

1951

Speeches/Documents

Title: Main points of the resolution adopted at the enlarged meeting of the political bureau of the central committee of the communist party of China

Author: Inner-Party circular drafted for the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party

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Source:. Xuanji, V, pp. 34-38. Available English Translation: SW, V, pp. 45-49

Description:.

The Political Bureau convened a meeting in mid-February at which responsible comrades from the bureaus of the Central Committee were present and various important questions were discussed. We herewith notify you of the main points of the resolution.

I TWENTY-TWO MONTHS FOR PREPARATION

The idea of "three years for preparation and ten years for planned economic construction" must be made clear to all cadres from the provincial and municipal level upwards. Counting from now, we have twenty-two months left for making preparations and so we must step up our work in all fields.

II. PROPAGANDA AND EDUCATION CAMPAIGN FOR RESISTING U.S. AGGRESSION AND AIDING KOREA

Persistent efforts must be made to push this campaign throughout the country, to deepen it where it is already under way and spread it where it is not, so as to make sure that this education reaches everyone in every part of the country.

III. AGRARIAN REFORM

1. During the busy farming season, agrarian reform in every place should stop for a while and experience should be summed up.
2. Strive for a good harvest this year.
3. Rely on the county conferences of peasant representatives and on the training classes.
4. Work hard to prepare the necessary conditions. Whenever and wherever they are not ripe, don't force the agrarian reform through.
5. As soon as agrarian reform is completed, switch over to the two major tasks of production and education.

6. East China's method of returning security money in instalments [1] is approved.
7. Persuade the peasants that it is to our advantage to refrain from using torture, which is illegal.
8. After the agrarian reform establish more districts and townships and reduce the area under the jurisdiction of each district and township.

IV. SUPPRESSION OF COUNTER-REVOLUTIONARIES

1. As a general rule, before passing a death sentence, refer the case to the masses and consult democratic personages.
2. Exercise strict control, guard against indiscriminate action and avoid mistakes.
3. Pay attention to the "middle layer", [2] and carefully weed out counter-revolutionaries hiding among the old personnel and among the intellectuals recently drawn into our work.
4. Pay attention to the "inner layer", carefully weed out counter-revolutionaries who have sneaked into the Party, and strengthen to the maximum our work of safeguarding secret information.
5. In addition, give education to the cadres and back them up in their work.

V. URBAN WORK

1. Every bureau and sub-bureau of the Central Committee and every Party committee at the level of province, municipality and administrative region must call two meetings on urban work during the year with the agenda set by the Central Committee and report twice on this subject to the Central Committee.
2. Strengthen the leadership of the Party committees over urban work and carry out the resolution adopted at the Second Plenary Session of the Seventh Central Committee.
3. Educate the cadres so that they are clear in their minds about relying on the working class.
4. In factories, the Party should exercise unified leadership over the work of the Party organization, the management, the trade union and the Youth League, with the fulfilment of production plans as the central task.
5. Strive for a gradual improvement in the workers' living conditions on the basis of increased production.

6. The idea of serving the needs of production and of the workers should permeate the planning of urban construction.

7. The All-China Federation of Trade Unions and the higher levels of each trade union should lay stress on solving the specific problems of the lower levels.

8. Party committees and trade unions should make a point of creating models and promptly spread their experience to other places.

VI. PARTY CONSOLIDATION AND PARTY BUILDING

1. Ours is a Party that is great, glorious and correct; this is the principal aspect which must be affirmed and made clear to cadres at all levels. However, it must also be made clear to them that there are problems which have to be straightened out and that in the new liberated areas a prudent attitude should be adopted towards Party building.

2. The consolidation and building of the Party should proceed under the strict control of the Central Committee and its bureaus, and organizations at lower levels must in no case act as they please.

3. The consolidation of the Party should be accomplished in three years. The steps to be taken are as follows. Devote one year (1951) to extensive education on what is required of a Communist, so that the entire membership will know the standards a Communist should live up to, and to the training of personnel for organizational work. At the same time experiment with typical units to serve as models. Then in the light of the experience gained, proceed with consolidation; in cities, however, this can start in 1951. In Party consolidation, first clear out the "persons in the fourth category". [3] Then differentiate between the "persons in the second category" and the "persons in the third category", and persuade those who, after education, are still not up to the standards of Party membership to withdraw from the Party, but make sure that they withdraw of their own free will and that their feelings are not hurt. Don't repeat the practice of "removing rocks" [4] as in 1948.

4. A policy of prudence must be adopted in building the Party in the cities and the new liberated areas. In the cities Party organizations should be set up primarily among the industrial workers. In the rural areas it is only after the completion of the agrarian reform that Party branches can be set up by admitting those who prove themselves qualified for Party membership as a result of education, and for the first two years the membership of a rural Party branch should in general not exceed ten. In city and countryside alike, education on how to be a Communist should be conducted among activists who are ready to receive it, and after such education those really qualified for Party membership should be admitted.

VII. UNITED FRONT WORK

1. The bureaus and sub-bureaus of the Central Committee and Party committees at the level of province, municipality and administrative region are required to call two meetings in 1951 to discuss united front work and report twice on this subject to the Central Committee.

2. It must be made clear to the cadres why our united front work needs to be strengthened.

3. It is necessary to unite intellectuals, industrialists and businessmen, leading religious figures, the democratic parties and democratic personages on the basis of the struggle against imperialism and feudalism and to carry out education among them.

4. Work conscientiously among the minority nationalities, the two central tasks being to push for regional autonomy and to train cadres from these nationalities.

VIII. RECTIFICATION MOVEMENT

This movement should be carried out once every winter for a short period; the aim is to review our work, sum up experience, enhance achievements and overcome mistakes and shortcomings, and thus educate the cadres.

NOTES

1. Before liberation the peasants who rented land from the landlords had to pay a considerable sum of security money in advance for their tenancy. During the agrarian reform the peasants demanded reimbursement of this money by the landlords, and this was known as the return of security money. Those landlords who were also running industrial and commercial enterprises or who were unable to repay the sum all at once were allowed to return it in instalments.

2. In the work of suppressing counter-revolutionaries, there are three layers to be swept clean, the outer, middle and inner layers. To sweep clean the "outer layer" refers to uncovering counter-revolutionaries lying low in society at large; to sweep clean the "middle layer" refers to uncovering counter-revolutionaries low in our army units and government organizations; and to sweep clean the "inner layer" refers to uncovering counter-revolutionaries lying low in our Party.

3. During the 1951 Party consolidation, Party members were classified into four categories: first, those who were qualified members; second, those who were not fully qualified or had fairly serious shortcomings and who had to be remoulded and to raise their political consciousness; third, inactive and backward elements who did not measure up to the standards for Party membership; and fourth alien class elements, renegades, political speculators and degenerates who had hidden in the Party.

4. "Removing rocks" was advocated by Liu Shao-chi in 1948 during the agrarian reform and Party consolidation in the liberated areas. He maligned large numbers of rural cadres as "rocks" weighing down on the peasants and wanted to have them removed from their posts and expelled from the Party.

According to this source, this is an internal Party circular drafted by Mao on behalf of the Central Committee. It summarizes the main points of the major tasks of the CPC at the time (such as land reform, united front work, etc.).

The Central Committee convened a meeting of the Political Bureau in mid February that was also attended by comrades in positions of responsibility in the various bureaus of the Central Committee. A number of important issues were discussed, and the main points of the resolution are circulated as follows:

Notes The Writings of Mao Zedong, 1949-1976. Contributors: Michael Y. M. Kau - editor, John K. Leung - editor, Tse-tung Mao - author. Publisher: M. E. Sharpe. Place of Publication: Armonk, NY. Publication Year: 1986. Page Number: 174.

1 Since October 1950, the Chinese government had become militarily involved in the Korean War (see text October 8, 1950, note 1). This, however, is the first official indication of mobilizing a nationwide, civilian-oriented campaign to assist and affirm the military effort.

2 In 1949, almost immediately after they took over the reins of government, the CPC began to push ahead the policy of land reform (sometimes known as "agrarian reform," and commonly known as *tugai* in China) on a nationwide scale. Since from the early 1930s onward, the CPC movement had been largely based in China's countryside, the problem of land reform had occupied the Party for two decades, and had been practiced in different forms and with different degrees of success in the CPC's base areas, such as in Jiangxi, in the 1930s. The policies followed by the CPC in the early stages of nationwide land reform were patterned after formulations suggested by people such as Ren Bishi in 1947-48. (See text Jan. 27, 1950, note 2.) The CPC saw land reform as the first and foundational step toward the socialist transformation of China's agrarian economy, and the key measure to combat and abolish China's traditional feudalistic socio-political structure, which had been largely based on the landownership of the landlord class and its exploitation of the peasant masses. In June 1950, the Land Reform Law was promulgated and the nationwide land reform movement was fully launched. (See text Mar. 12, 1950, note 5.) It was perceived that land reform would take place in three main stages of development: (1) wiping out the remnants of bandits and local tyrants (*tu hao e ba*) - the latter category being the designation of large landlords who had an exploitative relationship with the peasants (see text Jan. 17, 1951, note 1), checking on the rental structure, forcing the returning of securities held for back rent from the peasants by the landlords (which sometimes included indenturing of young men), and establishing the boundaries of public properties; (2) drawing class distinctions, confiscation of unduly large private holdings, requisition of agrarian property other than the land itself, and redistributing the properties to the peasant households; (3) rechecking the new structures and mobilizing the peasant masses to form local organizations under Party leadership and supervision to combat any resurgence of "counterrevolutionary" landlord forces, and reforming village government. The land reform movement was seen as the means to open up the path to liberate forces of production in the countryside and pave the way to the industrialization of China. 3. The grass-roots units of democratic government under the new regime at the time were the people's representative conferences (see text June 6, 1950[1], note 10) of which the organizations mentioned by Mao here were the rural version. 4. "Before Liberation the peasants who rented land from the landlords had to pay a considerable sum of security money in advance for their tenancy. During the agrarian [land] reform the peasants demanded reimbursement of this money by the landlords, and this was known as the return of security money. Those landlords who were also running industrial and commercial enterprises or who were unable to repay the sum all at once were allowed to return it in instalments." (*SW*, V, p. 49.)

The method alluded to here refers to a policy formulated by the Administrative Bureau of the East China Greater Administrative Region (GAR) (see text June 23, 1950, note 2), in which the most exploitative landlords who had held land in major holdings and whose landlord status was unquestionable were ordered to repay the peasants first, while others were offered a much more flexible method and schedule of repayment, ranging from postponement or reduction of repayment to

total exemption, and, as indicated in the *SW* note, those whose money was tied up in commercial and industrial enterprises were allowed to repay in instalments.

The East China GAR included the six provinces of Shandong, Jiangsu, Anhui, Zhejiang, Fujian, and Taiwan (not yet liberated) and the two municipalities of Shanghai and Nanjing.

5. This section should be considered in conjunction with the many comments made by Mao on the subject of suppressing counterrevolutionary activities in 1950-51. See text Dec. 19, 1950, source note. It should also be noted that, in the wake of this meeting of the Political Bureau, on February 21, 1951, the Central People's Government promulgated the "Regulations Regarding Penalty for Counterrevolutionaries." See *RMSC* (1952), pp. 39-41, and T. Chen (1967), pp. 293-296. 6. "The work of suppressing counterrevolutionaries was divided into three layers: the outer, the middle, and the inner [layers]. The 'outer layer' refers to the counterrevolutionaries hidden in society. Cleaning out the 'middle layers' refers to cleaning out the counterrevolutionaries hidden in the military and government organs, cleaning out the 'inner layer' means cleaning out the counterrevolutionaries hidden in the Party." (*Xuanji*, V, p. 38, note 1.) 7. See text June 6, 1950 (2), note 1. For specifics on what Mao is referring to here, see Mao's report at this plenum, *Xuanji*, IV, pp. 1314-1329. 8. In October 1946, the Central Committee of the CPC proposed the establishment of a New Democratic Youth League. Youth organizations began to be formed in the various liberated areas. The First National Congress of the N.Y. was held in Beijing (then known as Beiping) in April 1949. For more on the NDYL, see text June 30, 1953, source note. 9. The All-China Federation of Trade Unions was reinstated in August 1948. In May 1925, a national general confederation of trade unions had been formed under the name Zhonghua quanguo zong gonghui in Guangzhou (Canton). In 1927 it was banned by the KMT government. In 1948, as the Communists began to come into power, the trade union movement re-emerged, and the national body gained its current name (the Chinese remained the same as it was in 1925). With the promulgation of the Trade Union Law on June 29, 1950, by the PRC government, the legal status of trade unions in China was affirmed. 10. "During the Party rectification in 1951, Party members were divided into four categories: (1) those who met the standards of being a Party member; (2) those who did not fully meet the standards for being a Party member or those who had serious shortcomings; [such people] had to undergo transformation to raise their [political consciousness]; (3) passive and backward elements who did not meet the standards for being a Party member, and (4) alien class elements, renegades, [political] speculators, degenerates, etc., who had sneaked into the Party." (*Xuanji*, V, p. 38 note 2.) 11. "'Remove rocks' was a slogan put forward by Liu Shaoqi during land reform and Party consolidation in the new liberated areas [in 1948]. He labelled large numbers of rural cadres as 'rocks' weighing down on the peasants' heads and wanted to have them removed from their posts and purged." (*Xuanji*, V, p. 38, note 3.) 12. See text June 6, 1950(1), note 7. 13. Immediately after the founding of the PRC, the CPC proceeded to take steps to form and foster, on the basis of the worker-peasant alliance, a broader "United Front" between the proletariat and the petty bourgeoisie and the national bourgeoisie. It should be noted that this idea of a united front was based on class alliance and is not commensurate with the historical political United Fronts between the CPC and the KMT. A United Front Work Department of the Central Committee of the CPC was formed in 1950 under the leadership of Li Weihuan. 14. See text Sept. 21, 1949, note 1.