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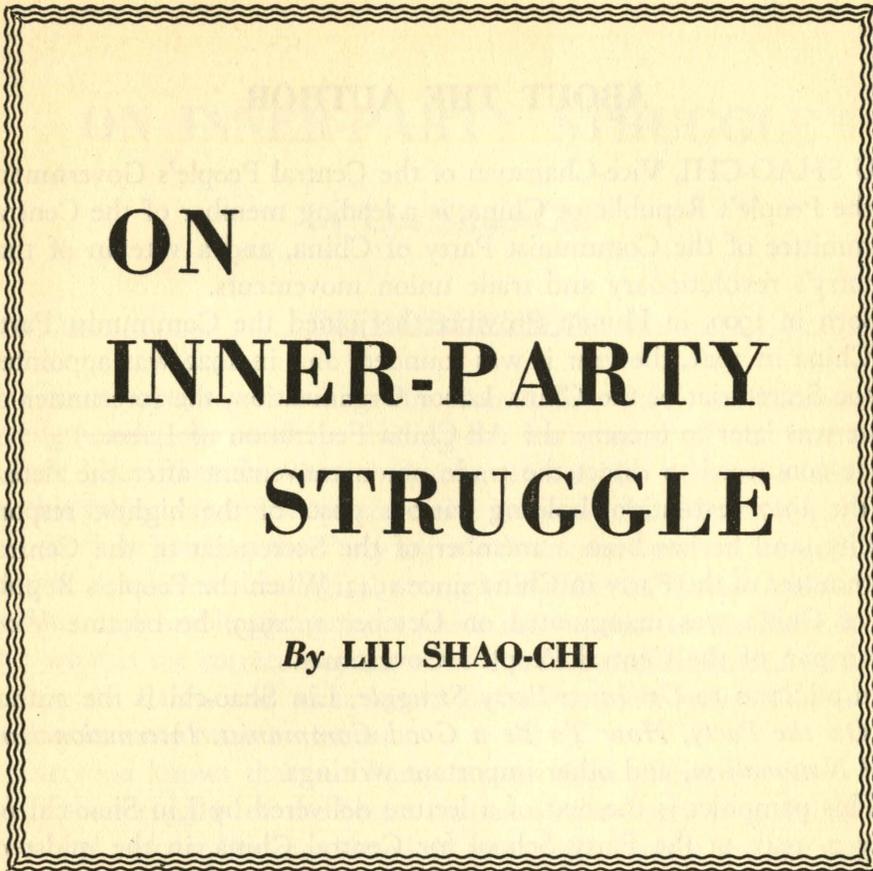
**ON
INNER-PARTY
STRUGGLE**

By **LIU SHAO-CHI**

NEW CENTURY PUBLISHERS

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

LIU SHAO-CHI, Vice-Chairman of the Central People's Government of the People's Republic of China, is a leading member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China, and a veteran of that country's revolutionary and trade union movements.

Born in 1900, in Hunan Province, he joined the Communist Party of China in 1921, the year it was founded, and in 1922 was appointed to the Secretariat of the China Labor Organization, the forerunner of what was later to become the All-China Federation of Labor.

He continued to direct the trade union movement after the defeat of the 1927 revolution, holding various posts of the highest responsibility, and he has been a member of the Secretariat of the Central Committee of the Party in China since 1943. When the People's Republic of China was inaugurated on October 1, 1949, he became Vice-Chairman of the Central People's Government.

In addition to *On Inner-Party Struggle*, Liu Shao-chi is the author of *On the Party, How To Be a Good Communist, Internationalism and Nationalism*, and other important writings.

This pamphlet is the text of a lecture delivered by Liu Shao-chi on July 2, 1941, at the Party School for Central China, in the midst of the gigantic struggle, led by the Communist Party of China, to defeat the Japanese invaders of their country.

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ON INNER-PARTY STRUGGLE

by Liu Shao-Chi

INTRODUCTION

WE HAVE RECENTLY raised in the Communist Party the problem of strengthening our work in steeling the Party spirit of our members. I have heard that the Central Committee has also adopted a decision on this subject, and we hope to receive it shortly. In order to strengthen our work in steeling the Party spirit of our members we are going to launch a concrete ideological struggle within the Party against the various undesirable phenomena which run counter to the Party spirit. But what is the correct way for us to conduct this ideological struggle within the Party, and what would be an incorrect way? This is the very question I want to discuss.

Everyone knows that our Party is a proletarian party, a party that leads the struggles of the broad masses. If the Party is to fulfill the historical tasks it has shouldered, it must fight against the enemies of the revolution at various periods, and must unite with the various revolutionary strata and classes.

Right from the day of its birth, our Party has never for a single moment lived in any environment but that of serious struggle. The Party and the proletariat have constantly lived inside the encirclement of various non-proletarian classes—the big bourgeoisie, the petty bourgeoisie, the peasantry and even the remnants of feudal forces. All these classes, when they are struggling against the proletariat or when they are co-operating with it, utilize the unstable elements within the Party and the proletariat to penetrate into the heart of the Party and the proletariat and constantly influence the Party and the proletariat in ideology, in living habits, in theory and in action. This is the origin of all kinds of erroneous and undesirable tendencies within the Party. It is the

social basis of all kinds of opportunism within the Party, and it is also the source of inner-Party struggles.

Inner-Party struggles are a reflection of the class struggles outside the Party.

From the very day of its inception, our Party has struggled not only against the enemies outside the Party but also against all kinds of hostile and non-proletarian influences inside the Party. These two kinds of struggle are different, but both are necessary and have a common class substance. If our Party did not carry on the latter type of struggle, if it did not struggle constantly within the Party against all undesirable tendencies, if it did not constantly purge the Party of every type of non-proletarian ideology and overcome both "left" and Right opportunism, then such non-proletarian ideology and such "Left" and Right opportunism might gain ground in the Party and influence or even dominate our Party. This would make it impossible for the Party to consolidate and develop itself or to preserve its independence. This would endanger the Party and lead to its degeneration. Such non-proletarian ideology and "Left" or Right opportunism can corrupt our Party, or certain sections of it, and can even transform the character of our Party or sections of it into that of a non-proletarian organization. For example, it was in this manner that the Social-Democratic parties in Europe were corrupted by bourgeois ideology and transformed into political parties of a bourgeois type, thus becoming the main social pillars of the bourgeoisie.

Therefore, such inner-Party struggle is absolutely necessary and cannot be avoided. Any idea of trying to avoid inner-Party struggle, or of refraining from criticizing others' mistakes so that they will not criticize one's own errors, is totally wrong.

Inner-Party struggles consist principally of ideological struggles. Their content is made up of the divergencies and antagonisms arising in matters of ideology and principle. The divergencies and antagonisms among our comrades on matters of ideology and principle can develop into political splits within the Party, and, under certain circumstances, even to inevitable organizational splits; but, in character and content, such divergencies and antagonisms are basically ideological struggles.

Consequently, any inner-Party struggle not involving divergencies in matters of ideology and principle and any conflict among Party

members not based on divergencies in matters of principle is a type of unprincipled struggle, a struggle without content. This kind of struggle without principle or content is utterly unnecessary within the Party. It is detrimental and not beneficial to the Party. Every Party member should strictly avoid such struggles.

Inner-Party struggle is absolutely indispensable to protecting the purity and independence of the Party, to guaranteeing that the Party's activities constantly proceed along lines which represent the highest interests of the proletariat, and to preserving the Party's basic proletarian character. With this object in view, inner-Party struggles must be conducted from two sides, or on two fronts. This is because the enemy's ideology influences the Party from two directions, attacking the Party from both the Right and the "Left." This is expressed in the Party by Right or "Left" opportunism.

Therefore, our inner-Party struggle must be directed simultaneously against both Right opportunism and "Left" opportunism, against these two aspects so that our Party can preserve its definite proletarian character. If we fail to do this, if we merely carry on a one-sided struggle, or if we slacken our vigilance and our struggle against either side, then the enemy not only can but assuredly will attack our Party from that very side which we have neglected. In that case, it will be impossible to preserve the Party's purity and independence or to consolidate the Party. It is, therefore, in the course of ceaseless inner-Party struggle on two fronts that our Party consolidates and develops itself.

Comrade Stalin said:

"The question here is that contradictions can be overcome only by means of struggle for this or that principle, for defining the goal of this or that struggle, for choosing this or that method of struggle that may lead to the goal. We can and we must come to agreement with those within the Party who differ with us on questions of current policy, on questions of a purely practical character. But if these questions involve differences over principle, then no agreement, no 'middle' line can save the cause. There is and there can be no 'middle' line on questions of principle. The work of the Party must be based either on these or those principles. The 'middle' line on questions of principle is a 'line' that muddles 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. It is not our policy to pursue such a 'middle' line.

It is the policy of a party that is declining and degenerating from day to day. Such a policy cannot but transform the party into an empty bureaucratic organ, standing isolated from the working people and becoming a puppet unable to do anything. Such a road cannot be our road."

He added: "Our Party has been strengthened on the basis of overcoming the contradictions within the Party."*

This explains the essential nature of inner-Party struggle.

Much has already appeared in the works of Lenin and Stalin on the essential nature of inner-Party struggle and why liberalism and conciliationism in the Party are no good. You can read these and I will not say more here on this subject.

The problem I now want to talk about is how to conduct inner-Party struggle. To us this is still a new problem. At present everyone is studying this problem. This is absolutely essential. I do not at this time propose to speak on the problem comprehensively. I will merely present my views, based on my personal observations regarding the historical experiences of the Chinese Communist Party. I invite all comrades to discuss whether or not these views are correct.

I

THE SPECIAL CONDITIONS UNDER WHICH THE CHINESE COMMUNIST PARTY WAS FOUNDED AND THE DEVIATIONS THAT HAVE ARISEN IN ITS INNER-PARTY STRUGGLES

WHAT DID Marx and Engels do for the world proletariat?

Marx and Engels provided the proletariat with a consolidated and complete ideological and theoretical system. Not only that, they also built an independent organization for the proletariat and led the mass struggles of the proletariat. They created the First International* and later was organized the Second International** as well as the Social-Democratic parties and trade unions in the various European countries. They educated and showed the working class how to organize themselves and how to carry on struggles.

During the period of the Second International (the period before the First World War), the Social-Democratic parties in the various countries carried on widespread organizational work among the workers, extensively broadened the movement for organizing the working class, and attained enormous successes in the field of organization. Since this was the period of "peaceful" development of capitalism and the organizations of the working class were formed in such a period of peace, the distinction between the Party and the trade unions was not yet very clear.

Especially after the death of Marx and Engels, the Second International, led by Kautsky and company, adopted an impermissible line of conciliation toward opportunism within the Party, with the result that opportunism corroded the various parties of the Second International. By the time of the imperialist era, the era of proletarian revolution, these parties and trade unions revealed their inability to

* International Workingmen's Association, founded September 28, 1864, in London, and generally referred to as the First International. It was dissolved in July, 1876.—Ed.

** Founded in Paris, on the hundredth anniversary of the French Revolution, July 14, 1889.

shoulder the revolutionary tasks which the proletariat ought to shoulder in the new period. Consequently, they could not but go bankrupt and decay in the course of the First World War.

Lenin's era was different from that of Marx and Engels. It was an imperialist era, the era of moribund capitalism. It was the era of proletarian revolution. This period demanded that the proletariat build a strong, militant party, a party which was completely consolidated and united, ideologically, politically, organizationally and in action and which had close ties with the proletarian masses. Only by relying on such a party would it be possible to carry on successfully the extremely serious revolutionary struggles. Therefore, in addition to restoring and developing the doctrines of Marx and Engels in all their aspects, Lenin particularly created a complete doctrine concerning the establishment of proletarian revolutionary parties. The system of theories concerning the building-up of our Party was in the main created by Lenin. This doctrine on Party-building was absolutely inseparable from the strategy and tactics of leading the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat.

What were the conditions in the period when Lenin founded the revolutionary party of the proletariat?

At that time, on the one hand, the imperialist war was approaching and the proletariat was confronted with the urgent task of overthrowing the bourgeoisie, seizing state power, and establishing the dictatorship of the proletariat. On the other hand, the Social-Democratic parties of the Second International with their extensive organizations were not yet conscious of the need to overthrow the bourgeoisie and establish the dictatorship of the proletariat. They neither wanted nor dared to prepare for a revolutionary offensive by the proletariat. Therefore, the parties of the Second International were loosely organized and faction-ridden and could not conduct any serious struggle. As a result, they completely failed to meet the revolutionary demands of the proletariat at the time.

The Social-Democratic parties of the various countries at that time not only fell theoretically and politically into the mire of Right opportunism (for instance, their theory of collaboration between labor and capital, their theory of the peaceful development of capitalism into socialism, their viewpoint that the proletariat could seize power

by parliamentary struggles without going through a revolution, and that therefore there was no need for creating strategy and tactics of proletarian revolution, etc.), but they were also thoroughly Right opportunists on the question of party organization. The parties of the Second International and the Mensheviks* in Russia advocated liberalism in Party organization. They advocated reducing the proletarian party to an ordinary workers' organization and held the view that no closely-welded organization or strict discipline was necessary in the Party. They advocated an unprincipled peace within the Party and tolerated the existence of divergent ideological and organizational factions within the Party and so on. To the parties of the Second International, party unity and discipline, self-criticism and struggle within the party were inconceivable and entirely unnecessary. Such were some of the principal concrete manifestations of Right opportunism of the parties of the Second International on the question of organization.

At that time, there were also the Economists in Russia and the syndicalists in Europe (France, for example) who contended that the working class did not need a party organization, who refused to organize parties of the working class or subordinated the parties of the working class to the trade unions, who advocated "independence of the trade unions," and who denied the party's leadership in the trade unions.

At that time, on the one hand, the militant tasks of the proletarian revolution demanded that there should be a strong fighting party to lead the broad masses and to carry out such tasks. On the other hand, the parties of the Second International with their millions of party and trade union members, were utterly impotent and incapable of fighting. Moreover, their organizational backwardness and laxity were backed up by all kinds of opportunistic views about organization. These were the actual and important conditions when Lenin started to build the Bolshevik Party.

Under the above-mentioned conditions, in order to build up a Party capable of leading the proletarian revolution, a Party which was completely united ideologically, politically and organizationally, Lenin

* A petty-bourgeois reformist, opportunist group in the Russian Social-Democratic Party. (See *History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union*, Chapter II. International Publishers, N. Y.)

could not but muster all forces to oppose the ideological and political opportunism of the parties of the Second International, particularly their opportunism on the question of party organization. It was on the question of organization—the conditions for joining the Party—that differences first arose between Lenin's Bolshevik Party and the Mensheviks.

Lenin's Bolshevik doctrine on party-building was worked out in the course of the struggle against Right opportunism regarding organization in the parties of the Second International, as well as during the struggle against the theory of the Economists and syndicalists that working class political parties were unnecessary. Therefore, Lenin's doctrine on party-building was full of polemics against the various Right opportunist views on organization, against liberalism and conciliationism, against reducing the proletarian party to an ordinary workers' organization, against unprincipled peace within the Party, against factional organizations and activities inside the Party, and so forth. Lenin, in the fight against Right opportunism on the question of organization, definitely laid down that the Party is the most advanced, best organized and best disciplined detachment composed of the most conscious, courageous and progressive elements of the proletariat and is the highest form of class organization of the proletariat. The proletariat has, in addition to the Party, other organizations such as trade unions, cooperative societies, cultural and educational bodies, or even the government, army, etc. Yet of all these proletarian organizations, the Party is the highest form, capable of politically directing all other organizations.

Thus, Lenin drew a definite line of demarcation between the Party and other organizations of the working class. Moreover, he laid down that the principle of Party organization should be democratic centralism, and that the Party should have a united, iron discipline. These principles of party organization were framed by Lenin in the course of struggle against Right opportunism of the parties of the Second International on the question of organization. They constitute the the Party. That was decidedly the situation before the October Revolution content of Lenin's party-building doctrine.

It was principally in the fight against Right, rather than "Left" opportunism with regard to party organization, that Lenin built up

lution. At that time "Left" opportunism regarding party organization had either not yet come into being, or had not been fully developed into systematic opportunism. That explains why Lenin's party-building doctrine was filled with polemics against Right opportunism, that is, against abandoning strict organization and discipline, against unprincipled peace within the party, against denial of inner-Party struggle and fear of self-criticism, against liberalism and conciliationism inside the Party, against the theory of independence of trade unions, etc. These polemics resulted from the actual conditions existing at the time when Lenin built the Party.

But if we take note of the actual conditions under which the Communist Party of China was built up, we will see that these conditions were entirely different from those which confronted Lenin before the October Revolution.

First, the Chinese Party was built up after the October Revolution when the Russian Bolsheviks had already won victory and set a living example for us. That was why from the very beginning our Party was built in accordance with Lenin's principles and under the guidance of the Communist International.

Second, the Chinese Party, from its founding up to the present time, has never been influenced by the Second International of the European Social-Democratic parties, either ideologically or organizationally.

Third, China, unlike Europe, has never witnessed a period of "peaceful" development of capitalism in which the working class was allowed to participate in peaceful parliamentary struggles. Nor did China have a labor aristocracy as was the case in Europe.

Fourth, petty bourgeois elements and peasants made up a considerable proportion of the Chinese Party's membership, which also included some idlers.* Herein lies the social basis of "Left" and Right opportunism inside the Chinese Party.

Because of these four conditions we have subjectively followed Lenin's principles and path from the very beginning in building the Chinese Party. The majority of our Party members can recite from memory the organizational principles of the Bolshevik Party. Fur-

* Lumpen proletarians, that is, workers, peasants and other people, who have lost their jobs or their land as the result of the oppression and exploitation by the reactionary government or the landlord and compradore-capitalist classes, and who have resorted to improper methods as their main means of livelihood.—Ed.

thermore, the traditions and conventions of Social-Democracy have never existed in our Party. Thus, we have been able to walk along many straight paths. From the very inception of our Party we have conducted self-criticism and ideological struggle, laid down the system of democratic centralism and maintained strict organization and discipline. We did not tolerate the existence of factions and we were violently opposed to liberalism, economism, and the independence of trade unions, etc. Therefore, systematic Right opportunist theories on organization have never been openly advocated in our Party. Ideas that it is not necessary to have self-criticism, inner-Party struggle, strict organization and discipline, a working-class political party, or that trade unions should be completely independent, have had no chance to develop openly in our Party.

The ideological struggle in our Party is still inadequate. However, this is not due to the existence within the Party of any systematic theory against inner-Party struggle. Rather, this is due to our inability to discover divergences in matters of principle because of our low theoretical level or due to the fact that individual responsible comrades employed special methods to suppress self-criticism.

But the special conditions and circumstances prevailing at the time when our Chinese Party was founded gave rise to two kinds of influences. One was favorable, enabling us from the very start to build a Communist Party of the Leninist type. Subjectively, we strictly adhered to the principles laid down by Lenin. From the very outset, our Party has carried out strict self-criticism and inner-Party struggle. This accounted for the rapid progress of our Party and served as a motive force to spur our Party forward.

But the other influence frequently led our comrades to another extreme, to another kind of mistake—the mistake of carrying inner-Party struggles too far, of struggling too intensely without any restraints whatsoever. This resulted in another deviation, a “Left” deviation.

Many comrades had a mechanical and erroneous understanding of Lenin’s principles and turned them into absolute dogmas. They believed that the Party’s highly centralized organization negates inner-Party democracy, that the need for inner-Party struggle negates peace within the Party; that the political leadership of the Party—the highest form of class organization of the proletariat—in other mass organiza-

tions of the proletariat negates the independence of trade unions and other organizations of the workers and toiling masses; and that unified, iron discipline means the obliteration of the individual personality, initiative and creativeness of Party members.

Many comrades memorized the principles of Lenin as if they were dead things. While they considered inner-Party struggle to be necessary and regarded liberalism and conciliationism as useless, still they applied these principles mechanically and dogmatically. They thought that inner-Party struggles should and must be uncompromisingly carried on regardless of the time, circumstances and issues involved, and that the more bitterly such struggles were conducted, the better. These comrades thought that the more vehement and sharp the form of inner-Party struggle and criticism, the better. They felt that the sharper the controversies between Party comrades, the better. If this was not the case, then they thought that errors of liberalism and conciliationism were being committed.

In order to prove that they themselves were free from liberal or conciliatory tendencies, that they were "100 per cent Bolsheviks," they carried on unprincipled struggles within the Party, irrespective of the actual conditions of time and place. Thus, these people became "rowdies" without any standpoint in inner-Party struggles, "struggle specialists" with no regard for principle, or "brawl experts" given to fighting. They conducted struggle for the sake of struggle. This is disgraceful within the ranks of the proletariat. And of course it does not prove that they were "100 per cent Bolsheviks." On the contrary, it only serves to prove that they had insulted Bolshevism and utilized the name and appearance of Bolsheviks to practice opportunism inside the Party.

Many comrades did not understand that our inner-Party struggle is a struggle over principle, a struggle for this or that principle, for defining the goal of this or that struggle, for choosing this or that method of struggle that may lead to the goal.

These comrades did not understand that on questions of current policy, on questions of a purely practical character we can and must come to agreement with those within the Party who differ with us. They did not know or understand that on issues involving principle, on questions of defining the goal of our struggles and of choosing

the methods of struggle needed to reach such goal they should wage an uncompromising struggle against those in the Party who hold divergent opinions; but on questions of current policy, on questions of a purely practical character, they should come to agreement with those within the Party who hold divergent opinions instead of carrying on an irreconcilable struggle against them, so long as such questions do not involve any difference over principle.

This is precisely the traditional style of work in the Party of Lenin and Stalin, which, however, many of our comrades have not yet acquired. They conducted uncompromising struggles over issues on which they should have come to agreement. As a result, there was not a single issue they would not fight over, there was never a time when they would not fight and there was not a single person against whom they would not fight. They struggled against all who differed with them, enforcing absolute conformity. They made no concessions on anything and would not compromise under any circumstances. They regarded anything contrary as antagonistic and believed that opposition is everything. This constituted their absolutism.

Many comrades did not understand what is principle, what problems involve principle and what are the Party's strategic and tactical lines. Nor did they know how to conduct a struggle by grasping the point of difference over principles, strategic plans and tactical lines. Their theoretical level was still exceedingly low and their political experience was limited. They were not yet able to grasp issues of great magnitude and fight over such issues. However, they rigidly committed to memory the fact that there must be inner-Party struggle and that it is wrong not to wage struggles. So even though they were unable to grasp the important issues and raise problems from the standpoint of the principles involved, nevertheless they still wanted to fight. Since they could only lay their hands on individual phenomena, on individual problems, and since they carried on meaningless and unprincipled struggles and controversies inside the Party against those who hold different views, they therefore created among the comrades disunity, mutual antagonism and organizational splits. Such evil phenomena did exist in our inner-Party struggle.

The above is one kind of deviation in the Chinese Party's inner-Party struggles, an exceedingly grave deviation in the Chinese Party

(although such deviations also exist in the parties of other countries). It constitutes inner-Party struggle carried on with too much intensity and without any restraint, which leads to another extreme—that of “Left” opportunism in inner-Party struggle, and “Left” opportunism on the question of party organization. (It negates democracy within the Party, negates inner-Party peace based on unity in matters of principle, negates the relative independence of trade unions and other mass organizations, negates the personality, initiative and creativeness of Party members.) This deviation was caused by the special environment and conditions of the Chinese Party.

Here I want to mention the fact that many Chinese comrades have not taken notice of Lenin’s principled struggle against “Left” opportunism after the October Revolution, Following the October Revolution, a faction of “Left-Wing” Communists emerged within the Russian Party. This group opposed the Brest-Litovsk Peace Treaty* and later there was the dispute on the trade union question. Before the October Revolution, there was a group of Otzovists** inside the Bolshevik Party with “Leftist” appearances but this group was quickly defeated and the situation did not become so serious as that caused by “Left-Wing” Communism at the time of the Brest-Litovsk Peace Treaty, although Lenin also defeated the latter before long.

But “Left-Wing” Communism again emerged in the countries in Western Europe. It raised the slogan of “no compromise,” it opposed participation in parliaments. It opposed all legal struggles and necessary alliances with the Left wing of the Social-Democratic parties. These were the circumstances under which Lenin wrote in April, 1920, his book “*Left-Wing*” Communism: *An Infantile Disorder**** to correct such trends.

After the victory of the October Revolution those who previously did not believe that the proletariat could seize power were now faced with the living fact. This fact dealt a fatal blow to Right opportunism.

It was under these conditions that “Left” opportunism was born, which contended that the revolution need not go along any circuitous paths but could gain victory overnight.

* The Brest-Litovsk Peace Treaty was signed on February 23, 1918, ending the state of war between the young Soviet Republic and Germany and Austria.

** Otzovists or “recallists” pretended to conduct a militant fight from the Left, demanding a boycott of the Tsarist Duma and recall of the Bolshevik deputies.

*** International Publishers, New York.

Such sentiments also existed in the Chinese Party and at certain periods have even been the dominant sentiments. People committing such mistakes completely disregarded the importance of Lenin's book *"Left-Wing" Communism: An Infantile Disorder*. Politically, they were against making any zigzags and against waiting. They maintained that a vanguard minority could launch an adventurist offensive regardless of the fact that the broad masses had not yet caught up with them. They accused others who opposed this of "Right opportunism."

Right and "Left" opportunism on organizational questions results from Right and "Left" deviations on political questions. Since the Chinese Party has committed Right and "Left" political errors in certain periods, it has also committed these errors in organizational matters. Especially during the Civil War period, our "Left" adventurist errors were accountable for the excessively heated inner-Party struggles that took place on questions of organization.

Consequently, there exist three kinds of deviations—if they can be classified in this manner—on the question of inner-Party struggle within the Chinese Party. The first is liberalism and conciliationism within the Party; the second is mechanical and excessive inner-Party struggle and "Left" opportunism in organizational matters and in inner-Party struggle; the third is unprincipled disputes and struggles within the Party.

These three kinds of deviations do not differ very much as far as their substance is concerned, because unprincipled disputes and struggles, excessive struggles and liberalism within the Party are not Marxist-Leninist. They are all manifestations of opposition to Marxism-Leninism. They are classified into the above three categories only by their outward forms.

Such are the special conditions under which the Chinese Communist Party was founded, and the deviations that have arisen in its inner-Party struggles.

II

THE MANIFESTATIONS OF MECHANICAL AND EXCESSIVE INNER-PARTY STRUGGLE

TODAY I AM NOT going to discuss the deviation of liberalism, which is the first of the aforementioned three kinds of deviations in inner-Party struggle. Although I do not think that at present the deviation of liberalism inside the Party is not serious or that to fight liberalism is unimportant, although I do not believe that our comrades are thoroughly clear about the tendency of liberalism and its manifestations in various concrete problems,—rather I believe that many comrades are still not thoroughly clear—yet I am not going to speak on this subject today. I shall talk about it some other time when I have the chance. Here I merely want to point out that the tendency of liberalism inside the Party has somewhat developed recently and in many cases has become a principal tendency in inner-Party struggle and that ideological struggle inside the Party has not been sufficiently developed. For this reason, many erroneous tendencies and undesirable phenomena have not been effectively corrected in due time and Party discipline has gradually slackened. This is very bad. This is because our Party has recently taken in large numbers of intellectuals and new Party members who have been strongly imbued with the ideology of bourgeois liberalism, and who have not yet been steeled ideologically, politically or organizationally by the iron discipline of the proletariat. Meanwhile, many comrades who in the past committed “Left” mistakes and stood for excessive inner-Party struggle have now turned the other way round and committed the Right mistake of liberalism. In the circumstances of a long period of the united front, the possibility that the bourgeoisie would exercise influence within the Party has also increased. The covert counter-revolutionary elements in the Party have resorted to every means to develop and support liberalism inside the Party. As a result, the tendency of liberalism has developed in the Party. This tendency should be strongly opposed in our struggle to

strengthen our work in steeling the Party spirit. For example, some comrades kept silent about other comrades' mistakes for fear of retaliation. They would not point out the mistakes of their intimate friends in order to conceal each other's mistakes. They would not speak to one's face but would do a lot of irresponsible talk behind one's back. They indulged in irresponsible criticism, gave vent to their grumbles and engaged in gossiping, etc., such phenomena are quite prevalent inside the Party.

Moreover, there has developed recently an especially serious phenomenon inside the Party. A certain group of persons fear that others would report their shortcomings and mistakes to the Party or to their superiors. They are terribly afraid lest others should bring up charges against them. On the one hand, they cannot help committing mistakes which they themselves know to be mistakes; they deliberately commit mistakes although they are aware of them. But on the other hand, they want to prevent other Party members from reporting their own mistakes to the Party or to their superiors and from criticizing them at the meetings. They have done some wrong and improper things and committed mistakes but they are unwilling to expose their mistakes in order to have their mistakes and shortcomings corrected. They conceal their sickness and are reluctant to have their sickness cured. They do not appreciate the truth that only by exposing their mistakes can such mistakes be corrected. They want to cover up such mistakes and hide them as if these mistakes were something more precious than any treasure on earth. For this reason, they not only try to forbid others to look squarely at their mistakes but also try to hold others' tongues and forbid others to report their mistakes to the Party or to their superiors, thus depriving others of the right to criticize and speak within the Party through absolutely proper organizational channels. They intimidate other comrades by saying, "if you dare to report to the superiors I will make you sorry. I will see that you are punished—you sycophant." They hate vehemently those comrades who have reported to the superiors and spoken about their mistakes. They take it to heart and think of retaliation. These phenomena are the evil indications of having lost completely the spirit of a Party member. They try to sever the connection between the leading bodies of the Party and the rank and file of the Party membership in order that

they may do mischief and evil inside the Party. Such phenomena should be strictly prohibited.

When any Party member has seen other Party members commit mistakes or other things unfavorable to the Party, he must submit reports thereon to the Party and to their superiors. It is incorrect not to make such reports and it is entirely correct to make reports. To prevent others from reporting to the Party and to the superiors about one's mistakes is absolutely unlawful and will never be tolerated in the Party. Of course, the leading body of the Party upon receiving such reports should thoroughly look into the facts and carefully handle the case and should refrain from making any hasty judgment only on the basis of one-sided versions of the story.

We have already decided that ideological struggle inside the Party should be properly set going. Therefore we must oppose liberalism. In certain Party organizations where particularly serious mistakes of liberalism have been committed, we should conduct, on the basis of facts, a concrete struggle against liberalism in order to overcome such mistakes. Several years ago, Comrade Mao Tse-tung wrote an article against liberalism in which he enumerated eleven manifestations of liberalism inside the Party. His article still holds true to this day and you should carefully study it and try to correct and fight liberalism in accordance with this article. At the same time, liberalism will also be fully discussed in the course in Party building. This is why I don't want to deal with this subject today. What I am going to talk about is the second and third deviations because so far nobody has ever systematically discussed these two deviations within the Party.

What are the manifestations of mechanical and excessive inner-Party struggle?

First, in local Party organizations and in Party organizations in the army, the so-called "struggle meetings" are regularly held. Even in non-Party organizations such as government organs and mass organizations, "struggle meetings" are also regularly held. Such "struggle meetings" are arranged in advance. They are not held for the main purpose of reviewing work. They are held for the purpose of attacking a certain person. Instead of conducting first of all a struggle over the "points at issue," the struggle is directed "against the person." In other words, this struggle is not conducted mainly against

certain incorrect ideologies and principles, but against a certain person. The purpose of the so-called "struggle against a certain Li or a certain Chang" is to deal a blow to a certain comrade who has committed mistakes. The "struggle meeting" is, in essence, a trial meeting against a certain comrade. It is not aimed chiefly at solving problems ideologically but at solving certain problems organizationally. Its purpose is to drive into submission some trouble-makers or some comrades who dare to stick to their dissident opinions—such opinions are not necessarily wrong. Moreover, at every "struggle meeting," organizational conclusions are invariably drawn about the majority of the persons against whom the struggle has been waged. Quite obviously, such a form of struggle is not correct.

Why is it not correct?

First of all, the very term "struggle meeting" is incorrect. It makes no sense at all. Since there are so-called "struggle meetings," are there also any so-called "non-struggle meetings"? It will cause ideological confusion if we consider that there are certain meetings which are specifically devoted to conducting struggle and there are other meetings at which there is no struggle at all. Here it proves that many comrades do not understand the absolute character and the universal character of the struggle. They mechanically divorce struggle from education.

The aim of inner-Party struggle is to educate the Party and the comrades who have committed mistakes. Therefore, inner-Party struggle is in itself a kind of indispensable education within the Party. Education within the Party is also a kind of inner-Party struggle, a relatively mild struggle. Therefore, education and struggle cannot be viewed separately. Struggle is a kind of education and education is a kind of struggle. Any mechanical separation of the two is incorrect.

Furthermore, such "struggle meetings" are a concrete manifestation within the Party of sectarianism and of the erroneous policy of attacking cadres and comrades. They are aimed at attacking the comrades against whom the struggle is waged rather than helping, educating and rescuing the comrades who have committed mistakes. They are chiefly for the purpose of struggle against the person while divergence and antagonism in ideology are overlooked. Hence, such

“struggle meetings” often fail to really strengthen the unity within the Party ideologically, politically, organizationally and in action. On the contrary, they often deepen the differences over ideology, politics, organization and action inside the Party. They intensify the disunity and unprincipled disputes inside the Party. They help the growth of sectarianism inside the Party. It is all the more incorrect to hold such “struggle meetings” in non-Party organizations.

Second, the mechanical and excessive inner-Party struggle also manifests itself in the following ways: some comrades hold the view that the more bitter the inner-Party struggle, the better. To them, the more seriously the problem is brought up, the better; the more fault-finding, the better; the more high-sounding terms used, the better; the more name-calling, the better; the sharper the criticism, the better; the more severe and the more rude the manner and the attitude, the better; the louder the voice, the better; the longer the face, the better; the oftener the teeth are bared, the better. In acting in this way they regard themselves as “revolutionary as revolutionary could be.” In inner-Party struggle and self-criticism, they pay no attention to appropriateness or moderation and do not stop at appropriate limits. They conduct the struggle without any restraint. Quite obviously, that is entirely incorrect.

Third, some comrades still do not understand that inner-Party struggle is essentially an ideological struggle. Nor do they understand that only by achieving ideological unity can unity inside the Party be maintained and strengthened politically, organizationally and in action and that problems must be solved from the angle of ideology and principle before they can be solved from the angle of organization and action. It is, however, no easy matter to achieve unity, to solve problems ideologically and on the basis of principles, to reform others' ideology and to correct others' long-held principles, viewpoints, and prejudices. This cannot be done simply in a few words or through a simple “struggle meeting.” Nor can it be achieved simply by high-handed means or compulsory measures. This can only be achieved through painstaking persuasion and education, through various kinds of complicated struggles and through a considerable period of education, struggle and practice in revolution. Some comrades do not appreciate the essence of inner-Party struggle in this light. But, in-

stead, they simplify, mechanize and vulgarize inner-Party struggle. They consider inner-Party struggle as a kind of contradiction in organization or in form, or they consider it as fighting, cursing, quarreling or wrestling. They do not look for real unity and do not solve problems on the basis of principle and ideology. They think that differences over ideology and principle within the Party can be settled by such simple, mechanical and vulgar methods. Quite obviously, that is entirely incorrect.

These comrades do not preserve or achieve unity within the Party by overcoming differences over principle and ideology within the Party and by correcting certain incorrect tendencies and phenomena. On the contrary, they attempt to preserve or achieve unity within the Party by simple organizational means or by high-handed measures, by a policy of attack, by a system of punishment in dealing with Party members. As a result, they bring about various erroneous and excessive inner-Party struggles. Therefore, instead of carefully and considerately persuading comrades on the basis of principle and ideology, they suppress and bully comrades by resorting to simple organizational means, hostile methods and even administrative measures. They draw at random organizational conclusions about comrades and mete out organizational measures to discipline comrades. Moreover, they ruthlessly discipline comrades inside the Party from the bourgeois viewpoint of equality before the law—that is, they mete out the heaviest discipline as provided in the Party Constitution without taking into consideration what kind of Party members the offenders are and whether or not the offenders have admitted or corrected their mistakes. In this way the system of disciplinary measures inside the Party is introduced. They often employ the means of conducting struggles in order to start and push forward work. They purposely look for “targets of struggle” (comrades inside the Party) and conduct the struggle against them as representatives of opportunism. They sacrifice and attack this one comrade or these few comrades, “killing the rooster to frighten the dog” as the Chinese saying goes, in order to make other Party cadres work hard and fulfill the task. They deliberately collect information about the shortcomings and mistakes of the target of struggle and jot down mechanically and piecemeal his not too appropriate words and deeds. Then they view in isolation such shortcomings and mistakes

and his not too appropriate words and deeds and regard all these as representing the whole make-up of the comrade. They magnify the individual shortcomings and mistakes of this comrade and develop these into a system of opportunism, create an extremely unfavorable impression about this comrade among comrades in the Party and incite their hatred for opportunism in struggling against this comrade. Then, "everybody can inflict blows on a dead tiger." The psychology of revenge on the part of some persons begins to gain ground and they expose all the shortcomings and mistakes of this comrade and arbitrarily raise these shortcomings and mistakes to the level of principle. They even fabricate some story and on the basis of subjective suspicion and completely groundless rumors, accuse the comrade of various crimes. They will not stop until they drive him into mental confusion. With this done, they are still reluctant to allow the comrade who has been attacked to make any defense. If he makes any defense they would accuse him of deliberately defending his mistakes or of admitting mistakes with reservations. Then they would deal him further blows. They do not allow the comrade being attacked to reserve his opinions on condition of submission to the Party organization and do not allow him to appeal to the superiors but insist upon his admitting his mistakes on the spot. In case the comrade being attacked has admitted all his mistakes, then they do not bother whether the problem pertaining to principle or ideology has been solved or not. So it occurred inside the Party that in the course of the struggle certain comrades admitted more mistakes than they had committed. In order to avoid attacks, they thought that they had better accept all the accusations. Although they admitted all the mistakes, as a matter of fact they still did not know what it was all about. This proves that such methods of struggle cannot cultivate the firmness of a communist in sticking to the truth.

Fourth, the methods of struggle inside the Party are mixed up with the methods of struggle outside the Party. Some comrades mechanically apply the methods of inner-Party struggle to non-Party mass organizations and employ the methods of inner-Party struggle in conducting struggles against non-Party cadres and the masses. On the other hand, some comrades employ the methods of struggle outside the Party and the methods of struggle against the enemy and

against alien elements in conducting struggle against comrades inside the Party. They adopt measures used in dealing with the enemy and alien elements when dealing with comrades inside the Party. They employ all kinds of provocations and maneuvers. They apply all kinds of administrative measures such as surveillance, charges, hearings, expulsions, etc., in inner-Party struggle. For example, the "Left" mistake committed by some comrades in the hunting down of traitors is largely due to the fact that they have not drawn a strict line between the struggle inside the Party and the struggle outside the Party and that they have mixed up the ideological struggle inside the Party with the campaign to hunt down traitors. Often there are enemy spies hiding inside the Party. But we must rely upon facts in conducting struggle against these hidden spies, expose them and expel them from the Party. But that is entirely different from the struggle waged for the purpose of educating Party members who have committed mistakes. A clear line of demarcation ought to be drawn between these two. The struggle inside the Party and the struggle outside the Party are closely related but their respective methods and forms of struggle must differ.

There are still some comrades (in fact, they can no longer be called comrades) who openly rely upon and make use of the forces outside the Party to conduct inner-Party struggle and to blackmail and intimidate the Party. For instance, relying upon their partial achievements, their troops and rifles, their prestige among the masses and their relations with a certain section of the United Front, some people conduct a struggle against the Party and the higher organizations. They compel the higher organization and the Party to accept their demands and opinions. They adopt an independent attitude toward the Party and declare their independence of the Party. Or they take advantage of the newspapers, magazines and various conferences outside the Party and even those of the bourgeoisie and the enemy to conduct a struggle against the higher Party organizations and certain comrades and cadres. Quite obviously, this is a mistake which is as serious as that of another group of persons who, relying upon the influence of the Party, coerce, command and oppress the masses and blackmail and impose exactions upon persons outside the Party. These persons conduct struggles against the Party from a non-

Party standpoint. Therefore, although they are Communists in name, they have completely departed from the standpoint of the Party and have become enemies of the Party.

Fifth, many problems in our Party are settled at meetings or through meetings. This is good. But in various organizations many meetings are held without preparation or previous investigation and study. Thus many divergent opinions are expressed and disputes often take place in the course of the meetings. Inasmuch as the conclusions of all meetings are invariably made by the leading participants and the conclusions made at such meetings are equivalent to decisions, many defects often occur. I have noticed that controversies at some meetings eventually awaited decision by the instructor or the secretary of a Party branch or some other responsible comrade. But the responsible comrade himself was not sure at all and he was entirely unclear about the question. But since the problem was so pressing, he had to come to a conclusion anyway; otherwise he could not be a responsible comrade any longer. This responsible comrade had to make a decision and in some cases he was greatly embarrassed and sweated all over. He rashly made up his mind and his conclusion amounted to a decision. Things were decided in accordance with this conclusion and of course many mistakes were bound to happen. Some comrades, when they do not feel sure enough to make a decision about a problem, are not willing to say that they are not sure and that they need time to consider and study the problem or to refer the problem to the higher authorities. However, they pretend that they themselves are already sure in order to save face and maintain their positions. They casually make a decision which often turns out to be incorrect. Such things should also be corrected.

In dealing with all problems, all of our comrades should assume the attitude: "If you know a thing, just say you know it; if you do not know, say so," and should not "claim to know what one really does not know." The problems inside the Party cannot be settled in an arbitrary manner. All meetings should reach conclusions. But matters which cannot be decided or problems which are still doubtful or have not yet been cleared up should not be decided casually. Matters decided must be matters about which one feels quite sure. Matters of which one is not sure may be reserved for further considera-

tion or may be referred to the higher authorities. The conclusion at a meeting may not necessarily be made by the most responsible comrade who attends the meeting. Whoever makes the report may make the conclusion after discussion. But the conclusion made by this comrade may not necessarily be equivalent to a decision. The decision made at the meeting may be different from the conclusion made by this comrade. This is also the case with the style of work in the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.

The above are some important manifestations of mechanical and excessive inner-Party struggle.

What I have mentioned above are of course some examples of the worst type. That does not mean that our present and past inner-Party struggle is universally so. But such forms of inner-Party struggle are actually in existence and in a certain period they occupied a dominant position and became the main form of inner-Party struggle.

What results have these incorrect and inappropriate forms of inner-Party struggle produced inside the Party? They have produced the following bad results:

First, they have given encouragement to the patriarchy inside the Party. Under such forms of inner-Party struggle, individual leaders and leading bodies oppress many Party members to such an extent that the latter dare not speak up or criticize, thus leading to the arbitrary manner of an individual or a few persons inside the Party.

Second, they have given encouragement to the tendency of ultra-democracy and the development of liberalism inside the Party. Many Party members in ordinary times dare not speak up or criticize and, superficially, peace and unity prevail inside the Party. But when the contradictions can no longer be concealed and when the situation has become serious and mistakes are exposed, then they begin to engage in wild criticism and struggle, resulting in antagonism, splits and organizational chaos inside the Party which are almost beyond remedy. This is the opposite side of patriarchy inside the Party.

Third, they have prevented the correct establishment of Party life based on democratic centralism with the result that democratic life inside the Party is irregular, abnormal or extremely lacking.

Fourth, they have impeded the development of Party members'

enthusiasm, initiative and creative power and weakened their sense of responsibility toward the Party and their work, with the result that some comrades dare not assume responsibility with enthusiasm, or work or create with a free hand. They have led comrades not to bother to consider and study problems and situations carefully but have encouraged their working style of attending to their work perfunctorily and merely echoing others' words.

Fifth, they have helped the development of sectarianism and unprincipled factional struggle inside the Party. They have given rise to the psychology of fearing criticism and struggle inside the Party and cultivated the conservative psychology of "minding one's own business" among some comrades, the psychology of "the less work, the better."

Sixth, they have afforded more opportunities for the Trotskyite spies and counter-revolutionary elements to undermine our Party and have furnished more pretexts for counter-revolution to attack our Party. The Trotskyite spies particularly take advantage of contradictions inside the Party and any not too correct inner-Party struggles to carry on their activity of undermining the Party and to win over those elements who have been attacked and who are dissatisfied with the Party. The counter-revolution takes advantage of the struggle against opportunism to conduct propaganda and provocation, and to influence sympathizers outside the Party and unreliable elements inside the Party in order to carry out a policy of estrangement and to undermine the solidarity and unity inside the Party.

The above-mentioned bad results have occurred inside the Party and some of them still remain to be eliminated.

Such mechanical and excessive forms of inner-Party struggle have created abnormal conditions in Party life for a considerable length of time and have caused great losses to the Party. Although they have been corrected in the higher leading bodies of our Party and have ceased to be dominant forms of struggle at present in the Party as a whole, yet in certain organizations at the middle and lower levels and in certain individual organizations, these forms of struggle have not yet been corrected and have continued to exist quite prevalently in varying degrees. As a result life in these organizations is still ab-

normal. Therefore, we must call serious attention to this deviation so that we may thoroughly eliminate it from our organization and so that our comrades may not repeat these mistakes and may correctly and steadily conduct the ideological struggle inside the Party and push the Party forward.

III

UNPRINCIPLED STRUGGLE WITHIN THE PARTY

Now I AM going to discuss another deviation in inner-Party struggles—the unprincipled struggle within the Party. Such a particular and serious phenomenon prevails in the Chinese Party. Although there exists a so-called “idle-gossip tendency” in the parties of foreign countries, I do not think the situation is so serious as it is in the Chinese Party. We must make our comrades fully aware of such a phenomenon and take the necessary steps to cope with it; otherwise the hindrance to the Party’s unity and work will be too great.

What are unprincipled disputes and unprincipled struggles within the Party?

I hold the view that the following disputes and struggles are unprincipled, that is, they constitute a departure from the common position and principles representing the revolutionary interests of our Party and of the proletariat.

First, some comrades do not raise questions or conduct a struggle against other comrades from the position of the Party or on the basis of the interests of the whole Party, but raise questions and conduct struggles against other comrades within the Party from the standpoint of their personal interests or clique interests. That is to say, their position in conducting inner-Party struggles is not correct. Therefore, their viewpoints, policies and methods in relation to questions are not correct either. They favor or advocate any measures so long as such measures are beneficial to themselves or to a few people. They oppose or reject any measures that are not beneficial to themselves or to the few. Whether or not such measures are beneficial to the Party or to the revolution they do not care, or else they push such measures aside as a matter of secondary importance. So what these people oppose or advocate is entirely unprincipled, a departure from the principles of the Party and the revolution. In other words, their principle is not the principle of the Party and the revolution, but the principle of their per-

sonal interests. Should every one take his own interests as his principle, then his principle and interests would certainly conflict with those of others and they would be bound to struggle against one another.

For instance, some of you quarreled or struggled with each other about orderlies, horses, food, clothing, medical treatment, promotion, etc. Such questions fall into the category of personal and unprincipled questions. Comrades do not suggest general principles as to how orderlies, horses, food, clothing and medical treatment should be distributed so that the Party may benefit and do not ask the Party or the school to adopt these principles, but raise questions such as: Why don't they give me an orderly or a horse? Why don't they give me medical treatment? Why don't they promote me? Why don't they give me good food and clothing? Everything is centered on "me" and everything proceeds from the position of "me" and in such a manner disputes are created and struggles are carried on within the Party. Therefore, as long as they personally are satisfied, even if things are otherwise unreasonably arranged, they care not a whit. This is one kind of unprincipled struggle.

Let us take another example, some comrades are opposed to extravagance. Some comrades oppose extravagance from the standpoint of the interests of the Party or from the position of the Party. They point out instances of extravagance which violate the principle of austerity and criticize and oppose them. They also submit proposals regarding economy and ask the Party to adopt them. This is correct.

But there are other comrades who do not oppose extravagance from the standpoint of the interests of the Party or from the position of the Party. They raise such questions as: Some have squandered so much money, some have had such good food, some have had such good clothing, some have. . . . Well, why shouldn't I eat like that, spend money like that, and have clothing like that? Is it because I am not old enough a veteran or is it because I have rendered no service to the Party? So he stands up and fights under the slogan of anti-extravagance. The reason is simply that he has not yet had a chance to squander like others. This is also a kind of unprincipled struggle.

Take another example. In East Anhwei, government personnel were given a small salary.* So some comrades asked to be sent to

work in the government organizations, with the aim that they might get a salary. When they were not allowed to go they launched a struggle under the slogan of opposing government personnel having salaries. Furthermore they did not make any suggestions in principle as to how the living allowances of government personnel should be fixed and then discuss them. This is also a kind of unprincipled struggle.

Second, some comrades stir up disputes and conduct struggles within the Party not for the purpose of making Party affairs better, but for the purpose of making them worse, or for ulterior purposes. Such purposes are incorrect. It is also a kind of unprincipled struggle. For instance, in order to cut a figure, to maintain personal position, to save face, or even to revenge themselves against others, some comrades, disregarding the situation and conditions at the time, arouse disputes and conduct struggles against other comrades within the Party, disrupting their work and plans, and undermining order and unity in the Party. This also belongs to this category of unprincipled struggle.

Third, some comrades do not raise questions on the basis of principle, asking the Party to adopt or to give up something, but bring up questions and conduct struggles on the basis of personal sentiment, pleasure or displeasure. They curse and get mad at people because they want to have a momentary fit of gratification and give vent to their ill feelings and grudges. This is also a kind of unprincipled struggle. There are some other comrades who, due to their limited experience and their low theoretical level are unable to raise questions and argue on the basis of principle. They engage in absolutely irreconcilable disputes with other comrades over issues which are of an isolated, piecemeal and purely practical nature, issues of current policy having nothing to do with principle, instead of over issues involving general principle. Therefore, this is also a kind of unprincipled struggle which should not be insisted upon.

For example, some comrades hold differing views with regard to certain battles, certain actions, certain forms of struggle or certain methods of organization. They stick to their own views and argue

* At the time of the Anti-Japanese War government personnel in the Liberated Areas were provided with all daily necessities. Except for some pocket money, they received no salaries.—*Ed.*

endlessly without touching the general principle of tactics and strategic planning, the general policy of action and the form of struggle and of organization in general, etc. Their questions are incorrectly brought up, so usually no correct conclusion can be drawn, or any of the differing views could be correct, and fruitless, idle talk is often the result.

Fourth, inner-Party struggle is conducted by fair means or foul without going through the prescribed organizational procedure. Instances are: To win over or attack comrades in an unprincipled way inside the Party; to stir up trouble and cause dissension among the comrades; to plan conspiracies against and set traps for other comrades; to say nothing in one's presence, but indulge in backbiting; to make irresponsible criticisms against the Party; to gossip; to devote oneself to rumor-mongering; to tell lies and to spread libels against other comrades, etc.

The struggles mentioned above are unprincipled struggles. Besides, there are some comrades who mix into principled struggle certain elements of unprincipled struggle or carry on unprincipled struggles under the banner of principled struggles. There are others who are particularly interested in the dispute between a certain person and another, and in the abnormal relationship between one and another, but who are not interested in the sum and substance of their quarrel.

All such unprincipled struggles within the Party are not good and they are detrimental to the Party.

Comrades may ask: What is principle? What are the questions of a purely practical character which have nothing to do with principle? What are the questions of current policy? Why on these questions should I not stick to my views and why should I compromise in every way with other people who differ with me?

These are questions that really should be straightened out.

What is principle?

Viewed purely from the angle of theory, what is meant by principle is the general laws governing the development of things. Particular things are governed by particular laws of development. Similar things are governed on the whole by similar laws of development. What we mean by the question of principle is a question of method

which we use in viewing and handling problems in accordance with the general laws governing the development of things. If our general laws governing the observation and handling of problems are wrong, if our position, standpoint and method are wrong, errors will certainly occur in our observation of and dealing with questions. If we understand wrongly the laws governing the development of certain problems then the method with which we handle such problems will certainly be wrong. Therefore, we should not treat a question of principle lightly. If errors occur in principle, then not only individual errors, but also errors of a systematic and persistent nature, affecting a series of practical problems, will occur.

What are the problems of current policy which have nothing to do with principle, and what are the problems of a purely practical character?

Most of these problems are individual problems, problems of daily routine and daily life. For instance, to mobilize and organize the masses is a problem of principle, and on this we all agree. The task of mobilizing and organizing the masses must be concentrated and led by mass organizations and the Army should also help and take part in such a task. All these are questions of principle on which we all agree. That is to say we hold no different opinions with regard to principle. But some of our comrades are of the opinion that the civil transportation corps and the civil transportation department of the Army should be suspended temporarily and the personnel should be dispatched to work in mass organizations. Some other comrades hold that the civil transportation corps should not be suspended. Some comrades suggest that a mass organization should be divided into four departments, while others suggest it be divided into five departments. All these problems are problems of a purely practical character. None of them are problems of principle.

As another example, at present the general principle of strategy of our war of resistance behind the enemy lines is a strategy of dispersed guerrilla warfare. In case there are no divergent views among us regarding this point, it means we have no divergent views regarding the principle of strategy. Suppose there is a certain commander who, forced by circumstances, or because of a particularly advantageous circumstance, fights a battle of mobile warfare resulting in either

victory or defeat. This is an individual practical problem which has nothing to do with the question of principle. Even if one or two of these battles are mistakes, these mistakes are still individual mistakes, so long as the commander does not hold it as a principle to wage mobile warfare behind the enemy lines. Perhaps owing to a specific situation he may even fight a not too bad battle. Therefore, we should not persist in our own views and endlessly argue over such individual, purely practical questions.

As another example, our Army, equipped as it is today, should not in principle attack the strong positions and the major cities of the enemy. If we have no divergent views on this principle, then it would be an individual practical question, having nothing to do with principle, should we, in a special situation, or because of a special necessity, launch an offensive and take a certain enemy position or city.

However, if you say that since we have taken this stronghold or that city, we may launch attacks right away on all enemy strongholds and cities, there the question of principle arises. During the civil war period, some comrades advocated attacks on big cities and directed the Red Army to attack certain major cities. It was a practical problem which concerned principle, because their attacks on big cities were motivated by their advocacy that in principle the Red Army should attack big cities. On such a practical problem which involved principle, we should not make a compromise regarding principle. We should still advocate in principle that no attacks on big cities should be launched.

There are often several solutions for concrete and practical problems. There are often several actually possible roads to take from one place to another. These ways and roads have their respective merits and demerits so far as the situations confronting us at the time are concerned. Some ways and roads are the most advantageous to us but they are risky, so, to play safe, we had better take the less advantageous ways and roads.

Therefore, if divergent views occur over such concrete and purely practical issues, so long as these views do not involve principle, we should try our best to compromise, to make concessions, to accept and subscribe to others' views. "Be good at compromising," then matters can be smoothly dealt with, and questions promptly settled.

We should not always persist in our views, always ask others to give up their views, to acquiesce, and to deal with matters in accordance with our views. If so, we would only delay the settlement of issues, obstruct the progress of work, sharpen the disputes and strengthen the tendency to idle talk in the Party, and obstruct unity among the comrades. That is why we should make all possible compromises with Party members holding different views concerning questions of a purely practical character.

Now we know what are questions of current policy which have nothing to do with principle and what are questions of a purely practical character. They are questions which have nothing to do with the objective of struggle and the form of struggle with which to attain the objective, which do not involve strategy and tactics, which have no concern with our general position and our position in relation to specific issues. The foregoing examples are questions of this kind.

To sum up, our general guiding principle in dealing with all issues is in the interests of the struggle of the Party and the proletariat. Everything must be subordinated to this general principle. All standpoints, opinions and actions against this general principle must be opposed. The various principles are divided into big principles and small principles. The law is that the part is subordinated to the whole, the immediate interests to the long-range interests, the small principles to the big principles. No conciliation or compromise can be made in regard to differences over principle. We must thrash out the questions in order to reach agreement. However, on all issues which have nothing to do with principle we should not be doggedly uncompromising and we should not struggle and argue too emphatically, otherwise our work would be impeded and unity impaired.

I once heard a comrade say that as long as his political stand in inner-Party struggle was "correct" it would not matter, or it was of secondary importance, if he committed some organizational mistakes. So he held that in inner-Party struggle it was permissible to struggle against his opponents by various means incompatible with organizational discipline. Such an argument and viewpoint were obviously incorrect, because he regarded the correct political line and the correct

organizational line as things contradicting each other. He did not know that to disrupt the order and organization within the Party is to commit the gravest error in principle. It is particularly so today. To impair the unity and solidarity within the Party is to best help the enemy, to most severely damage the interests of the Party and the proletariat, and to commit an error which is more serious than any other error committed in principle.

On this point, as well as on many other questions of principle, all our comrades should try their best to compare and to differentiate the various questions of principle in relation to the degree of their influence upon the interests of the party at the time. In accordance with the law that the small principles should be subordinated to the big principles, the part to the whole, we will decide on what questions of principle we should not persist and should make temporary concessions and on what questions of principle we should persist and make no concessions.

To uphold inner-Party solidarity and unity we should sometimes make a temporary compromise with other people within the Party who hold divergent views regarding certain questions of principle which are relatively not so important or so urgent; we should not bring up such questions of principle for the time being, and argue persistently over them. Instead, we should lay our emphasis upon the urgent questions which are of great consequence at the time. Of course, this is by no means a compromise in principle and a middle line, but is a compromise in actual action and is a submission to majority decision.

The foregoing are questions of unprincipled struggle within the Party.

Where do the inner-Party unprincipled struggle and the mechanical, excessive struggle come from? What are their origins? They originate from the following:

First, the theoretical level of our comrades within the Party is in general very low and their experiences in many respects are not yet sufficient. For a long time the leadership and centre of the whole Party did not actually come into being, while up to now in different localities very few leaderships and centres of the Party have actually come into being.

Second, there are many petty-bourgeois elements in the Party. The impetuosity, the frenzy of the petty-bourgeoisie, the vengefulness of the peasant petty-bourgeoisie constantly influenced inner-Party struggles.

Third, the democratic life within the Party is abnormal. The style of discussing questions mutually and objectively among the comrades has not yet been established. The style of judging and dealing with questions rudely and subjectively still exists to a serious extent.

Fourth, opportunists have smuggled themselves into the Party and certain opportunistic psychology exists in the minds of part of our comrades. To show how well they have been "bolshevized," they often try deliberately to be "Left," thinking that "Left" is better than Right. Or they attack others so as to raise their own prestige.

Fifth, Trotskyite traitors and counter-revolutionary elements have smuggled themselves into the Party, and they seek to undermine the Party by taking advantage of inner-Party struggle. These treacherous Trotskyites often, under the cover of the Party banner, deliberately attack certain comrades. After that, one of the treacherous Trotskyites would be sent to contact the comrade being attacked, trying to draw him into their gang as a spy.

Such are the origins of the various deviations in inner-Party struggle.

From the very beginning our Party has had severe self-criticism and inner-Party struggles. This is entirely necessary and very good. In our inner-Party struggle a great deal has been correctly and appropriately carried out. Therefore, our Party has in many cases made achievements in inner-Party struggles and has to some extent raised the theoretical level of our Party. There is no denying that these criticisms and inner-Party struggles are the force which pushes our Party forward on the road of progress. Our Party cannot do without them. Nor can we deny that in the long historical development of our Party, in our inner-Party struggle of the past, there existed the aforementioned typical deviations and errors, and in many cases inner-Party struggle was not conducted in a correct manner. As a result, we paid dearly for our inner-Party struggles. Therefore, what we should do today is to profit by past errors, to see to it that we have not paid high prices in vain, and to seek a great progress of the Party

by studying the historical lessons of the inner-Party struggles of the past.

To obtain greater achievements in inner-Party struggle and to achieve greater progress of the Party at less cost and pain—that is the policy for the present and future inner-Party struggle, which we should lay down by studying the historical lessons of the inner-Party struggle of the Chinese Party. For this purpose, it is necessary that we thoroughly set right the various deviations and mistakes in past inner-Party struggles, and that we conduct inner-Party struggles effectively and properly.

IV

HOW TO CONDUCT INNER-PARTY STRUGGLE

THE QUESTION is clear—how to conduct inner-Party struggle correctly and appropriately.

On this question, the Communist parties of the U.S.S.R. and many other countries have much experience and so has the Chinese Party. Lenin and Stalin have taught us, and the Central Committee of our Party has issued many instructions on this. Our comrades must make a careful study of these experiences and instructions, which will also be discussed when we come to the question of Party-building. Today I will not touch upon them. I will bring up for the reference of our comrades only the following points, on the basis of the experience of the inner-Party struggle of the Chinese Party.

First of all, comrades must understand that inner-Party struggle is a matter of the greatest seriousness and responsibility. We must conduct it with the strictest and most responsible attitude and should never conduct it carelessly. In carrying out inner-Party struggle we must first fully adopt the correct stand of the Party, the unselfish stand of serving the interests of the Party, of doing better work, and of helping other comrades to correct their mistakes and to gain a better understanding of the problems. We ourselves must be clear about the facts and problems by making a systematic investigation and study. At the same time, we must carry on systematic, well-prepared and well-led inner-Party struggles.

A comrade must understand that only by first taking the correct stand himself can one rectify the incorrect stand of others. Only by behaving properly oneself can one correct the misbehavior of others. The old saying has it: "One must first correct oneself before one can correct others."

Only when one does not vacillate himself, can one help the vacillating elements to overcome their vacillations.

Only when one is armed himself with correct principles and theories, can one overcome the incorrect principles and theories of others.

Only when one has a clear understanding himself of the question of principle, can one help to clear up confusion of others. Only when one has himself collected much actual data on specific problems and studied more systematically such problems can one be of much help to other comrades and to the Party.

If a comrade does not do this, if he himself in the first place does not adopt the correct position and has not mastered the correct principles, if he has not viewed the objective situation according to principles, or has not systematically studied the problems, or even if he has some particular shortcomings and is not clear enough himself about certain points, he will not be able to overcome what is incorrect in others, in the course of the inner-Party struggle. If in spite of all this he persists in carrying on the struggle in a headstrong fashion he will in all probability end up in the wrong way.

Only objective hard facts, only experiences tested in practice and only truth can triumph over all.

Our self-criticism and inner-Party struggle are not intended to weaken the Party's organization, solidarity, discipline and prestige or to obstruct the progress of its work. On the contrary, they are intended to strengthen our Party's organization and solidarity, enhance its discipline and prestige, and accelerate the progress of its work. Thus, inner-Party struggle must not be allowed to follow a course that leads to undisciplined individualism in the name of democracy. Inside the Party, neither patriarchy nor irresponsible excesses that in practice abuse democracy is allowed. These are the two extremes of abnormal life within the Party.

Inner-Party struggle must be conducted with the greatest sense of responsibility to the Party and to the revolution.

Second, comrades must understand that inner-Party struggle is basically a struggle between different ideologies and principles inside the Party. It represents antagonism between different ideologies and principles inside the Party. It is imperatively necessary to draw a clear line with regard to ideology and principle. But with regard to organization, the form of struggle, the manner of speaking and criticizing, comrades must be as little antagonistic as possible, must try their best

to discuss or to argue over matters in a calm way, and must try their best not to adopt organizational measures and not to draw organizational conclusions.

In conducting inner-Party struggle comrades must try their best to assume a sincere, frank and positive educational attitude in order to achieve unity in ideology and principle. Only in cases where we have no alternative, when it is deemed imperative, may we adopt militant forms of struggle and apply organizational measures. All Party organizations, within appropriate limits, have full right to draw organizational conclusions in regard to any Party member who persists in his errors. The application of Party disciplinary measures and the adoption of organizational measures are entirely necessary under certain circumstances. Such measures, however, cannot be used casually or indiscriminately. Party discipline cannot be upheld simply by the excessive punishment of comrades by Party organizations. The upholding of Party discipline and Party unity does not in the main depend on the punishment of comrades, (if they have to be upheld in such a manner it signifies a crisis in the Party), but rather on the actual unity of the Party in ideology and principle, and on the consciousness of the vast majority of the Party members. When we are eventually fully clear regarding ideology and principle, it is very easy for us to draw organizational conclusions, if necessary. It does not take us a minute to expel Party members or announce voluntary withdrawal from the Party.

With regard to different ideologies and principles, comrades' persistence, opposition and arguments cannot be separated from their obedience to the Party organization, to the majority and to the higher authority, otherwise, there would be no Party unity and no unity in action. Comrades should never, because of their insistence on principle, oppose the Party organizationally, disobey the majority and the higher authority and begin to take independent action. Such would constitute a violation of the fundamental discipline of the Party.

What we should adopt as the correct method in conducting inner-Party struggle is this: Militancy in the fight over principles and ideologies and the least possible militancy with regard to organization and forms of struggle. Many comrades committed mistakes because on the one hand there was no fight or clear-cut difference with regard

to ideologies and principles, but on the other hand, there was excessive fighting with regard to organization and forms of struggle. They argued so much that their faces became red, they cursed so much that they called each other all kinds of names and they fought so much that they avoided meeting each other. Profound hatred developed among them. But strangely enough, no clear-cut differences over principle or ideology were found among them.

Third, criticisms directed against Party organizations or against comrades and their work must be appropriate and well-regulated. Bolshevik self-criticism is conducted according to the Bolshevik yardstick. Excessive criticism, the exaggeration of others' errors and indiscriminate name-calling are all incorrect. The case is not that the more bitter the inner-Party struggle, the better; but that inner-Party struggle should be conducted within proper limits and that appropriateness should be observed. Both over-shooting the target or falling short of it are undesirable.

In pointing out or criticizing the errors of others, comrades must grasp the key points and stress the most important issues. Comrades must explain problems to others in a systematic way and with clarity so that problems may be solved. Comrades should not pile up piecemeal various errors of others and many seemingly-true facts, and simply expose them. This will make people think that you are deliberately finding fault with them, attacking them, and dealing them blows.

When you are appraising and criticizing a certain comrade, you should not only point out his shortcomings and errors as if they were everything about him but should also give credit for his accomplishments, meritorious services, good points and those of his views which are correct. Even if only a part or even only a tiny part of his opinion is correct, you should point it out for him and not leave it unmentioned. Only in so doing, can you make a full appraisal and criticism of him, help him improve himself and convince him.

This is the method which we should adopt in inner-Party struggles; appropriate criticism, appropriate attitude and appropriate method as against "over-shooting or falling short of the target."

Fourth, the holding of struggle meetings, either inside or outside the Party, should in general be stopped. The various defects and errors should be pointed out in the course of summing up and reviewing

work. We should first deal with "the case" and then with "the person." We must first make clear the facts, the points at issue, the nature, the seriousness, and the cause of the errors and defects, and only then point out who are responsible for these defects and errors, and whose is the major responsibility and whose is the minor responsibility.

We should not begin by inquiring as to who is responsible for these mistakes and errors. So long as a comrade commits an error unintentionally and is fully aware of it, and is correcting it, we should receive him with open arms and should no longer be fastidious about it. In conducting inner-Party struggles, it is not our policy to deal blows at our cadres and comrades, or attack others or to deal them blows. For such a policy would be in substance the same as the policy of applying the whip and the repressive policy of the exploiting class in dealing with the working people. Our policy is the mutual assistance and mutual examination between cadres.

For particularly mischievous comrades who frequently violate decisions, discipline and Communist ethics, it is not impermissible, but sometimes even essential, to hold some specific trial meetings when it is found impossible to reason with them in matters of principle. But it would be wrong to make such a practice a general one.

Fifth, every opportunity to appeal must be given to comrades who have been criticized or punished. As a rule, a comrade should be personally notified of all records or organizational conclusions that may be made about him, and these should be made in his presence. If he does not agree, then after discussion, the case may be referred to a higher authority. (In the case of anyone who expresses dissatisfaction after having been punished the Party organization concerned must refer the case to a higher authority even if the comrade himself does not want to make an appeal.) No Party organization can prevent any comrade who has been punished from appealing to a higher authority. No Party member can be deprived of his right to appeal. No Party organization can withhold any appeal.

On questions of ideology or principle the Party member concerned may appeal directly to a higher Party committee or even to the Central Committee by going over the head of the Party organization to which he belongs. In making such an appeal the comrade, however, should first fully explain his views, his reasons and his differences

and make all these clear to his Party organization, before making his appeal to a higher authority. He should not keep his mouth shut in his Party organization while indulging in irresponsible talk with a higher Party organization in an attempt to deceive and fool the higher Party organization. Once an appeal has been made, the final decision rests with the higher Party organization, which may cancel, reduce or increase the disciplinary measures taken against a comrade by a Party committee of a lower level.

On questions of ideology or principle, if agreement cannot be finally reached within the Party organization after discussion, the matter may be settled by a majority decision. After that, the minority who still hold different opinions may have the right to reserve their opinions on condition that they absolutely abide by the decision of the majority in respect to organizational matters and in their activities.

When a Party committee of a higher level or a leading organ is asked by a certain number of comrades, or Party committees of a lower level, to hold a suitable meeting for the purpose of examining the work, the Party committee of a higher level should, whenever possible, call such a meeting to review its work.

Sixth, a clear line should be drawn and a proper link should be established between struggles waged inside the Party and those waged outside the Party. A struggle waged outside the Party must not adopt the same forms as are used in inner-Party struggle, nor vice versa. Particular care should be exercised to avoid taking advantage of outside forces and conditions in waging struggles against the Party or of intimidating the Party. All Party members must take great care to maintain sharp vigilance lest the hidden Trotskyites and counter-revolutionary elements should take advantage of the conflicts and struggles inside the Party to carry on their subversive activities. In conducting inner-Party struggles Party members must not allow themselves to be utilized by these elements. This can be done by strictly observing Party discipline and by carrying on the inner-Party struggle correctly.

Inside the Party, only open struggles and ideological struggles are allowed. No form of struggle which violates the Party Constitution or Party discipline will be allowed.

Seventh, in order to prevent unprincipled disputes within the Party,

it is necessary to lay down the following measures:

1. Party members who disagree with the Party's leading body or any Party organization should submit their views and criticisms to the appropriate Party organization and should not talk about it casually among the masses.

2. Party members who disagree with other Party members or certain responsible Party members, may criticize them in their presence or in certain specific Party organizations and should not talk about it casually.

3. Party members or Party committees of a lower level who disagree with a Party committee of a higher level, may bring the issue to the Party committee of a higher level, or ask it to call a meeting to study the matter, or should refer the matter to a Party committee of a still higher level, but they should not talk about it casually or inform Party committees of a still lower level about the matter.

4. When Party members discover any other Party member doing something wrong and acting in a manner detrimental to the interests of the Party they must report such activities to the appropriate Party organization and should not attempt to cover up the matter or attempt to mutually shield each other.

5. Party members should promote an upright style of work and oppose anything of a deceitful nature, oppose any kind of deceitful talk and actions and should severely condemn all those who indulge in idle talk, gossiping, prying into other's secrets and the spreading of rumors. The leading bodies of the Party must from time to time issue instructions forbidding Party members to talk about certain specific matters.

6. The leading bodies at all levels must from time to time summon those comrades who indulge in idle talk and unprincipled disputes and talk with them, correct them and warn them, or subject them to discipline in other ways.

7. Party committees at all levels must respect the opinions set forth by Party members. They should frequently convene meetings to discuss questions and review their work, and provide Party members with ample opportunity to express their opinions.

Unprincipled disputes should in general be forbidden and no judgment should be passed on them, because it is impossible to judge who

is right and who is wrong in such unprincipled disputes.

When we try to settle unprincipled disputes among the comrades we should never simply start to tackle the dispute itself, but should review and sum up their work and set forth in a positive way and from the standpoint of principle their future perspectives, program of work, the line to follow, plans, etc. In the course of the summing up of their work, and setting forth their future perspectives, program of work, the line to follow and plans, we can criticize the incorrect views of certain comrades, and then ask them if they still hold different views. If they do, then it is a dispute in principle. Thus, an unprincipled dispute will be raised to the level of a principled dispute. If they do not have any dispute in principle, then they will be asked to rally together around this summing up of work, these future perspectives and this program of work, and to struggle together for the fulfillment of the perspectives and program and to give up all unprincipled disputes. Unprincipled disputes should be settled through the summing up of past work, and the defining of present objectives, and the advancement of the current work. Otherwise, unprincipled disputes cannot be settled.

We should never play the role of a judge in trying to settle an unprincipled dispute, because it is impossible of judgment and settlement. If a judgment were not appropriate, both sides to the dispute would feel dissatisfied and the dispute would continue.

Issues such as that a certain comrade does not fully trust another or still suspects another, etc., should in general not be brought up for discussion, because discussion on such issues will be of no avail. Such issues can be settled, and a particular comrade can be proved trustworthy and can be cleared of suspicion only in the course of his work, his struggle and his practice.

If comrades introduce into their principled struggles certain unprincipled elements we should only lay emphasis on the discussion of the principled question and should not lay emphasis on the unprincipled elements, otherwise the principled question will be overshadowed.

If a comrade carries on an unprincipled struggle under the cloak of a principled struggle we must point out that he is correct in principle on certain points, and we should not deny such principles because he is making use of them but we should appropriately point out

that his position and methods are wrong, and in this way prevent a principled struggle from being turned into an unprincipled struggle.

All in all, inner-Party struggle is fundamentally a form of struggle and controversy over ideology and principles. Inside the Party everything must submit to reason, everything must be reasoned out and everything must have some reason for it, otherwise it will not do. We can do anything without difficulty if we have reasoned it out.

Inside the Party we must cultivate the practice of submitting to reason. The yardstick for determining whether this or that reason is sound is: the interests of the Party and the interests of the proletarian struggle; the subordination of the interests of the part to those of the whole, and the subordination of the immediate interests to long-range interests. All reasons and viewpoints are sound when they are beneficial to the interests of the Party, to the interests of the proletarian struggle, to the long-range interests of the Party as a whole, and to the long-range interests of the proletarian struggle as a whole, otherwise they are not sound. Any struggle that does not submit to reason or that has no reason for it is an unprincipled struggle. Anything that does not submit to reason or that cannot be reasoned out must be wrong and in such cases, no correct conclusions can be drawn and no ultimate solution can be found. If we still fail to reach agreement after having reasoned it out, then it will be clear who is violating the interests of the Party and the interests of the proletarian struggle. It would then become necessary to draw organizational conclusions in the case of those comrades who persist in their errors, and the point at issue can be solved without difficulty.

In order to enable us to reason things out it is essential to have inner-Party democracy and to straighten out problems by calm and dispassionate discussion. It is most essential for us to study humbly, to raise the theoretical level of the comrades, to have a clear idea of the situation, to make a thorough investigation of the case and to study problems carefully. We can never reason things out if we are careless, subjective, parrot-like, divorced from practice, making no thorough investigation of the case, etc.

If we do not submit to reason, or if we fail to reason things out, then we will have to resort to force, tricks, the power granted by the Party, and even deceit, for the solution of problems. In that case, inner-

Party democracy will no longer be necessary, for inner-Party democracy requires that we all reason things out so that we may take concerted action.

What I mean by "reason" here, of course, is not empty and seemingly true reason, but real facts and the real truth that have been tested by practice. Certain intellectuals are given to idle talk a great deal without basing themselves on facts. They can talk about everything under the sun. Theirs is empty talk, Party jargon and of no use whatsoever but is harmful to the Party and the revolution. Therefore, in promoting the practice of submitting to reason, it is necessary to oppose empty talk and Party jargon, and to advocate objective and materialistic reasons which proceed from reality and are intended for practice. That is to say, "our theories are materialistic."

Everything must submit to reason! It would not do if it didn't! It would not do either if we reason incorrectly! It would be even more undesirable if we indulge in empty talk! Of course, this is a rather difficult job. But only in this way can we become qualified as Bolsheviks.

Bolsheviks submit to reason and they are supporters of truth. They are a kind of men who clearly understand reason and deal with others in real earnest in accordance with reason. They are not unreasonable and irrational struggle-specialists!

These are some methods I suggest as to how to conduct inner-Party struggles.

I am of the opinion that our comrades should adopt these methods in conducting inner-Party struggles, in opposing the various kinds of incorrect tendencies inside the Party and in examining the Party spirit of every Party member, and especially that of the cadres, so that our Party may be still further consolidated ideologically and organizationally. This is our aim.

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