of the problem.

To sum up, a Party member should unreservedly submit to the interests of the Party. He should be strict with himself and public-spirited and should have no personal aims or considerations. He should not think only of himself in all matters. He should not make a lot of personal demands on the Party or blame the Party for not having promoted or commended him. Besides, a Party member should endeavour, under all circumstances, to study and improve himself to the best of his ability,

---

to struggle courageously and to ceaselessly raise his consciousness and his understanding of Marxism-Leninism in order to render greater contributions and assistance to the Party and the revolution. In dealing with Party members' problems the Party and its leaders must pay attention to the working, living and educational conditions of Party members in order to enable them to do better work for the Party, to develop themselves and to raise their consciousness to the greatest extent in the proletarian revolutionary cause. Great attention should be paid especially to those comrades who are really strict with themselves and public-spirited. Only in this way, that is, only by paying attention to both aspects and co-ordinating them can the Party be most benefited.

**Examples of Various Kinds of Erroneous Ideologies in the Party**

Comrades! If we take the Communist outlook on life and world outlook, our understanding of the cause of Communism, and the establishment of a correct relationship between the Party's interests and those of Party members as our criteria for evaluating our Party members and cadres, we will find out that on the one hand, there are many Party members and cadres who conform to these criteria and can serve as models for other Party members, but that on the other hand there are also some Party members and cadres who still do not conform to these criteria, and still retain different kinds of incorrect ideologies to a greater or lesser degree. Here I shall openly point them out in a general way, so that our comrades may pay attention to them while carrying on their self-cultivation.

---

What are the basically incorrect ideologies among comrades in the Party? They can be listed roughly as follows:

Firstly, those who have joined our Party not only come from different social strata, but bring with them different aims and motives. Despite the fact that most members have joined the Party in order to fight for the realisation of Communism, for the great aim of emancipating the proletariat and mankind, there are, however, still some other members who have joined the Party for other reasons and aims. For example, some peasant comrades regarded as 'Communism' the 'striking down of the local despots and the distribution of the land' which we carried out in the past and they did not understand genuine Communism as meaning anything more when they joined the Party. At the present time quite a few people have joined the Party chiefly because of the Communists' determined resistance to Japan and because of the anti-Japanese national united front. Certain other people have joined the Party as a way out because they could not find a way out in society—they had no trade, no job, no school to attend, or they wanted to escape from their families, or from forced marriages, etc. Some came because they looked up to the prestige of the Party, or because they recognised, though only in a vague way, that the Communist Party can save China. And finally there were even some individuals who came because they counted on the Communists for tax reduction, or because they hoped to become influential in the future, or because their relatives and friends brought them in, etc. It is

---

very natural that such comrades should lack a clear and definite Communist outlook on life and world outlook, should fail to understand the greatness and difficulties of the Communist cause, and should be unable to take a firm proletarian stand. Therefore, it is also very natural that at certain turning points, under certain conditions, some of them should have wavered or changed. They have brought with them all kinds and shades of ideologies into the Party. Consequently, their education, steeling and self-cultivation are an extremely important matter. Otherwise, they simply will not be able to become vanguard fighters of the proletariat.

Despite this, however, it is by no means a serious problem. That certain people come to rely upon the Communist Party, come to the Party to seek a way out and give support to the Party's policies—all this, after all, cannot be regarded as wrong. They are not mistaken in having sought out the Party. We welcome such people except for the opportunist elements, enemy spies and traitors. The Party's Programme and Constitution must be accepted and observed. As to further study and understanding of Communism and of the Party's Programme and Constitution, they can do this after joining the Party, and moreover on the basis of their studies they can further steel and cultivate themselves in the course of the struggle, and make themselves into very good Communists.

As a matter of fact, it is impossible to require many people to have a profound understanding of Communism and of the Party's Programme and Constitution before

---

they join the Party. It is for this reason that we only prescribe the acceptance of the Party's Programme and Constitution as a condition for admission into the Party, instead of prescribing a thorough understanding of the Party's Programme and Constitution as a condition. Although such persons still do not thoroughly understand Communism they can become active fighters in the course of the present Communist movement and the present revolutionary movement. Moreover, in the long course of the revolutionary struggle, they can become excellent and conscious Communists through intensive studies and cultivation. Besides, our Party Constitution further stipulates that Communist Party members shall have the freedom to withdraw from the Party (there is no freedom to join the Party). If any member lacks a profound belief in Communism, cannot endure strict inner-Party life, or for any other reason, he is free to withdraw from the Party. So long as he does not give away Party secrets, does not oppose Communism, does not engage in subversive activities against the Party, the Party allows any member to withdraw and will leave him be. As to opportunists and traitors who have sneaked into the Party, we will naturally expel them. In this way the purity of our Party can be preserved.

Secondly, certain Party members still have an ideology marked by relatively strong individualism and self-interest.

This kind of individualism finds expression in the following ways: certain persons, when solving all kinds



---

of concrete problems, place their personal interests above the Party's interests; or they are always worrying about their personal gains and losses, weighing their personal interests; or they engage in jobbery, taking advantage of Party work to achieve certain personal aims; or they attempt to pay off their personal grudges against other comrades on the pretext of a question of principle, or of Party interests:

When it comes to questions of salaries, amenities and other matters concerning private life, they always want to surpass others, and to compare and compete with the very highest cadres and 'use any means to achieve this end', and will brag about such things. But when it comes to work, they want to compare with those who are less capable. When there are hardships, they try to avoid them; in times of danger, they attempt to run away. As to orderlies, they always want more. As to living quarters, they always want the best. They want to show off and share the honours bestowed on the Party. They try to monopolise all the good things, but will have no part in anything that is in something of a mess.

Comrades! There are such people in our Party. Their heads are full of the ideology of the exploiting classes. They even believe in such expressions as: 'Everyone for himself, and the devil take the hindmost', 'Man is a selfish animal,' 'There is no such thing in the world as a genuinely unselfish person, or else such a person is a simpleton or an idiot.' They make use of all such expressions of the exploiting classes to justify their own selfishness and individualism.

---

This kind of selfish individualism frequently finds expression inside the Party in such mistakes as unprincipled disputes, factional struggles, sectarianism and departmentalism. It also finds expression in actions which disregard or even undermine at will Party discipline. Most unprincipled struggles arise from personal interests. Factional struggles and sectarianism often place the interests of the individual or the minority above Party interests. Such people often consciously undermine the organisation and discipline of the Party in the course of unprincipled factional struggles, attack certain persons in an unprincipled manner or deliberately, and make friends in an unprincipled way with certain people for the purpose of not offending each other, mutual shielding and mutual boasting and praising.

As to departmentalism in the Party, it is different from such individualism. Departmentalism comes about chiefly because a comrade sees only partial interests, sees only his part of the work, does not see the situation as a whole and does not see the work of others. Therefore, he commits the mistake of only looking after the interests of his part of the work to such an extent that he obstructs others. Politically speaking, this is a thing resembling guildism. In the case of comrades committing the mistake of departmentalism their motives and their starting points may not necessarily be very bad. This of course cannot be compared with individualism. Nevertheless, persons with an individualistic outlook often commit the mistake of departmentalism.

---

Thirdly, self-conceit, individual heroism, showing-off etc., still exist to a greater or lesser extent in the ideology of quite a few comrades in the Party.

The first consideration of people with such ideas is their position in the Party. They like to show off, and want others to flatter them and admire them. They have a personal ambition to become leaders. They take advantage of their abilities and like to claim credit, to show off themselves, to keep everything in their hands and they are intolerant. They are full of vanity, do not want to bury their heads in hard work and are unwilling to do technical work. They are haughty. When they have made some small achievements they become very arrogant and domineering as if there were no one else like them in the world. They seek to overshadow others and cannot treat others on equal terms, modestly and politely. They are self-conceited and like to lecture others, to instruct and boss others. They are always trying to climb above others, and do not accept directions from others, do not learn modestly from others and particularly from the masses, nor do they accept criticisms from others. They like to be 'promoted' but cannot stand being 'demoted'. They can only work 'in fair weather' but not 'in foul'. They cannot bear attacks or injustices and are unable to adapt themselves to circumstances. They are not 'great men capable of asserting themselves when necessary or of keeping in the background when required.' They have not yet got rid of their deep-rooted 'desire for fame' and they try to build themselves up into 'great men' and 'heroes' in the Communist cause, and even have no

---

scruples in employing any means for the gratification of such desires. However, when their aims cannot be achieved, when they receive rebuffs or cool treatment from comrades in the Party, there is a possible danger of their wavering. In the history of the Party there have been not a few members who left the Party because of such wavering. In the minds of such persons there exist remnants of the ideology of the exploiting classes. They do not understand the greatness of Communism, nor do they have the broad vision of a Communist.

Communists should not indulge in self-complacency or haughtiness. Granted certain comrades are very competent and have done certain work well and made great achievements. For example, our army officers led thousands upon thousands of men and won victories, or our Party and mass-work leaders in various places through their work brought about a much more favourable situation. Theirs may probably be 'great' achievements of which they may be proud, yet compared with the cause of Communism as a whole how great are these achievements after all? Their achievements are but 'a drop in the ocean'. To a person with a Communist world outlook, what is there in this that one may be really proud of?

So far as individual Party members are concerned how can one's personal position be worth worrying about? One's position can never be higher than that of an emperor, nevertheless, comparing the position of an emperor with that of a fighter for the cause of Communism, how great is it after all? It is only 'a drop in the ocean';

---

as Stalin has said. So what is there that is worth worrying and bragging about?

Yes, in our Party, in the Communist cause, we need countless numbers of Communist heroes and a great many Party and mass leaders with prestige and position. At present, we really have far too few revolutionary heroes and leaders with prestige. We still need to temper and cultivate a great number of very good Communist revolutionary heroes and leaders in all fields. This is a very important thing in our cause which simply cannot be neglected. Whoever shows contempt for this point simply does not understand how to advance the Communist cause. Therefore, we must still greatly enhance our Party members' keenness and aspiration for progress in the revolutionary cause. At present we are not doing enough in this respect. This point shows itself, for instance, in the fact that certain Party members are not studying hard enough, and their interest in politics and theory is not deep enough.

Therefore, we oppose individual heroism and showing-off but we certainly do not oppose such aspiration for progress among our members—this is a most precious quality of Communist Party members. But the proletarian and Communist aspiration for progress is entirely different from the individualistic aspiration for progress. The former seeks truth, upholds truth and moreover fights most effectively for truth. It has a perspective of unlimited development and is of a progressive nature. But the latter, as far as the individual goes, is extremely

---

limited in its progressive nature and furthermore has no perspective, because, for the sake of the individual's personal interests, it often consciously negates, covers up or distorts truth. Therefore, our comrades must understand that real leaders and heroes in the Communist cause can never be individualistic and self-appointed. Anyone who appoints himself as a leader or who individually tries to become a leader can never become a leader in our Party. All leaders, whether national or local, have achieved success through mass support. The rank and file of our Party will not support as their leaders those persons who are self-conceited, given to individual heroism, showing-off, personal ambition for leadership and vanity. No Party member has the right to demand that other members and the masses support him as a leader or to safeguard his position as a leader. Only such Party members who have not the slightest personal aim, who are loyal to the Party, who have a high degree of Communist ethics and qualities, who can master the theory and methods of Marxism-Leninism, who have considerable practical ability, who can actually direct Party work, who try unceasingly and strenuously to study and to make progress can win the confidence and support of the Party and the masses and thus become heroes and leaders in the Communist cause.

Our comrades should further realize that a Party member, a leader or hero, whoever he may be, can only carry out a part of the work of the Communist cause and shoulder only a part of the responsibility. The Communist cause is a collective task involving countless

---

tens of millions of persons over a long period of time, and cannot be monopolised by any individual. Even our great leaders, Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin, fulfilled only a part of the work of the Communist cause. Their work still needs the continuous efforts of tens of millions of us. We ordinary Party members also carry out a part of the work and shoulder a part of the responsibility in the cause of Communism. Our part is of course much smaller than that of Marx, Engels, Lenin or Stalin. Nevertheless, we all have our part. Although there is a difference between a great part and a small part, it is a part all the same. Therefore if we can do a part of the work well, it means that we have fulfilled our duty.

Of course, we should try our best to do a bigger part. But if we cannot, we can still do a smaller part just as well. So far as we individually are concerned, this is nothing worth while worrying about. In any case, we should at least try not to obstruct the development of the Communist cause, and should do our part of the work, be it big or small. That is the attitude we should adopt towards our own work. There are certain comrades who are not willing to do technical work, thinking that to do so is to belittle themselves, and that it would prevent them from becoming famous in later generations (actually they can, like Edison and Stakhanov, etc. who all rose from among technical workers), and prevent them from displaying their talents. They seem to think that for them to do such work would be a great loss to the Communist cause. Therefore, they more or less lose the aspiration for progress required of all Party members.

---

Comrades! Such a way of thinking is incorrect! Technical work plays an extremely important part in our Party work. Those comrades who are doing such work are also doing their part for the cause of Communism in the same way as comrades doing other kinds of work. A Communist should do any work that is important at the time no matter whether the work is to his liking or not or whether it can win popularity or not. For example, following the victory of the Russian revolution many cadres doing important Party and political work were mobilised to learn the art of trade for the purpose of carrying out the New Economic Policy, for at that time only by carrying on trade efficiently could the Communist Party triumph over private capitalism. Even though none of the Party members liked to do trade yet they all did it because it was important. It was right that they did it, and it would have been wrong if they had not.

Here, let me repeat, Party leaders in assigning work to Party members should naturally take into consideration the different circumstances of individual Party members, see to it that the work assigned to them should suit their personality and help to develop their strong points and encourage their enthusiasm for progress. However, the Party member to whom the work is assigned should not refuse the assignment on such grounds.

Fourthly, there are a small number of comrades in the Party who strongly reflect the ideology of the exploiting classes. In dealing with Party comrades and

---

inner-Party problems they often adopt methods used in coping with the enemy, being utterly devoid of the great, sincere, Communist and proletarian spirit of mutual assistance and solidarity.

Persons with such an ideology seek to elevate and develop themselves in the Party, but they achieve this purpose by holding others down and obstructing their development. They want to jump over the heads of others and are jealous of those who are more capable. They feel displeased if others go ahead of them, catch up with them or overtake them. They will not be pleased until they have succeeded in keeping others down or behind them. They are not willing to be under others. They only care about their own well-being, their own development, without any consideration for the difficulties of others. When they see other comrades meet with difficulties, setbacks, frustration or attacks, they are happy over the calamity, secretly rejoice, and are entirely devoid of sympathy. They even scheme to injure other comrades, to 'throw stones at them when they are already down the well' and take advantage of the weak points and difficulties of other comrades to attack them and ruin their reputation. In the Party they also take advantage of the weaknesses in the Party's organisation and work to serve their ulterior purposes, to garner certain personal benefits by means of exacerbating such weaknesses. In the Party they are fond of spreading rumours, speaking ill of others behind their backs, and scheming to drive a wedge in the relations between comrades. They like to take part in all the unprincipled

---

disputes in the Party, and take great interest in all 'controversies'. Especially when the Party is in difficulties, they create and exacerbate such controversies inside the Party.

In short, they are thoroughly vicious and not in the least upright. Is it not a sheer joke to say that such persons can master the theory and method of Marxism-Leninism, and can reflect the ideology of the proletariat? Quite evidently, theirs is absolutely the reflection of the ideology of the declining exploiting classes because all exploiters, in order to develop themselves, will impair the interests of others. To increase their own wealth or to prevent themselves from going bankrupt during a depression, the capitalists crowd out a great many smaller capitalists, and compel countless workers to starve. To expand their land, the landlords exploit the peasants and deprive many of their landholdings. Fascist countries like Germany, Italy and Japan, to expand themselves, hindered the development of other countries and conquered Austria, Czechoslovakia, Ethiopia, etc. and committed aggression against China. To impair the interests of others and to render others bankrupt are conditions essential to the development of the exploiters themselves, whose happiness is founded upon others' sufferings.

Therefore, among exploiters it is impossible to find genuine firm unity, genuine mutual assistance and genuine human sympathy. The exploiters must work out treacherous schemes and underhanded measures

---

against others, for it profits them to undo others or to render them bankrupt. Nevertheless, they are compelled to tell lies and pose before the masses as pseudo-saints and 'supporters of justice'. These are the characteristics of all exploiters in their decline. Such things, however, are also reflected in the ideology of some people in our Party. To the exploiters such things may be the standard of their 'noble' ethics; but to the proletariat, they are outright treason.

The proletariat is entirely different from what has just been described. The proletariat does not exploit others, but is exploited by others. There are no basic conflicts in interests among the workers, or between the workers and all the other oppressed and exploited toiling masses. To develop themselves and to win their own emancipation, the workers not only have no need to impair the interests and development of other workers or toiling people, but have need of uniting with other workers and toiling people. Only then can the workers develop themselves, raise their own position and emancipate themselves. The emancipation of the proletariat itself must be accompanied by the emancipation of all toiling people and mankind as a whole. It is impossible to separately emancipate an individual worker or a section of the workers. The cause of emancipating humanity must be carried out to the end, and it is impossible to stop or compromise halfway. And it must be the common, complete emancipation of humanity as a whole.

---

The ideology of the awakened workers, reflecting this objective situation of the proletariat, is entirely contrary to the ideology of the exploiters. On the one hand, they must of course employ the most merciless measures in dealing with the common enemy of the people; on the other hand, they never employ such measures in dealing with their own brothers and comrades, thus clearly differentiating their attitude and measures adopted against their enemy from those directed towards their friends and comrades. They have a great and sincere friendship, love and sympathy for their own class brothers and for all the toiling people who are being exploited and oppressed. They display a great spirit of mutual assistance, of firm solidarity and of genuine equality in dealing with their own brothers. They absolutely refuse to recognise that any one among their own brothers or among humanity has any special privileges and they do not cherish the idea that they themselves have any special privileges. To them such a thing is unthinkable and an insult. They want to develop and elevate themselves but they know they must at the same time develop others, raise the position of the whole labouring class, and only thus can they elevate themselves. They are unwilling to lag behind others as regards ideology, politics or work and they have a lofty aspiration to strive for progress, but they know they must respect, love and help those persons who are better qualified in such aspects. They strive to learn from such persons without any jealousy. They show extreme concern for the painful and difficult situation of their own class and

---

of the whole of the world's labouring people. They are concerned about the struggle for the emancipation of labouring people everywhere and about their victories and defeats. They realise that every victory or defeat of the labouring people, wherever it takes place, means their own victory or defeat, and moreover, they express very great sympathy and concern about such victories and defeats.

They consider that in the struggle for the emancipation of any labouring people or of all the oppressed people it would be criminal to adopt an attitude of indifference or to gloat over other's misfortunes. They love their own comrades and brothers; they openly, frankly and sincerely point out the weaknesses and mistakes of their comrades and brothers. (Indeed, this is a true expression of love). In matters of principle, they never appease or compromise with their comrades or even encourage their mistakes and weaknesses (to do so would not be an expression of love), but use every means to help them overcome and correct such weaknesses and mistakes. They do not utilise or aggravate such weaknesses and mistakes to force their comrades into an unfortunate or even hopeless situation.

In dealing with their own comrades and brothers, they 'return good for evil'. If only the other comrades will correct their mistakes they will have not the slightest desire for retaliation. They are able 'to require much from themselves and little from others.' They are strict with themselves but rather lenient towards other com-

---

rades. Nevertheless, they take a firm and strict position in matters of principle, and adopt a candid, upright and serious attitude. They will not compromise on questions of principle. They will not tolerate anyone who in any way harms the interests of the Party, nor will they allow anyone to insult them without reason. They are especially contemptuous of anyone who lavishly praises, flatters or adulates them in an unprincipled way. They oppose all unprincipled struggles among their own comrades and at the same time keep themselves from being involved in unprincipled struggles. They are not influenced or irritated by those irresponsible and informal criticisms made behind their backs and will not on this account lose their own stand on matters of principle or their cool-headed and calm attitude.

All this represents the ideology of the proletariat and should be reflected, developed and learnt by every one of our Party members. The entire lives of our great leaders, Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin represent the highest model and concrete embodiment of such ideology. All this represents the uprightness of humanity in the present society, and it is the Communist Party that manifests such uprightness. We must promote and elevate such uprightness in order to overcome all viciousness.

Fifthly, bureaucracy still exists in our Party and in various organisations. I will speak again on this subject later on. Among some comrades there still exist such weaknesses as narrow-mindedness and the minding of small matters without taking into consideration the

---

overall situation. They do not have the great courage or the far-sightedness of a Communist. Blind to the bigger issues, they are very much interested in small matters under their nose. They are not very much interested in the vital problems and the highly important events of the Party and the revolution, but instead often concern themselves with trifles as small as a needle or a piece of thread or with insignificant remarks. Over such trifles they will seriously and endlessly argue with others and become overwhelmed with unrestrained emotion. They can also be easily bribed by others with small favours or gifts. They have all the characteristics of narrow-mindedness of the small producer in rural society.

Also there are still certain individuals who seem to have no clear and definite standpoint. To them, this may be all right and that may also be all right. They play ball with both sides and try to please everybody. To his face they can get along very well with a person whom they hate. They can speak well of you to your face, while speaking ill of you behind your back. They may speak well of a certain person to one man, and speak ill of the same person to another man. "To show himself, when speaking, to be a respecter of persons and circumstances", to "tack with the wind", and to lean without principle on the winning side—such are their characteristics. Sometimes they are just fence-sitters, watching to see which side is winning and going over to that side. Such people who are neither 'fish, flesh, nor fowl' but who are 'double-dealing' creatures are not altogether

---

unknown in our ranks. They display the characteristics of a broker.

In addition, there are certain persons who simply cannot stand the temptations of the exploiting classes of the old society. They begin to waver when they see around them the kaleidoscopic world, glittering gold and beautiful women. As a result, they may commit crime, or may even betray the Party and the revolution.

Furthermore, the impetuosity and inconsistency which characterise the petty-bourgeoisie, and the destructive character of the lumpen-proletariat and the bankrupt peasantry are also often reflected in the ideology of some of the comrades in the Party. We have no need to go further with our list.

To sum up, apart from those who represent the Communist ideology of the great and resolute proletariat, there still exist in our Party certain comrades who, to a greater or lesser degree, reflect various kinds of non-proletarian ideology and even the ideology of the declining exploiting classes. Such ideology is sometimes latent in the Party and only reveals itself in some small individual daily problems. Sometimes it grows and systematically exposes itself in various problems of principle in the Party, in important political questions and in inner-Party struggles. Certain individual sections or links of the Party organisation may also be controlled or corroded by such erroneous ideology. When it develops to the highest degree, for instance, during the time when Chen Tu-hsiu, Chang Kuo-tao and the like were in power



---

in the Party such erroneous non-proletarian ideology even temporarily controlled the major part or the most important part of the Party leadership. But in normal times such ideology is overcome by correct proletarian ideology. This is demonstrated by the inner-Party ideological struggle.

The same is also the case with certain Party members. Sometimes, their erroneous ideology lies dormant and under control. But at other times it may develop to the point of controlling their actions. This is demonstrated by the contradictions and struggles between the two different ideologies possessed by the same individual.

Our ideological cultivation means that we should consciously adopt the proletarian and Communist outlook on life and world outlook and have a correct understanding of the relationship between individual development and the interests of the emancipation of the class, nation and mankind in order to overcome and eliminate all kinds of incorrect and non-proletarian ideologies.

#### **The Origin of the Various Erroneous Ideologies in the Party**

Comrades! The Communist Party represents the brightest and the most progressive side of contemporary human society. It is here that the best ideology of humanity—Marxism-Leninism—exists and develops. Gathered together in the Communist Party are the world's most conscious, progressive, and sound persons with the highest sense of morality and righteousness. They persistently fight against all evil influences and struggle for

---

the bright future and for the final emancipation of human society. The Chinese Communist Party is one of the best Communist Parties in the world. It is powerfully armed with Marxist-Leninist theory, and, at the same time, it has inherited the finest traditions of the many progressive thinkers and prominent men who have made great achievements in past generations in China's history. It stands for the most progressive and the brightest side of Chinese society. In its organisation are gathered together the most splendid Chinese men and women. It has carried on a protracted struggle against the old, evil influences and traditions of Chinese society and it has accumulated rich experiences and gone through many trials over a long period of revolutionary struggle. All these are matters which we Communists can be proud of. Furthermore, we can assert, with full confidence and on every authority, that we shall certainly achieve final victory and final success.

However, even so, not everything in our organisation is perfect. Our organisation is not without defects or mistakes. Our ranks are not without unsound elements or even thoroughly bad eggs. And it is still not impossible for such unsound elements and bad eggs to do foul and harmful things. That is to say in our bright Party there are still things of darkness, there is still a seamy side. These are the things which I have previously enumerated.

Once a family has taken in marriage an ugly son-in-law or daughter-in-law, it will not be possible to keep him or her from meeting the guests. With regard

---

to the things of darkness, even if we try to adopt an attitude of 'not washing our dirty linen in public', it will be impossible. The masses of people are in constant contact with our Party, our sympathisers will come to visit us, and a vast number of people, young men and women, who look up to us, desire to come here (Yenan—Translator) to learn from us or to join our Party. When they arrive here, apart from seeing all our progressive, bright, and beautiful things and family-members, they will meet our ugly son-in-law or daughter-in-law, who in the presence of many people, talks nonsense, or makes a fool of himself or herself. In such cases some of our guests and new Party members will wonder. They will ask such questions: Isn't the Communist Party supposed to be the best? Aren't Communists the best men and women? Why are there still such ugly persons and bad things in the Communist Party? Isn't this strange?

Some young comrades, before they joined the Party, were very bitterly dissatisfied with existing society and felt that there was no way out and that only the Communist Party offered the brightest hope. They thought that after they joined the Party everything would be satisfactory and hopeful. But after they joined they began to feel that in the Party there were also certain mistakes, defects and things of darkness. Moreover, in fact, we cannot make them feel satisfied with everything (because what they find to be satisfactory may be more or less not in conformity with the interests of the Party and the revolution). What they now actually feel does not exactly coincide with their former ideals. Then they

---

began to feel doubtful and puzzled and asked: "Why are there also such things in the Communist Party?" Before some of them came to Yenan and entered the Anti-Japanese University they thought that Yenan and the Anti-Japanese University must be as good as they had dreamed them to be, but after they had arrived and entered the University they found that not everything was satisfactory. Then they again became puzzled, asking: "Why are there still such unsatisfactory things at Yenan and in the Anti-Japanese University?" Certain persons even became pessimistic and disappointed because they could not find answers to these questions.

With reference to these questions, in addition to sharpening our vigilance and instructing our Party members and cadres to pay serious attention to carefully treating and guiding our new Party members and those who are inclined to us, and not giving them an unfavourable impression, it is necessary to give an explanation to our comrades inside and outside of our Party.

Why are there still such bad things in the splendid organisation of our Party? The reason, I think, is very simple. It is that our Party is not a Party that has fallen from the heavens; it is a Party which has grown out of the existing Chinese society. Although in general our Party members are relatively the best Chinese men and women, the vanguard of the Chinese proletariat, they come, however, from every stratum of Chinese society and are still living in this society which is replete with the influences of the exploiters—selfishness, intrigues,

---

bureaucracy and every kind of filthy thing. Most of our best Party members are unlikely to be influenced by such things, but is it so strange that there should still be other Party members who to a greater or lesser extent bring into our Party, or reflect in our Party, some of the filthy things of society? Is it anything strange that there are muddy stains on a person who crawls out of the mud and who constantly dabbles in the mud? It is not strange at all. It is a matter of course. It would be very strange indeed if there were absolutely no such filthy things in the Communist Party. How could it be possible for such a filthy society to give birth to a Communist Party that is perfectly immune from filth? It is utterly inconceivable. It can be said that so long as there are still such filthy things, so long as there are still classes, and the influences of the exploiting classes in society there are bound to be such filthy things in the Communist Party to some extent.

Therefore the Communist Party is confronted with the task of carrying on the revolution and it is necessary for Communist Party members to carry on self-cultivation and steeling. Because of this, in addition to waging struggles against all dark and backward influences and things in society we must carry on inner-Party struggle to oppose the wavering, unsteady elements who reflect in the Party all kinds of dark and backward things in society. This constitutes the very basis of our inner-Party contradictions and inner-Party struggle. In the course of the various struggles inside and outside of the Party we seek to remould society, to gradually rid

---

it of the dark, backward things and at the same time to remould our Party and Party members, to solve inner-Party contradictions so as to develop our Party and Party members to a sound and firm level.

Comrade Stalin says:

...the sources of contradiction within proletarian parties lie in two circumstances.

What are these circumstances?

Firstly, pressure by the bourgeoisie and bourgeois ideology on the proletariat and its Party in the course of the class struggle—pressure which the least steadfast strata of the proletariat, and that means the least steadfast strata of the proletarian Party, not infrequently give way to. It cannot be considered that the proletariat is completely isolated from society, that it stands outside society. The proletariat is part of society, connected with its various strata by numerous ties. But the Party is part of the proletariat. Therefore, the Party cannot be free of connections with, and the influence of, the various strata of bourgeois society. The pressure of the bourgeoisie and its ideology on the proletariat and its Party finds expression in the fact that bourgeois ideas, morals, customs and moods not infrequently infiltrate into the proletariat and its Party through certain strata of the proletariat, connected in one way or another with bourgeois society.

Secondly, the heterogeneity of the working class, the presence of different strata within the working class. I think that the proletariat, as a class, may be divided into three strata.

One stratum is the basic mass of the proletariat, its core, its permanent part, it is that mass of 'thoroughbred' proletarians, which has already long ago severed its ties with

---

the capitalist class. This stratum of the proletariat is the most dependable support of Marxism.

The second stratum consists of those who only recently came from the non-proletarian classes, from the peasants, the middle classes, the intelligentsia. These people who come from other classes, who only recently joined the ranks of the proletariat, have brought with them into the working class their customs, their habits, their hesitations, their instability. This stratum represents the most favourable breeding ground for all sorts of anarchistic, semi-anarchistic and 'ultra-leftist' groupings.

Finally, there is a third stratum: the working class aristocracy, the elite of the working class, the best provided for section of the proletariat, with its tendency towards a compromise with the bourgeoisie, with its dominant tendency to adapt itself to the powers that be, with its striving 'to become a somebody'. This stratum represents the best breeding ground for outspoken reformists and opportunists.

Comrades! This is the origin of various non-proletarian ideologies, errors, defects and filthy things which still exist in our splendid proletarian Party. This is the origin of the various contradictions that still exist in the Party.

#### **The Attitude Towards Various Erroneous Ideologies in the Party and Inner-Party Struggle**

Because of the influence of the exploiting classes, because of the heterogeneity of the working class and of our Party, there arise among different Party members differences in ideology, viewpoint, custom, habit and mood; there arise among different Party members

---

differences of varying degree in their philosophy of life, their world outlook, and their concept of ethics; and there arise among different Party members differences in methods of looking at things and ways of thinking with regard to various revolutionary problems. Some look at things in a correct objective manner, from the angle of their development and their inter-connection; while others look at things in an incorrect subjective manner, taking things to be in a state of stagnation and isolation. Some only observe or exaggerate this aspect of things, while others only see or exaggerate that aspect of things; that is to say, they do not view problems as a whole in accordance with the laws of the development and relation of objective things, but view problems in a one-sided and subjective way; therefore differences as to the method of activity are brought about among Party members and differing ideas, views and arguments arise and in this way inner-Party struggles are aroused.

Such differences and arguments will inevitably become all the sharper, especially at turning points of the revolution, in conditions of ever-intensifying revolutionary struggles and growing hardships and under the influence and pressure of the exploiting class and its ideology. Therefore, the crux of the problem is not whether there are differences in ideology and opinions in the Party—there are bound to be such differences. The point is how to solve the contradictions within the Party, how to get rid of these differences, how to overcome the various erroneous non-proletarian ideologies in the Party. Naturally, it is only through inner-Party

---

struggle that we can solve these contradictions, clear away the differences, and overcome the various erroneous ideologies. Just as Engels said: 'No one can at any time hide contradictions for long. Contradictions must be solved by means of struggle.'

Different kinds of people, both inside and outside of the Party, hold different kinds of views and adopt different kinds of attitudes towards the various errors and defects and undesirable things in the Party.

People of one kind do not see or are unwilling to see the defects, errors, and undesirable things in the Party. They are blindly optimistic and take it for granted that everything is all right in the Party; therefore they relax their vigilance and slacken their struggle against the defects, errors and all the undesirable things.

People of a second kind see nothing or almost nothing but errors, defects and undesirable things; they do not see the bright side of the Party. They consider that nothing is good in the Party; therefore they become pessimistic, disappointed and lose their confidence in the future of the Party. Or they become alarmed and regard such things as 'disastrous'.

Both of these views are incorrect and one-sided. Our view is different from both. On the one hand, we know that our Party is the most progressive, most revolutionary political party of the Chinese proletariat. On the other hand, we clearly realise that in our Party there are still various kinds of errors, defects and un-

---

desirable things, both large and small. At the same time we clearly understand the origin of these things, the method of gradually correcting them and eliminating them. Accordingly, we must strengthen our efforts and work and carry on the necessary struggle in order to advance our Party and the revolution.

Just as the standpoints and views of various persons are different, so there are also different kinds of attitudes towards the undesirable things in our Party.

The first kind of attitude is: To enjoy seeing the defects, errors and undesirable things in our Party and to gloat over them and by every means utilise and magnify them in order to undermine our Party (sometimes the method used is to oppose certain mistakes and to support the Party line in such a manner as to channel the mistakes in another direction). This is the attitude adopted by our enemies outside the Party and by the spies and trotskyites lurking within the Party.

The second kind of attitude is: To sympathise with, accept and learn from certain erroneous ideologies and bad examples in order to gratify certain personal ambitions and desires. People with this attitude consider that the existence of certain defects and errors in the Party is to their advantage, therefore they themselves consciously or unconsciously promote the development of such defects and errors and make use of them. This is the attitude adopted by opportunists and Party members of the most undesirable character.

---

The third kind of attitude is: To leave these errors, defects and undesirable things undisturbed and to let them take their own course. People with this attitude try to take things easy and are unwilling to struggle against these things. Or they fear inner-Party struggle and self-criticism, and consider these as harmful and not beneficial to the Party. Or they are apathetic and unwilling to recognise these phenomena or they adopt a perfunctory, conciliatory and eclectic attitude towards these phenomena. This is the attitude adopted by Party members who have but a weak sense of duty towards the Party and who are profoundly imbued with liberalism and who are guilty of bureaucracy.

The fourth kind of attitude is: To harbour violent hatred towards the errors, defects and persons in the Party whose ideology is incorrect. People with this attitude bluntly sever relations with such persons, attempt to purge them and expel them from the Party at one stroke. But if they fail in this or if they themselves meet with rebuffs they give up and become disheartened and melancholy. They 'mind their own business', keep themselves aloof or stand far away from the Party. This kind of absolute attitude also finds expression in a mechanical understanding of inner-Party struggle and self-criticism. They think that the more bitter the struggle among comrades in the Party the better; they raise every trifle to a so-called 'level of principle'; they label the tiniest fault as political opportunism, etc., and abuse the organisational methods of the Party or even methods used in struggles outside the Party to punish

---

comrades. They do not carry on the inner-Party struggle in an appropriate and concrete manner in accordance with the objective requirements and the laws of development of objective things, but, on the contrary, they carry on the 'struggle' mechanically, subjectively, violently and unscrupulously. They consider that inner-Party struggle must be carried on under any circumstances, and the more frequent and the more bitter the struggle the better, with the result that they deliberately hunt for 'targets for struggle', deliberately create inner-Party struggle, and seek to promote the work of the Party by relying upon such mechanical 'struggle'. This is the attitude adopted by Party members who do not understand the origin of the contradictions within the Party and who lack knowledge of the methods of dealing with inner-Party differences and who only mechanically understand inner-Party struggle.

The fifth kind of attitude is the very attitude we should adopt, an attitude which is opposite to the four kinds previously mentioned.

1. We first of all recognise and make out which of the various phenomena, ideologies, diverse opinions and views are correct, beneficial to the long-range interests of the Party and the revolution and which of them are incorrect and detrimental to the long-range interests of the Party and the revolution. Maybe both sides to the dispute are wrong but a third opinion and view may be right. After sober analysis and consideration we decide our clear-cut attitude, and take up our stand on the correct side. We do not blindly follow or idolise anybody.

---

2. We study, promote, and develop all that is good and upright and uphold all the correct views and opinions in the Party. We do not imitate the bad examples or allow ourselves to be influenced by incorrect ideology.

3. We do not adopt a liberal attitude but carry on an irreconcilable struggle against various ideologies and views which are wrong in principle and against all undesirable phenomena in the Party in order to constantly try to overcome such mistakes and phenomena. We do not temporise or permit the development of these mistakes and phenomena to jeopardise the interests of the Party. Nor do we fear this kind of inner-Party struggle.

4. We do not, however, adopt a mechanical, absolute attitude. We combine irreconcilability and clarity in principle with flexibility in the methods of struggle and with the spirit of patient persuasion. In the course of prolonged struggles, we seek to educate, criticise, steel and reform those comrades who possess erroneous ideologies but who are not incorrigible. In a concrete and appropriate way we carry on ideological struggles in the Party which are essential to the various questions of principle at different stages but do not recklessly carry on struggle in the Party in a subjective, mechanical and fanatical manner. Nor are we addicted to struggle.

5. By means of inner-Party struggle we consolidate the Party and enhance its discipline and prestige, and mete out organisational penalties to the incorrigible

---

elements or even expel them from the Party in order to ensure the soundness and consolidation of our Party. This is the attitude which all good and mature Party members should adopt.

Of the five previously-mentioned attitudes only the fifth is the correct Bolshevik attitude. It is obvious that the first and second attitudes are incorrect. It is not at all strange that our enemies should make use of all our errors and defects in order to undermine our Party. In addition to constantly sharpening our vigilance, we should, on every occasion when defects and mistakes occur inside the Party, reduce any opportunity which could possibly be utilised by the enemy. This is the bounden duty of every comrade who loves our Party. If in the course of inner-Party struggle a Party member ignores this point, or is only concerned with victory in the immediate struggle and his own momentary gratification, or if he does not reject assistance from bad elements, but joins in with them, or if he utilises certain forces and help from outside the Party in order to attain a certain goal in inner-Party struggle, he will commit an unforgivable political mistake and a gross violation of Party discipline.

Our Party members should reflect the correct ideology, learn from good examples and not from incorrect ideologies and bad examples in the Party. They should fight against such incorrect ideologies and bad examples. There are, however, still certain comrades in the Party who, apart from reflecting correct ideologies and follow-

---

ing good examples, sometimes more or less reflect certain incorrect ideologies and follow bad examples. It seems easy for certain comrades to learn to be bad but hard for them to learn to be good. This deserves our serious attention.

These comrades, in the event of certain mistakes occurring in the Party, are apt to help to develop or magnify such mistakes either intentionally or unintentionally and in the course of inner-Party struggle they often line up on the wrong side, or for certain reasons they join the winning side. These comrades will scarcely make any progress, unless seriously prodded and steeled.

It is, I think, quite clear to you students of the Institute of Marxism-Leninism that the comrades of the third kind who adopt a liberal and bureaucratic attitude towards the various errors, defects and undesirable phenomena are of course extremely wrong and entirely non-Bolshevik. For in *Party Construction* which you have studied, there is a whole chapter devoted to the necessity of self-criticism and ideological struggle in the Party. Lenin and Stalin have likewise on many occasions given clear and profound explanations on this point to which you may make reference, and the fourth and fifth chapters of the book *On Political Parties*, published by the Chinese Publishing House, deal with this question at great length, therefore I need not go into details now. What I do want to point out, however, is that there are still not a few comrades in the Party who adopt this kind

---

of attitude. They have been very inadequate in carrying on self-criticism and particularly in self-criticism from the lower levels upwards, and in exposing various errors, defects, and undesirable phenomena in the Party in a responsible, formal, and sincere manner in order to correct and eliminate them. In this respect, we still need great improvement. But there is quite a lot of irresponsible, informal and cowardly criticism and discontent, backbiting and gossiping in the Party about this or that person or concerning this or that matter. These are two expressions of liberalism in the Party. This shows that the political development and courage on the part of some comrades in the revolutionary struggle are still inadequate and that the correct practice of inner-Party democracy is also still inadequate.

Certain comrades dare not dispense with face-saving, fear to give offence to others or to incur their animosity or counter-criticism. They would rather leave the various errors and defects in the Party alone and adopt a perfunctory attitude of 'muddling through' and 'the less trouble the better' and yet they criticise others behind their backs. This is not beneficial but detrimental to the Party. Such irresponsible criticism and talk may lead to unprincipled disputes and splits in the Party, and may offer opportunities to spies lurking in the Party and bad elements to carry on disruptive activities in the Party. Furthermore, the mistakes and defects in the Party will never be corrected by means of such kind of irresponsible criticism. Therefore the Party rules adopted



---

at the Sixth Plenary Session of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China prohibit such irresponsible criticism and talk and promote inner-Party, responsible and formal self-criticism which is beneficial to the Party.

Since various errors, defects and incorrect, non-proletarian ideologies exist in the Party, each of these incorrect ideologies may at some time develop into a certain trend in the Party, give rise to differences in the Party over certain principles and affect the Party's unity in action. If under such conditions we do not correctly carry on self-criticism in the Party and constantly expose and correct the various errors and defects, overcome all incorrect ideologies and conduct inner-Party struggle to overcome inner-Party differences, but instead adopt an eclectic attitude and 'middle' line and try to muddle through—then, 'we shall not be able to correctly educate the Party, the proletariat, and the masses' (Stalin). 'We shall not be able to advance or develop'; 'we shall no longer be proletarian revolutionaries and we shall be doomed to failure' (Lenin).

Stalin says:

The 'middle' line on questions of principle is a 'line' that muddles up one's head, a 'line' that covers up differences, a 'line' of ideological degeneration of the Party, a 'line' of ideological death of the Party.

The policy of the "middle" line on questions of principle is not our policy. The policy of the 'middle' line on questions of principle is the policy of a party that is declining and degenerating from day to day. Such a policy cannot but

---

lead to the transformation of such a party into an empty bureaucratic organ, functioning fruitlessly and detached from the working masses. This road is not for us.

Therefore, ... the overcoming of the contradictions within the Party by means of struggle is the law of development of our Party. .. the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) grew and gained strength by overcoming the contradictions within the Party.

Therefore, it is incorrect to adopt a liberal and bureaucratic attitude; self-criticism must be developed and inner-Party struggle carried on to oppose all undesirable phenomena, and to overcome differences in the Party before it can be consolidated, developed and advanced.

Liberalism is manifested in another phenomenon. When a particular dispute has broken out in the Party many comrades put aside their regular work and for days and nights engage in inconsequential discussions or deliberately indulge in denouncing everything in the Party, and in the course of such debates they weaken Party unity, disintegrate the solidarity of the cadres, weaken Party discipline, incapacitate the Party leadership, destroy Party prestige and convert militant Party organisations and the Party apparatus into debating societies. Cases like this have taken place more than once in the past in certain of our Party organisations. As Stalin says: 'This is not self-criticism but a scandal.' 'This is slandering the working class.' This is alien, anti-Bolshevik 'self-criticism'. It has nothing in common with

---

the self-criticism we advocate. The reason why we need self-criticism is not to destroy Party prestige, undermine Party discipline, weaken Party leadership, but to promote Party prestige, consolidate Party discipline, and strengthen Party leadership.

The comrades of the fourth kind who adopt an absolute attitude are also wrong. This attitude is the opposite of liberalism—the third attitude mentioned above. Those who adopt this attitude do not understand that the incorrect ideologies in the Party have a deep-rooted social origin and cannot be eliminated at one stroke. All comrades in the Party, at different times, are more or less apt to reflect some incorrect ideology of society. Only people like Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin who were so pure, so firm, and so correct, keen and profound in observing things can be perfectly free from the influence of these ideologies. That is why Dr. Sun Yat-sen called Lenin 'the sage of the revolution'. It is inevitable that everyone of us will commit some mistakes in our work. If we do not tolerate and make allowances but absolutely reject and even eliminate all comrades who to some degree or other reflect non-proletarian ideologies of society and who commit some mistakes but who are not incorrigibly bad elements, then our Party cannot be built up. The ultimate result of such rejection and elimination may lead to the eventual elimination from the Party of the very comrades who adopt this absolute attitude, because they are not 'sages of the revolution' and they themselves cannot help com-

---

mitting mistakes. For example, in the past some comrades committed mistakes during the campaign to suppress reactionary elements because they adopted this absolute attitude. Comrades who adopt this attitude do not specifically understand that in the course of the struggle for the cause of Communism, the greatest and most difficult task is to transform mankind into selfless citizens of Communist society. If they understand this point, if they understand that even mankind with all its weaknesses, can in the long course of struggle, be steeled, educated, and converted into highly civilised Communists, why can they not educate and reform the Party members who have joined the Party but who still retain to some degree or other the remnants of the ideology of the old society?

Naturally, it needs long, patient education and steeling to reform and educate these Party members. It is a difficult task. However, if we are reluctant to undertake this small, difficult task and shrink from it, how can we talk about changing the world and mankind? Since we have made up our minds to undertake, and not to shrink from, the unprecedentedly arduous task of changing the world and mankind what other arduous tasks in the world today can daunt us? Party members who believe in the Communist philosophy of life and world outlook are dauntless and unafraid of any difficulties and hardships, and at the same time understand that the course of progress of world events is a tortuous one. The comrades who adopt an absolute attitude do

---

not yet understand the arduous and tortuous nature of the cause of Communism. If they fear hardships, desire to travel a straight road, to eliminate at one stroke all the undesirable things, and immediately to leap into their ideal world, they will certainly run their heads against the wall. After they have run their heads against the wall they will become pessimistic and disheartened, lose their confidence in the future of the cause of Communism, thus exposing the very substance of their non-proletarian ideology. What a pity it is that there are still not a few comrades in our Party who more or less adopt such an attitude!

The reason why inner-Party struggle is necessary is that differences over principles inside the Party are brought about in the course of the development of the Party and the struggle of the proletariat; at such times, differences can be overcome and contradictions solved 'only by a fight for one or the other principle, for one or the other goal of the struggle, for one or the other method in the struggle leading to that goal.' No compromise will be of any avail. Inner-Party struggle is necessary not because we like to struggle or to argue. That is to say, when questions have developed to the level of principle and cannot be solved by any means but struggle, we should unflinchingly carry on inner-Party struggle to solve them. It does not mean that we have to conduct inner-Party struggle in a fussy and uncompromising way and with a long face, against all

---

dissenting views concerning current policies and purely practical matters. Comrade Stalin said:

We can and must reach all kinds of agreements with dissenters within the Party on questions of current policy, on questions of a purely practical character.

When opportunist ideology manifests itself and differences in principle take place in our Party, we must carry on struggle to oppose these erroneous principles and opportunism and overcome them; it does not mean that when there is no difference in principle, no opportunism in the Party we subjectively and deliberately try to magnify some difference in opinion among the comrades concerning certain purely practical matters and take it for 'difference in principle', and deliberately 'hunt' for certain comrades as 'opportunists', regarding them as 'targets' in inner-Party struggle. It does not mean that we think that the work of the Party, the development of the Party and the victory of the proletarian revolutionary struggle will be miraculously expanded simply by relying upon intensifying the fire against such "targets". Of course, this is not conducting inner-Party struggle seriously but is simply making a mockery of the Party, and making child's play of inner-Party struggle, which is of an extremely serious nature.

It is necessary to prod, publicly criticise or even mete out organisational penalties to certain comrades in the Party who, having committed mistakes in principle and displayed opportunist ideology, turn a deaf ear to

---

persuasion, ignore Party criticism, and furthermore persist in their errors and become so headstrong and obstinate as to struggle against the policy of the Party or adopt a double-faced attitude. But we should not attack or punish comrades who have committed mistakes if they do not persist in their mistakes and after discussion and persuasion, are willing to correct their mistakes and give up their former points of view, or when they are calmly thinking over their mistakes or are dispassionately discussing them with other comrades. In carrying on self-criticism and inner-Party struggle we do not mean that the grimmer the face the better nor do we mean that the more comrades we punish the better. The highest aim of self-criticism and inner-Party struggle is to effectively educate the Party, to educate the comrades who have committed mistakes, to correct errors and to consolidate the Party. If this aim can be attained by means of peaceful discussion, persuasion and criticism instead of attacking comrades—if this is possible, then of course, it is all the better. However, during certain periods in the past, we hardly ever heard in the Party openly expressed views to the effect that such inner-Party peace and solidarity resulting from the absence of differences over principle were both desirable and essential. According to some seemingly crazy people, inner-Party peace is bad even if it results from unity in principle and line, and only by deliberately creating inner-Party struggle out of nothing can we be called 'Bolsheviks.' Of course people of this kind are not 'Bolsheviks'

---

at all but are almost incorrigible people and careerists usurping the name of 'Bolshevik'.

This is the reason why the four previously-mentioned attitudes are wrong. This is the answer to the question as to what attitude we should adopt in dealing with the errors, defects and undesirable phenomena in the Party. As a matter of fact, it is through the struggle against the things of darkness inside and outside the Party that we seek to change the world and mankind, as well as our Party and ourselves. Inner-Party struggle is the reflection of the class struggle outside the Party. In the course of the class struggle outside the Party—the revolutionary mass struggle—the Party steels, develops and consolidates itself and at the same time, in the course of the inner-Party struggle achieves solidarity and unity so as to be able to lead the revolutionary mass struggle systematically, correctly and effectively.

Therefore, it is entirely wrong and favourable to the enemy to adopt a liberal attitude towards the various mistakes, defects and undesirable phenomena in the Party, to try to deny differences over principle in the Party, to evade inner-Party struggle, to cover up inner-Party contradictions and 'muddle through', because it is against the laws of development of the class struggle and against our fundamental standpoint of changing the world and mankind through struggle.

Therefore, it is also wrong to separate inner-Party struggle from the class struggle outside the Party—the

---

revolutionary struggle of the broad masses—and to turn it into empty talk because the Party cannot steel, develop and consolidate itself if it divorces itself from the revolutionary struggle of the broad masses.

However, it is not right, either, to carry the matter to another extreme—to adopt an absolute attitude towards the comrades who have defects and mistakes but are not entirely incorrigible, and to mechanically carry on, or even subjectively create, inner-Party struggle, because this will undermine the Party, afford opportunities to the enemy to attack our Party and is against the laws of development of the Party. We should not break with the honest comrades in the Party the moment they have committed some mistakes but should seek to persuade, educate, and steel them in a considerate and sympathetic manner. We should not publicly attack them or expel them from the Party unless it is absolutely necessary.

In spite of certain errors and defects, certain individual, isolated, bad phenomena that still exist in our Party we are fully confident that in the development of the labour movement and in the great revolutionary struggle of the masses, we can and shall certainly eliminate these things. The history of the past more than ten years' struggle of the Chinese Communist Party, its great progress in all respects, and the history of the development of the labour movement in the various countries of the world have thoroughly convinced us on this point.

---

Inner-Party struggle is an indispensable and essential component part of the revolutionary struggle of the Party. Therefore our comrades should not only be steeled and cultivated in the course of the struggle outside the Party, but also be steeled and cultivated in the course of inner-Party struggle on two fronts. However, not a few of our comrades still do not thoroughly realise this point and lack self-cultivation and steeling in this respect. This is manifested in the unprincipled struggle in the Party, and in the following examples: some of our comrades, especially those who have worked for a relatively long time in the army, never vacillated, complained or felt disheartened in the course of the struggle against the counter-revolution, no matter how cruel and hard the struggle was or how many attacks, wrongs, or injustices they suffered. But during inner-Party struggle they could hardly bear any criticism, attacks and injustices, not even a single word. Or they were suspicious and thought that what other people said alluded to them and on this account they would complain and become extremely disheartened. Comrades, we cannot but pay attention to such phenomena.

We ought to say that they are in general very good comrades because they resolutely fought against the counter-revolution and regarded the Party as their affectionate mother. After having undergone many hard battles against the counter-revolution and returned to the arms of their own great mother they expect to meet with encouragement, consolation and affection and not

---

more attacks, criticism and injustices. It is only natural that they should have such expectations. However, what they have not taken into account or into full account is that since there are still various errors and defects in the Party it is necessary to conduct inner-Party struggle in which every comrade must take part. It is inevitable in the course of inner-Party struggle for everybody to meet with correct or incorrect criticisms, attacks or even injustice and humiliation. This must be undergone by every comrade. It is not because our Party is merciless, but because this is an inevitable phenomenon of the Party in the course of the class struggle. However, these comrades fail to take this point into account, therefore the moment they come across such phenomena they are surprised and feel exceptionally miserable and disheartened.

In this respect, I think that our comrades should on the one hand, take care to unite with other comrades, treat them in a sincere and candid manner and should not hurt their feelings by casual malicious remarks, or throw sharp sarcastic remarks at them, and especially should not irresponsibly criticise comrades behind their backs. With the exception of those who are most obstinate and who persist in their mistakes and do every kind of wrong thing in the Party, we should, in general, clearly and sincerely admonish and criticise, in their presence, and in a considerate and helpful manner, comrades who have committed mistakes. This is what we, and especially our comparatively responsible comrades, should pay attention to. We should bear in mind

---

an old Chinese maxim: 'If the body is cut with a sharp knife, the wound will heal, but ill-feeling roused by sarcasm will never be forgiven.' On the other hand, our comrades on their part should be prepared for inner-Party struggle and should have the courage to bear criticism, attacks or misunderstandings and injustices and especially should not be aroused to anger by other's irresponsible and even incorrect criticism and rumours. Besides formal and mutual criticism made among the comrades in Party organisations, so long as our ideology and behaviour are correct, we may, if necessary, make some explanations in answer to the irresponsible criticism and misunderstanding by others, and if such explanations are of no avail we had better let others say what they like. We should also bear in mind two other old Chinese maxims: 'Who is not gossiped about by others behind his back, and who does not gossip about others?' 'When the storm rises, sit calmly in the fishing boat.' There is not a single person who is not misunderstood in some way by others. On the one hand, we should be able to bear any misunderstanding and not involve ourselves in unprincipled struggles; on the other hand, we should always keep ourselves on the alert and examine our own ideology and behaviour.

That is to say, we should not casually hurt other comrades' feelings by our remarks but we should be able to bear any remarks others may cast at us.

We are radically opposed to unprincipled disputes in the Party. Since they are 'unprincipled' they are

---

harmful and unprofitable to the Party. Since they are 'unprincipled' there is nothing right or wrong, good or bad about them. We should not try to find out who is right and who is wrong, or who is good and who is bad in unprincipled struggles, because these matters cannot be straightened out. We are radically opposed to this kind of unprincipled struggle and ask comrades who are engaged in it to stop it unconditionally and return to questions of principle. This is the policy we should adopt in unprincipled disputes. What shall we do, if in spite of prohibition by the Party and opposition by us, unprincipled disputes in the Party still take place or many unprincipled questions are involved in certain struggles over principle? What shall we do if unprincipled questions are thrust upon us and we become involved in them? In cases like this, we must concentrate our attention on the questions of principle and not on the unprincipled ones and must seriously deal with unprincipled disputes in accordance with the above-mentioned policies, firmly maintaining our standpoint to the end without becoming entangled in unprincipled disputes. We should not return 'wrong' for 'wrong'. We should consistently stand upon the 'right' side to oppose the 'wrongs' of others. This is not very easy for some of our comrades to do. Therefore we must carry on steeling and cultivation.

In a word, the aim of our ideological cultivation is fundamentally to steel us as loyal, pure, progressive, model Party members and cadres. We should do the following:

---

1. Build up our firm Party and class standpoint through the study of Marxism-Leninism and revolutionary practice.

2. Examine our own ideology, behaviour, correct all erroneous ideas and at the same time look at questions and other comrades on the basis of the Communist philosophy of life, world outlook and firm Party standpoint.

3. Constantly adopt an appropriate attitude and method in the struggle against various erroneous ideologies in the Party, especially those that affect the revolutionary struggle of the time.

4. Strictly control ourselves in ideology, speech and behaviour. We should particularly control those political ideologies, speeches and activities which concern the revolutionary struggle at the time by taking a firm standpoint and by sticking to principle. In addition it would be best to pay attention even to many 'trifles' (private life, behaviour, etc.). But as regards other comrades, except on questions of principle and important political questions, our restrictions imposed upon them should not be too severe. We should not try to find fault over 'trivialities'.

Comrades! This is, in my opinion, what is meant by the fundamental ideological cultivation of Communist Party members.

## THE CLASS CHARACTER OF MAN

**I**N A CLASS SOCIETY, man's class character forms the very nature and substance of man.

In a class society all human beings exist as human beings of a particular class. Therefore, the social character of man is determined by his class status. As the status of one person is different from that of another, so is his social character. In the past, Mencius, Kautze, Hsuntze\* and others had argued 'whether human nature was good or evil' without ever achieving any result. This was because they did not understand or deliberately wanted to cover up the class differences in the social character of man. In a class society men's ideas of good and evil are different. What is regarded as good by the exploiters is regarded as evil by the exploited, and vice

---

\* All the three were leading Confucian scholars of the latter part of Chou Dynasty (1122-255 B.C.). They held different views with regard to human nature. Mencius was of the opinion that human nature was primarily good, Hsuntze regarded it as evil while Kautze thought that it was likely to change.



---

versa. Naturally, to discuss the question as to whether human nature is good or evil without taking into consideration the relationship of classes will get nowhere. Likewise, if we do not adopt the proletarian standpoint we cannot judge how good or how bad certain people are, still less can we judge the party spirit of these people.

The class character of man is determined by his class status. That is to say, if a given group of people have for a long time held the status of a given class, i.e., a given position in social production, and have for a long time produced, lived and struggled in a given manner they will create their particular mode of life, and their particular interests, demands, psychologies, ideas, customs, viewpoints, manners and relations with other groups of people and things, etc. All these are different from, or contrary to, those created by other groups of people. In this manner the particular characteristics of men, their particular class character, are formed.

As men of different classes in society have different interests, demands, ideas and customs, so they have different ways of looking at, and different policies in dealing with, everything in society and history—such as politics, economics, culture, etc. The ruling classes enact laws and systems in accordance with their interests, demands and viewpoints. As a result, all political, economic and cultural systems in society become tools of the ruling classes and all are permeated with a class character.

---

In a class society, all ideas, utterances, behaviour, social systems and doctrines of men are permeated with a class character, representing the particular interests and demands of certain classes. From the different demands, doctrines, ideas, utterances and behaviour of men, we can find out their different class character.

For example, the method of production of natural agricultural economy and handicraft industry is the basis of feudal society. In such production the feudal lords are in a position to exploit the surplus labour of the peasants. They do not work but rely upon land rent and corvee as a means of living. Therefore they want to get hold of more land and to possess it permanently. They demand that the peasants pay more land rent and contribute more unpaid services, and recognise as justified their right of trampling on and exploiting the peasants, thus giving rise to their feudal sectionalism, swallowing-up of others, extravagance, laziness, cruelty and social rank. Such are the characteristics of the feudal class.

The method of machine production in modern industry is the basis of capitalist society. In such production the bourgeoisie own the means of production and all the products with which to exploit the surplus labour of the proletariat. Their livelihood is dependent upon the surplus value created by the workers. Such being the case, they want free buying and selling of commodities and of labour power, and free competition. They use econo-

---

mic means to destroy their competitors and to create for themselves an economic and political monopoly. They claim the inviolability of their private property and demand that the workers give their surplus labour in greater quantity (longer working hours and speed-up) and in better quality (better and more experienced skill) for less pay. They also want the workers to recognise as justified their right to become rich and to monopolise the wealth of society, thus giving rise to their competition, monopoly, extravagance and the centralised and mechanical character of their organisation. Such are the characteristics of the bourgeoisie.

Take the case of the peasants. The peasants have for a long time been tied to the land and have been engaged in production in a form that is scattered, independent, simple, self-sufficing and with little mutual co-operation. Their way of life is simple and individualistic and they bear the burden of land rent and unpaid services, etc. Thus, the ground is prepared for their lax ways, conservatism, narrow-mindedness, backwardness, outlook as of private owners, revolt against the feudal lords and their demand for political equality, etc. Such are the characteristics of the peasantry.

The proletariat are concentrated in big industries, carrying on production with a minute division of labour; all their actions are governed by machines and mutual-dependence; they are wage-labourers who sell their labour power and who do not possess any means of production;

---

they rely on wages as a means of livelihood and their basic interests do not conflict with those of other toilers. Hence the ground is prepared for their great solidarity, mutual co-operation, sense of organisation and discipline, progressive outlook and demand for public ownership of property, revolt against all exploiters, militancy, tenacity, etc. Such are the characteristics of the proletariat.

All exploiting classes deceive and oppress the exploited and fight among themselves for the surplus products or surplus value of the exploited, thus giving rise to their deceitfulness, oppression of man and mutual plundering. Many wars in history were caused by the exploiting classes fighting among themselves over the seizure and division of the surplus products and surplus value produced by the exploited.

A feature common to all exploiters is that they build their happiness upon the sufferings of other people. Sacrificing the happiness of all mankind or the great majority of the people, subjecting them to hunger, cold and humiliation in order to provide special privileges and special enjoyment for an individual or for a small number of people—such is the foundation of the 'noble character', 'greatness' and 'respectability' and moral basis of all exploiters.

The reverse is the case with the proletariat and the Communists. They want to build their happiness upon the basis of sharing their happiness with all others. In the struggle for the emancipation of the broad masses

---

of the working people and of all mankind, they seek to emancipate themselves and eliminate the special privileges of the small number of people. Such is the foundation of the noble character, greatness, respectability and the moral basis of the Communists.

Such are the various class characteristics of men in a class society. These class characteristics are gradually formed as a result of the specific position of men who engage for a long time in production, their specific relations of production and specific way of life. They become a kind of nature of men. This nature is social in character.

Party spirit is the highest crystallisation of such class characteristics of men. Therefore men possess party spirit of various kinds: The party spirit of the feudal class, the bourgeoisie, the proletariat, etc.

The Party spirit of a Communist is the highest crystallisation of the class character, the substance and the interests of the proletariat. The steeling and cultivation of a Communist in the Party spirit is the remoulding of his substance.

The Communist Party should develop the many great and progressive characteristics of the proletariat to the highest level. Every Communist should remould himself in accordance with these characteristics and equip himself with these excellent characteristics. This is the remoulding of substance. All Party members who

---

do not come from the ranks of the industrial workers possess non-proletarian characteristics, and therefore need all the more to be remoulded.

Nor are the characteristics of the proletariat unchangeable. It was in the course of the birth and growth of the proletariat that the characteristics of the proletariat took shape, grew and finally gave rise to Marxism-Leninism. During the period of Socialist transformation in the future and the period when Socialism is passing into Communism, the proletariat will continuously change society and the substance of mankind, and, at the same time, its own substance and characteristics. In Communist society class distinctions between men will die out and so will the class characteristics of men. Then the common character of mankind, namely common human nature, will be formed. This represents the entire process of the remoulding of the substance of mankind.

However, in the history of the world only the Communists and Marxists recognise their own Party spirit and class character as well as those of all other people and of all historical and social matters. This is also due to the fact that the special class status of the proletariat enables the Communists to openly recognise and declare this truth. The declaration of this truth does no harm to the proletariat but deals a serious blow to the exploiting classes for their treachery is exposed and they will be placed in a more difficult position to uphold the in-

---

terests of a small number of people. None of the other parties or classes admit their party spirit and class character and they try to describe themselves as if they were 'super-party' or 'super-class'. As a matter of fact, behind this nonsense about 'super-party', and 'super-class', are hidden as many vested interests as there are exploiting classes. Before the exploited they dare not admit their party spirit and class character. Because of their illusions and ignorance the petty-bourgeoisie accept this fallacy of 'super-party', 'super-class'.

The petty-bourgeoisie is characterised by its indulgence in illusions and by its fear of serious practice and struggle.

---

## A BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE ABOUT THE AUTHOR

**L**IU SHAO-CHI, Vice-Chairman of the Central People's Government of the People's Republic of China and a member of the Secretariat of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China, is one of the leaders of the contemporary revolutionary movement and the trade union movement in China.

Liu Shao-chi was born in 1898 in Ninghsiang county, Hunan Province. In 1920, he joined the Socialist Youth League of China (the predecessor of the Communist Party of China), which was founded in the same year. In 1921, the Communist Party of China was established and Liu Shao-chi joined the Party in the same year. In the spring of 1922, he was appointed to the Secretariat of the China Labour Organisation, the forerunner of the All-China Federation of Labour.

From that time on to the defeat of the revolution in 1927 Liu Shao-chi led the revolutionary trade union movement in China.

After the defeat of the revolution in 1927 Liu Shao-chi went underground and continued to direct the trade union movement. In the autumn of 1932, he went to the revolutionary base in Kiangsi and took charge of the workers' movement in the Red Areas.

From 1936 to 1942, Liu Shao-chi served successively as secretary of the North Bureau, Central Plains Bureau and Central China Bureau of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China.

Since 1932, Liu Shao-chi has been a member of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China. From 1943 onwards, he has been a member of the Secretariat of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China and Vice-Chairman of the Chinese People's Revolutionary Military Council.

When the People's Republic of China was inaugurated on October 1, 1949, Liu Shao-chi became Vice-Chairman of the Central People's Government.

In addition to *How to Be A Good Communist*, other books by Liu Shao-chi include *On Inner Party Struggle*, *On the Party*, *Internationalism and Nationalism* and other important writings.

## PUBLICATIONS ON CHINA

### In English

Titles	pp	Standard Edition	Popular Edition
On People's Democratic Dictatorship ... (By Mao Tse-tung)	45	US\$0.15	US\$0.10
On Practice ..... (By Mao Tse-tung)	23	0.10	0.05
On the Party ..... (By Liu Shao-chi)	206	0.50	0.30
On Inner-Party Struggle ..... (By Liu Shao-chi)	80	0.30	0.20
Internationalism and Nationalism ..... (By Liu Shao-chi)	52	0.15	0.10
The Chinese People's Liberation Army ... The Common Program and Other Documents of the First Plenary Session of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference ..	62 44	0.30 0.15	0.20 0.10
The Sino-Soviet Treaty and Agreements	25	0.10	0.05
The Trade Union Law .....	38	0.10	0.05
The Marriage Law .....	42	0.10	0.05
The Agrarian Reform Law .....	104	0.15	0.10
The First Year of Victory .....	100	0.30	0.20
China's Revolutionary Wars .....	47	0.15	0.10
China's Youth March Forward .....	70	0.30	0.20
Culture and Education in New China ..	124	0.30	0.20
China's Railways .....	45	0.15	0.10
China Accuses! .....	100	0.20	0.15
How the Tillers Win Back Their Land .. (By Hsiao Ch'ien)	148	0.25	0.15
Thirty Years of the Communist Party of China .....			
(By Hu Chiao-mu)			
The Communist Party—Leader of the Chinese Revolution.			

### In Preparation

On the Battlefronts in the Liberated Areas ..... By Chu Teh  
Mao Tse-tung's Theory of the Chinese Revolution... By Chen Po-ta  
Workers in New China

## FOREIGN LANGUAGES PRESS

26 Kuo Hui Chieh, Peking, China

Cable Address: "FOLAPRESS" Peking

OBTAINABLE AT ALL PROGRESSIVE BOOKSTORES