

1953

Speeches/Documents

Title: Intra-Party Directive on Rectification

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Description: This is an intra-Party directive drafted by Mao on behalf of the Central Committee. It is important to note parallels between the principles and methods suggested by Mao here and those implemented in the rectification campaign within the CPC in Yanan in 1942. This document forecasts the first major internal rectification campaign in the CPC after Liberation.

This matter of opposing bureaucratism, opposing commandism, ¹and opposing violations of law and discipline ought to arouse the attention of our leadership organs at all levels.

During the "Three-Anti's" [campaign], ²our Party has fundamentally solved the two problems of corruption and waste among many of the personnel at the four levels of the Center, the greater administrative regions, ³the provinces and the municipalities, and the special districts. It has also basically solved that part of the problem of bureaucratism in which many leaders are alienated from the personnel whom they lead in their organizations. However, there is still basically no solution in many places, areas, and departments as far as the other area of bureaucratism is concerned, that is, in the area that has to do with [cadres] not understanding the suffering of the masses of the people, not understanding the conditions of lower levels somewhat farther removed from the organ where they themselves work, not understanding that many bad people and bad things connected with commandism and violation of law and discipline exist among the cadres at the three levels of *xian*, district, and *xiang*. Even though they may have some knowledge of these bad people and bad things, they turn a blind eye to them, their indignation is not aroused, and they have no sense of the seriousness of the problem, and so they take no active measure to support the good people and punish the bad or to promote the good things and eliminate the bad. Take the matter of handling letters from the people, for instance. In some provinces the People's Government has piled up more than seventy thousand pieces of mail without handling them. We still don't know how many letters from the people have piled up in the Party and governmental organs at the levels below the province, but it can be imagined that the quantity is not small. Most of these letters from the people contain problems that they hope we will solve, and many of these ought to be handled promptly because they contain accusations against cadres for acts in complete disregard of the laws. ⁴

In our Party and government, bureaucratism and commandism are not only a major problem at present, but will continue to be a major problem for a very long period of time. In terms of its social origins, it is a problem of the remnants of the reactionary work-style of the reactionary ruling class in its treatment of the people (a work-style that opposes the people, a Kuomintang work-style) reflected in our Party and our government. In terms of the role and method of the leadership in our Party and governmental organizations, this is a problem of the failure to connect the delegation of tasks and responsibility to giving a clear explanation of the lines of demarcation in our policies and to connect work and work-style. This is to say that it is problem of not issuing repeated instructions regarding the lines of demarcation in our policies and regarding work-style in our work to mid- and lower-level cadres at the same time that tasks and responsibilities are assigned. This is a problem of not carrying out inspections of cadres at all levels, particularly those at the three levels of *xian*, district, and *xiang*, or of

doing the work of inspection poorly. This is a problem of not having yet launched the work of rectifying the Party at the three levels of xian, district, and xiang, and of not having yet launched the struggle to oppose commandism and to clear out elements who violate law and discipline in the process of the rectification of the Party. This is a problem [related to the fact] that we have not yet launched the struggle against and purged the type of bureaucratism that is [exemplified by the fact] that there still exist among our personnel in higher-level organs above the special district level a lack of understanding and concern for the suffering of the masses of the people and a lack of understanding and concern for the conditions of the basic-level organizations. If our role of leadership is strengthened and if there are improvements in our methods of leadership, then bureaucratism and commandism, which endanger and harm the masses, can be gradually reduced, and it will be possible for many of our Party and governmental organizations to break away from the Kuomintang work-style sooner. Then many bad people who have wormed their way into our Party and governmental organizations can be cleared out at an earlier date, and many of the bad things that exist at present may be eliminated sooner.

Therefore, in 1953, in coordination with Party rectification, Party building, and work in others areas, beginning with the handling of the letters from the people, please carry out an inspection of the circumstances that give rise to bureaucratism and commandism under which elements who violate law and discipline operate, and launch a resolute struggle against them. Wherever there is a typical case of bureaucratism, commandism, or violation of law and discipline it should be widely exposed in the newspapers. In cases of severe violation of the law, there should be punishment according to the law, and if it involves a Party member, then Party discipline must be applied. Party committees at all levels ought to be resolute in punishing elements who have violated law and discipline and who are deeply hated by the masses, and they should eliminate them from Party and governmental organizations. In the most serious cases, capital punishment should be applied in order to assuage the people's anger and to serve as a point of education for the cadres and the masses of the people. However, at the moment that an appropriate stage has been reached in the launching of the widespread struggle against bad people and bad things, there should be an investigation of models of good people and things everywhere, and [these should be] analyzed and publicly commended so that the entire Party can measure up to these types and the spirit of righteousness can be promoted while the spirit of evil is suppressed. We believe that there must be quite a large number of such models of good people and good things everywhere.

Notes

1 See text June 6, 1950(1), note 11.

2 See text Nov. 1951-Mar. 1952, source note.

3 See text June 23, 1950, note 2.

4 See text May 16, 1951.

Remarks

“against bureaucratism, commandism, and "violations of law and discipline" at all levels of administration. The campaign reflected the fact that the SAN-FAN CAMPAIGN had actually intensified, rather than resolved, problems of bureaucratic inefficiency and commandism. The

methods employed during the campaign included work teams, ideological study, criticism and self-criticism, and limited mass participation. In general, it was a moderate movement restricted to closed-door rectification.”

Organizing China: The Problem of Bureaucracy, 1949-1976. Contributors: Harry Harding - author. Publisher: Stanford University Press. Place of Publication: Stanford, CA. Publication Year: 1981. Page Number: 393.