

WORK FOR STRENGTHENED UNITY OF THE PARTY

February 6, 1954

Our Party at present is fundamentally united, consolidated and sound. Not only we and people throughout the country recognize this, but our enemy also cannot fail to observe this. When we demand strengthened unity of the Party and reveal defects within the Party to the public, we do not mean to repudiate this basic condition but, rather, to start from it. The fact that the Party is basically united, consolidated and sound by no means indicates that our Party has no shortcomings; on the contrary, it provides a favourable condition for the Party to examine and overcome these shortcomings. In the draft resolution the Political Bureau analysed two aspects of the current situation in the Party.⁴⁵ In my view, the shortcomings pointed out in the draft deserve full attention of all the comrades present here, leading cadres of Party committees at and above provincial and municipal levels, senior leading cadres of the armed forces, and Party organizations at various levels.

In the draft the Political Bureau points out that we still follow a policy of coalition with the bourgeoisie, that we are still surrounded by the petty bourgeoisie like by a big ocean, and that in the large Party of ours the members are not well educated in Marxism-Leninism and the ideological and political background of some Party cadres is complicated. Is all this true? I don't think anybody among us will dispute these facts. But what do they mean? For one thing, they threaten unity of our Party. Since the bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie surround us, it is likely that their ideology will spread among weak members of our Party and, being irreconcilable with

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our Party's ideology, corrode, disintegrate and divide our Party. Inadequate education in Marxism-Leninism and complicated ideological and political background of some Party cadres make it possible for the bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie to erode our Party with their ideology.

It also notes in the draft that a number of cadres, even some senior cadres, do not fully understand the importance of Party unity, collective leadership and a Central Committee enjoying solid, enhanced prestige. It points out that a considerable number of Party cadres have developed an extremely dangerous arrogance. They are dizzy with their achievements, have clean forgotten about the need of being modest and the spirit of self-criticism Communists must have, exaggerate their role, and stress their personal prestige. They consider themselves first in the world, can stand only flattery and not criticism and supervision, suppress and even retaliate against those who criticize them, and go so far as to regard the areas and departments under their leadership as their capital and independent kingdoms.

Comrades! Is all this true? Do comrades in the Party fully understand the importance of Party unity and collective leadership? Aren't there a considerable number of cadres who have become arrogant? If during the initial period of socialist construction in China people become arrogant, reject criticism and supervision, then what will become of them in a few years or a dozen years? Numerous examples in history show how arrogance disrupted the victors' unity and brought them to a tragic end. They were closely united when they were under enemy suppression, but once the enemy's direct suppression was overthrown, many of the victors became arrogant and disunited. Such things were hardly avoidable in the past, but our Party's class foundation and historic mission make us entirely different from victors of the old times. Ours is a Communist Party of the working class. Our ultimate aim is to eliminate exploitation and classes, finally to abolish state power and the Party itself. That is why our unity can be consolidated. We at all times oppose any Party member who permits the lofty mission of ardently and diligently serving the people to degenerate into the contemptible individualism of the bourgeoisie. The Second Plenary Session of the Seventh Party Central Committee, held in March 1949, particularly warned all Party cadres against arrogance after victory in the revolution, because arrogance might lead to individualism, impair and

jeopardize Party unity, and seriously damage the Party's cause. We must always bear in mind that we have taken only the first step in our ten-thousand-li march and that we are still surrounded by a vicious enemy, who is ready to injure us once we are off our guard and disunited. Whenever possible, the enemy will attempt to eliminate us. Under such circumstances unity is the life of the Party. Any damage to Party unity assists the enemy. When members in the Party become arrogant and individualistic and when their arrogance and individualism are not resolutely checked by the Party, they will, as time goes on, haggle over position in the Party, scramble for power and personal gain, develop improper relations among people, form a small clique and even help the enemy undermine and split the Party. Therefore, the Political Bureau feels it has an absolute responsibility to warn the entire Party membership and arouse them to overcome such a danger, even if it is only in an embryonic stage. It also demands that comrades who have made such mistakes correct them quickly and thoroughly. If it ignores those mistakes and lets them spread freely, it will be committing a crime against the Party and the people.

Considering various conditions both inside and outside the Party, the Political Bureau thinks it appropriate and absolutely necessary for the Central Committee to adopt this resolution. The resolution will serve greatly to enhance the political consciousness, vigilance and resistance of all Party members, which conforms entirely to the interests of people throughout the country and of socialist construction and transformation. In the draft resolution concrete measures are proposed that will help not only strengthen unity but get all Party members to disdain, combat and repudiate views and deeds that disrupt unity.

For the purpose of strengthening Party unity the Political Bureau deems it necessary to point out that it is wrong for some Party comrades to believe that so long as they consider themselves to be in the right, they may ignore the Party's democratic centralism, the principle of collective leadership, Party discipline, Party leadership and the Party Constitution. These comrades must understand that violations of the Party's democratic centralism and discipline are tantamount to undermining Party unity, which in turn harms the Party's ultimate interests and endangers the Party's very survival. Therefore, they must realize that their views and actions are totally wrong and must be corrected at once. Our Party should wage a resolute struggle

against anyone who sticks to his erroneous views and actions, so as to curb violations of the Party's democratic centralism and discipline and disruption of Party unity.

Without a doubt Party unity must be based on Marxism-Leninism and on correct political and organizational principles. So long as our comrades abide by the Party Constitution and the stipulations in the draft resolution, the Party allows different views to be raised and discussed within it. To strengthen Party unity we must not allow democracy, criticism and self-criticism to be reduced within the Party, but must ensure that they are conducted to the full extent. All comrades need help from others. If a comrade has shortcomings and has made mistakes, it is a loss to the Party. Everyone else has the responsibility to help him overcome his shortcomings and correct his mistakes. Party unity means to develop just such mutual help in a comradely fashion, enabling each comrade to progress in the united, harmonious, big family and encouraging him to do the Party's work well and help promote the cause of revolution.

However, as it is pointed out in the draft resolution, in our Party the principle of criticism and self-criticism is not always smoothly implemented. This situation must change, since it hinders the Party's progress, impairs its ties with the masses and jeopardizes its unity. The Party's task, as pointed out time and again by the Central Committee and Comrade Mao Zedong, is to continue to make progress by conducting criticism and self-criticism out of a desire to consolidate and strengthen Party unity, by struggling against suppression of critical views, and by firmly adhering to the precepts of "Say all you know and say it without reservation," "Blame not the speaker but be warned by his words," and "Correct mistakes if you have made any and guard against them if you have not." In this way we can correct mistakes and overcome shortcomings in our work, enhance our understanding of Marxism-Leninism, lift Party spirit and strengthen Party unity. Without a doubt unity thus achieved is genuine unity, which will serve greatly to increase the combat effectiveness of the entire Party and improve our work towards new victories.

Of course, there are people in the Party who do lip service to criticism and self-criticism, and in practice they regard these as suitable only for others and their work, not for themselves and their own work. Such views are totally wrong. There are also people who do not want to tighten Party discipline, promote Party unity and help other comrades progress through criticism and self-criticism; instead,

taking advantage of criticism and self-criticism, they want to weaken and disrupt Party discipline so as to undermine the Party's unity and prestige. The Party can absolutely not allow such an attitude. We should carry out criticism and self-criticism, using the weapon correctly. At the same time, it should help people who have such wrong ideas and attitudes to realize their mistakes and correct them promptly.

The Political Bureau maintains that it is essential to abide by the effective and correct principle relating to criticism and self-criticism, the principle often cited by the Central Committee and Comrade Mao Zedong: "To proceed from the desire for unity and achieve unity through criticism and self-criticism." We should adopt the attitude of "helping others" and "curing the sickness to save the patient" when dealing with comrades whose shortcomings or mistakes are not serious and with ones who, though they have relatively serious shortcomings and mistakes, are willing, after criticism and persuasion, to put the interests of the Party above those of their own and to correct their mistakes and mend their ways. We must carry out serious criticism or necessary struggle against their shortcomings and mistakes in view of actual situations. Yet we should arrive at unity by starting from the desire for unity and conducting criticism or struggle. We should not prevent these people from correcting their mistakes, still less intentionally exaggerate their specific partial, temporary and less important shortcomings and mistakes and regard the as systematic and serious ones. That is not starting from the desire for unity and therefore cannot arrive at unity, only to the detriment of the Party. This is one aspect of the matter.

As for the other aspect, concerning people in the Party who purposely undermine Party unity, oppose the Party stick to their mistakes, and even engage in factional, divisive and other harmful activities within the Party, the Party has to wage merciless struggle, meting out severe punishment and, if necessary, expelling them from the Party. Only by doing so can Party unity be upheld and the interests of the revolution and the people be defended.

In order to strengthen Party unity, repudiate words and deeds that harm it, crush imperialist and counter-revolutionary conspiracies to undermine our Party unity, combat hostile acts and ideas of people who have sneaked into the Party, and correctly distinguish nuances in inner-Party struggle so as to adopt the proper policy, cadres, particularly senior cadres, of the entire Party must maintain sharp revolu-

tionary vigilance and political sensitivity. In his speech “Rectify the Party’s Style of Work”, Comrade Mao Zedong called on Party comrades to develop a good nose: “They should take a sniff at everything and distinguish the good from the bad before they decide whether to welcome it or boycott it.” This should remain our motto.

Comrades! Unity of the entire Party hinges on unity of the Party Central Committee, unity of leading comrades at and above the levels of provincial and municipal Party committees, and unity of senior leading comrades of the armed forces. In our endeavour to strengthen Party unity these comrades are holding the major responsibility. Therefore, they should set an example by strengthening unity among themselves, and work hard in all Party organizations and among all Party members to strengthen unity of the entire Party. As long as our Party is united as one, we can certainly unite with the working class as a whole and with the labourers and people throughout the country in crushing any conspiracy and sabotage on the part of enemies both at home and abroad, thus ensuring victory in the great cause of socialist construction and transformation.