

MAO TSE-TUNG: TALKS AT A CONFERENCE OF SECRETARIES OF PROVINCIAL, MUNICIPAL AND AUTONOMOUS REGION PARTY COMMITTEES

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Mao Tse-Tung

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II. THE TALK OF JANUARY 27

Now, let me take up a few points.

First, we must make an adequate assessment of our achievements.

In our revolution and construction, the achievements are primary, though there are shortcomings and mistakes. Our achievements, however

many, must not be exaggerated, but to underestimate them will lead to mistakes, perhaps even to big mistakes. This question

was settled at the Second Plenary Session of the Eighth Central Committee, but repeated references to it at the present conference show that some comrades are still unconvinced. Among the democratic personages in particular there are such remarks as, "You people always say achievements are basic. That doesn't solve any problem. Who doesn't know that achievements are basic, but what about shortcomings and mistakes?" Nonetheless, it is really achievements that are basic. If this is not affirmed, people will be disheartened. Aren't there people who have become disheartened about co-operative transformation? Second, there must be over-all planning and all-round consideration, so that everyone is provided for. This has been our consistent policy. It was our policy in the Yen-an days. In August 1944, the newspaper Ta Kung Pao carried an editorial saying, "Don't set up a separate kitchen." During the Chungking negotiations, I told the man in charge of Ta Kung Pao that I quite agreed with what he said, provided Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek took care of our meals, otherwise what else could we do but set up a separate kitchen? At that time we confronted Chiang Kai-shek with the slogan that everyone should be provided for. Now we are running the country.

Our policy is still one of over-all planning and all-round consideration so that everyone is provided for. This includes providing for all the army and government personnel left behind by the Kuomintang. Even those who fled to Taiwan can come back. All counter-revolutionaries not to be put to death will undergo remoulding and be given a chance to earn a living. The democratic parties will be preserved and coexist with us for a long time and their members will be provided for. In a word, we will take care of all our country's 600 million people. For instance, through the state monopoly of the purchase and marketing of grain we look after the entire urban population and all rural grain-deficient households. Or take the urban youth for example.

Arrangements must be made for them in one way or another – they can go to school or work on a farm, in a factory or in a frontier area.

Relief will be extended to families where no member has a job, our principle being not to allow anybody to die of starvation. All this falls within the scope of over-all planning and all-round consideration.

What kind of policy is this? It is one of mobilizing all positive forces to build socialism. It is a strategic policy. It is better to follow this policy, and there will be fewer troubles. This idea of over-all planning and all-round consideration must be made clear to all.

Comrade Ko Ching-shih said that we must explore every possible way. That's well said, for we must explore every possible way of surmounting difficulties. This slogan should be publicized. The difficulties before us are not very great and don't amount to much! Aren't things at least better now than on the Long March, when we had to scale snow-topped mountains and plod through the marshlands? After crossing the Tatu River on the Long March, the question was which way to go. There was nothing but high mountains to the north and very few inhabitants. At that time we called for surmounting the difficulties by a thousand ways and a hundred devices. What do we mean by a thousand ways and a hundred devices? A thousand ways mean 999 ways plus one, and one hundred devices mean 99 devices and another thrown in. You have so far proposed very few ways or devices. How many ways and devices has each of the provinces and the central departments got? Explore every possible way and the difficulties will be surmounted.

Third, the international situation. In the Middle East, there was that Suez Canal incident. A man called Nasser nationalized the canal, another called Eden sent in an invading army, and close on his heels came a third called Eisenhower who decided to drive the British out and have the place all to himself.

The British bourgeoisie, past masters of machination and manoeuvre, are a class which knows best when to compromise. But this time they bungled and let the Middle East fall into the hands of the Americans. What a colossal mistake! Can one find many such mistakes in the history of the British bourgeoisie? How come that this time they lost their heads and made such a mistake? Because the pressure exerted by the United States was too much and they lost control of themselves in their anxiety to regain the Middle East and block the United States. Did Britain direct the spearhead chiefly at Egypt? No. Britain's moves were against the United States, much as the moves of the United States were against Britain.

From this incident we can pin-point the focus of struggle in the world today. The contradiction between the imperialist countries and the socialist countries is certainly most acute. But the imperialist countries are now contending with each other for the control of different areas in the name of opposing communism. What areas are they contending for? Areas in Asia and Africa inhabited by 1,000 million people. At present their contention converges on the Middle East, an area of great strategic significance, and particularly on Egypt's Suez Canal Zone. In the Middle East, two kinds of contradictions and three kinds of forces are in conflict. The two kinds of contradictions are: first, those between different imperialist powers, that is, between the United States and Britain and between the United States and France and, second, those between the imperialist powers and the oppressed nations. The three kinds of forces are: one, the United States, the biggest imperialist power, two, Britain and France, second-rate imperialist powers, and three, the oppressed nations. Asia and Africa are today the main areas of imperialist contention. National independence movements have emerged in these regions. The methods the United States employs are now violent, now non-violent, and this is the game it is playing in the Middle East.

Their embroilment is to our advantage. We, the socialist countries, should pursue the policy of consolidating ourselves and not yielding a single inch of our land. We will struggle against anyone who tries to make us do so. This is where we draw the line beyond which they can be left to quarrel among themselves. Then shall we speak up or not? Yes, we shall. We certainly will support the anti-imperialist struggles of the people in Asia, Africa and Latin America and the revolutionary struggles of the people of all countries.

As for the relations between the imperialist countries and ourselves, "they are among us and we are among them". We support the people's revolution in their countries and they conduct subversive activities in ours. We have our men in their midst, that is, the Communists, the revolutionary workers, farmers and intellectuals, and the progressives in their countries. They have their men in our midst, and in China for instance they have among us many people from the bourgeoisie and the democratic parties and also the landlord class. At present, these people seem to be behaving themselves and are not causing trouble.

But what will they do if an atom bomb is dropped on Peking? They won't revolt? That's highly questionable. Still more so in the case of those criminals now undergoing reform through labour, those ringleaders who created disturbances in that school in Shihchiachuang, and that college student in Peking who wanted to have thousands and tens of thousands of people shot. We must absorb them and transform the landlords and capitalists into working people. This is also a strategic policy. It takes a very long time to abolish classes.

In short, our assessment of the international situation is still that the embroilment of the imperialist countries contending for colonies is the greater contradiction. They try to cover up the contradictions between themselves by playing up their contradictions with us. We can make use of their contradictions, a lot can be done in this connection.

This is a matter of importance for our external policy.

Now a few words about Sino-American relations. We have had Eisenhower's letter to Chiang Kai-shek reproduced and distributed among you. In my view, the letter is meant chiefly to pour cold water on Chiang Kai-shek and then pump a little courage into him. The letter talks about the need to keep cool and not to be impulsive, which means not resorting to war but relying on the United Nations.

That's pouring cold water. For Chiang Kai-shek has really become rather impulsive. To pump courage into Chiang Kai-shek, Eisenhower says he will continue his hard-line policy towards the Communists and pins his hopes on disturbances breaking out in our midst. In Eisenhower's view, disturbances have already occurred and the Communists cannot stop them. Well, everybody has his own way of looking at things.

I still think it preferable to put off the establishment of diplomatic relations with the United States for some years. This will be more to our advantage. The Soviet Union established diplomatic relations with the United States seventeen years after the October Revolution. In 1929 a world-wide economic crisis broke out which lasted through 1933. In 1933 Hitler came to power in Germany and Roosevelt in the United States. And it was only then that diplomatic relations were established between the Soviet Union and the United States. It will probably be after our Third Five-Year Plan that we will establish diplomatic relations with the United States, that is, eighteen years or even more from the day of liberation. We are in no hurry to take our seat in the United Nations, just as we are in no hurry to establish diplomatic relations with the United States. We adopt this policy to deprive the United States of as much political capital as possible and put it in the wrong and in an isolated position. You bar us from the United Nations and don't want to establish diplomatic relations with us; all right, but the longer you stall, the more you will be in debt to us. The longer you

stall, the more you will be in the wrong and the more isolated you will become in your own country and before world opinion. Once I told an American in Yenan, the United States can go on withholding recognition of our government for a hundred years, but I doubt if it can withhold it in the 101st. One day the United States will have to establish diplomatic relations with us. When the Americans come to China then and look around, they will find it too late for regrets. For this land of China will have become quite different, with its house swept clean and the "four pests" eliminated; they won't find many friends here and they can't do much even if they spread a few germs.

Since World War II, the capitalist countries have been very unstable and in deep turmoil, with anxiety widespread among their people. There is anxiety in all countries, China included. But there is less here anyway. Look into the matter and see who is actually afraid of whom – the socialist countries of the imperialist countries, principally the United States, or the other way round. I say there is fear on both sides. The question is, which side is more afraid of the other? I'm inclined to think that the imperialists are more afraid of us. There may be some danger in making such an assessment, that is, our people may all go to bed and sleep for three days on end. So we must take two possibilities into account. In addition to the favourable possibility, there is the unfavourable one, and that is the imperialists may go berserk. They harbour evil designs and are always out to make trouble. Of course, today it is not so easy for them to start another world war, for they have to think of the consequences.

Now a few words about Sino-Soviet relations. In my view, wrangling is inevitable. Let no one imagine that there is no wrangling between Communist Parties. How can there be no wrangling in this world of ours? Marxism is a wrangling ism, dealing as it does with contradictions and struggles. Contradictions are always present, and where there are contradictions there are struggles. Now there are some

contradictions between China and the Soviet Union. The way they think, the way they do things and their traditional habits are different from ours. So we must work on them. I always say that we should work on our comrades. Some people say, since they are Communists, they should be as good as we are, so why is such work needed? To work on people means doing united front work, working on the democratic personages, but why on Communists? It is wrong to look at the matter this way. There are different opinions inside the Communist Party itself.

Some people have joined the Party organizationally, but ideologically they still need to be straightened out. And even among veteran cadres there are some who do not talk the same language as we do. Therefore, it is often necessary to have heart-to-heart talks, confer individually or collectively and hold meetings more than once to help people straighten out their thinking.

In my opinion, circumstances are more powerful than individuals, even than high officials. The force of circumstances will make it impossible for those die-hard elements in the Soviet Union to get anywhere if they continue to push their great-nation chauvinism. Our present policy is still to help them by talking things over with them face to face. This time when our delegation went to the Soviet Union, we came straight to the point on a number of questions. I told Comrade Chou En-lai over the phone that these people are blinded by their material gains and the best way to deal with them is to give them a good dressing down. What are their material gains? Nothing but 50 million tons of steel, 400 million tons of coal, and 80 million tons of petroleum.

Does this amount to much? Not at all. Now at the sight of this much their heads are swelled. What Communists! What Marxists! I say multiply all that tenfold, or even a hundredfold, it still doesn't amount to much. All you have done is to extract something from the earth, turn it into steel and make some

cars, planes, and what not. What is so remarkable about that? And yet you make all this such a heavy burden on your backs that you even cast away revolutionary principles. Isn't this being blinded by material gains? If one attains high office, one can be blinded by material gain too. To be the first secretary is some kind of material gain, which is also liable to swell one's head. When a man's head gets too swelled, we have to give him a good bawling out one way or another. This time in Moscow, Comrade Chou En-lai did not stand on ceremony and took them on, and consequently they kicked up a row. This is good, straightening things out face to face. They tried to influence us and we tried to influence them. However, we didn't come straight to the point on every question, we didn't play all our cards but kept some up our sleeves. There will always be contradictions. As long as things are tolerable on the whole, we can seek common grounds and reserve differences, to be dealt with later. If they insist on having their own way, sooner or later we will have to bring everything into the open.

As for us, we mustn't talk big in our external propaganda.

We must always be modest and prudent and must, so to speak, tuck our tail between our legs. We must continue to learn from the Soviet Union. However, we must do it selectively, learning only what is advanced and not what is backward. In regard to what is backward there is another way of learning – just don't. As for their mistakes, we can avoid repeating them if we know about them. As for those things of theirs which are useful to us, we must learn them by all means. We shall learn what is useful from every country in the world. One should go everywhere in search of knowledge. To go to one place only would be monotonous.

Fourth, let a hundred flowers blossom and a hundred schools of thought contend. This policy was advanced following the repudiation of the counter-revolutionary Hu Feng clique, and I think it remains correct because it accords with dialectics.

Concerning dialectics Lenin said, "In brief, dialectics can be defined as the doctrine of the unity of opposites. This grasps the kernel of dialectics, but it requires explanations and development."ⁱ It is our job to explain and develop the doctrine. It needs to be explained, and so far we have done too little. And it needs to be developed; with our rich experience in revolution, we ought to develop this doctrine. Lenin also said, "The unity (coincidence, identity, equal action) of opposites is conditional, temporary, transitory, relative. The struggle of mutually exclusive opposites is absolute, just as development and motion are absolute."ⁱⁱ Proceeding from this concept, we have advanced the policy of letting a hundred flowers blossom and a hundred schools of thought contend.

Truth stands in contrast to falsehood and develops in struggle with it. The beautiful stands in contrast to the ugly and develops in struggle with it. The same holds true of good and bad, that is, good deeds and good people stand in contrast to bad deeds and bad people and develop in struggle with them. In short, fragrant flowers stand in contrast to poisonous weeds and develop in struggle with them. It is a dangerous policy to prohibit people from coming into contact with the false, the ugly and the hostile, with idealism and metaphysics and with the twaddle of Confucius, Lao Tzu and Chiang Kai-shek. It will lead to mental deterioration, one-track minds, and unpreparedness to face the world and meet challenges.

In philosophy, materialism and idealism form a unity of opposites and struggle with each other. The same is true of another pair of opposites, dialectics and metaphysics. Whenever one talks about philosophy, one cannot do without these two pairs of opposites. Now in the Soviet Union they will have nothing to do with such "pairs" but are going in only for "singles", asserting that only fragrant flowers, but not poisonous weeds, grow there, and denying the existence of idealism and metaphysics in a socialist country. As a matter

of fact, idealism, metaphysics and poisonous weeds are found in every country.

In the Soviet Union many of the poisonous weeds appear in the name of fragrant flowers, and many absurd statements bear the label

of materialism or socialist realism. We openly recognize the struggle between materialism and idealism, between dialectics and metaphysics, and between fragrant flowers and poisonous weeds. This struggle will go on for ever and will move a step forward at every stage.

If you comrades here already know materialism and dialectics, I would like to advise you to supplement your knowledge by some study of their opposites, that is, idealism and metaphysics. You should read Kant and Hegel and Confucius and Chiang Kai-shek, which are all negative stuff. If you know nothing about idealism and metaphysics, if you have never waged any struggle against them, your materialism and dialectics will not be solid. The shortcoming of some of our Party's members and intellectuals is precisely that they know too little about the negative stuff. Having read a few books by Marx, they just repeat what is in them and sound rather monotonous. Their speeches and articles are not convincing. If you don't study the negative stuff, you won't be able to refute it. Neither Marx nor Engels nor Lenin was like that. They made great efforts to learn and study all sorts of things, contemporary and past, and taught other people to do likewise.

The three component parts of Marxism came into being in the course of their study of, as well as their struggle with, such bourgeois things as German classical philosophy, English classical political economy and French utopian socialism. In this respect Stalin was not as good. For instance, in his time, German classical idealist philosophy was described as a reaction on the part of the German aristocracy to the French

revolution. This conclusion totally negates German classical idealist philosophy. Stalin negated German military science, alleging that it was no longer of any use and that books by Clausewitzⁱⁱⁱ should no longer be read since the Germans had been defeated.

Stalin had a fair amount of metaphysics in him and he taught many people to follow metaphysics. In the History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolsheviks), Short Course, Stalin says that Marxist dialectics has four principal features. As the first feature he talks of the interconnection of things, as if all things happened to be interconnected for no reason at all. What then are the things that are interconnected? It is the two contradictory aspects of a thing that are interconnected. Everything has two contradictory aspects. As the fourth feature he talks of the internal contradiction in all things, but then he deals only with the struggle of opposites, without mentioning their unity. According to the basic law of dialectics, the unity of opposites, there is at once struggle and unity between the opposites, which are both mutually exclusive and interconnected and which under given conditions transform themselves into each other.

Stalin's viewpoint is reflected in the entry on "identity" in the Shorter Dictionary of Philosophy, fourth edition, compiled in the Soviet Union. It is said there: "There can be no identity between war and peace, between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, between life and death and other such phenomena, because they are fundamentally opposed to each other and mutually exclusive." In other words, between these fundamentally opposed phenomena there is no identity in the Marxist sense; rather, they are solely mutually exclusive, not interconnected, and incapable of transforming themselves into each other under given conditions. This interpretation is utterly wrong.

In their view, war is war and peace is peace, the two are mutually exclusive and entirely unconnected, and war cannot be transformed into peace, nor peace into war. Lenin quoted Clausewitz, "War is the continuation of politics by other means."^{iv} Struggle in peace-time is politics, so is war, though certain special means are used. War and peace are both mutually exclusive and interconnected and can be transformed into each other under given conditions. If war is not brewing in peace-time, how can it possibly break out all of a sudden? If peace is not brewing in wartime, how can it suddenly come about? If life and death cannot be transformed into each other, then please tell me where living things come from. Originally there was only non-living matter on earth, and living things did not come into existence until later, when they were transformed from non-living matter, that is, dead matter. All living matter undergoes a process of metabolism: it grows, reproduces and perishes. While life is in progress, life and death are engaged in a constant struggle and are being transformed into each other all the time.

If the bourgeoisie and the proletariat cannot transform themselves into each other, how come that through revolution the proletariat becomes the ruler and the bourgeoisie the ruled? For instance, we stood in diametrical opposition to Chiang Kai-shek's Kuomintang. As a result of the mutual struggle and the mutual exclusion of the two opposing sides, a change took place in our status and theirs, that is, they turned from the ruler into the ruled, whereas we turned from the ruled into the ruler. Those who fled to Taiwan were only one-tenth of the Kuomintang, those remaining on the mainland accounting for nine-tenths. The latter are being remoulded by us; this is a case of the unity of opposites under new circumstances. As for the onetenth who have gone to Taiwan, our relationship with them is still a unity of opposites, and they, too, will be transformed through struggle.

Stalin failed to see the connection between the struggle of

opposites and the unity of opposites. Some people in the Soviet Union are so metaphysical and rigid in their thinking that they think a thing has to be either one or the other, refusing to recognize the unity of opposites. Hence, political mistakes are made. We adhere to the concept of the unity of opposites and adopt the policy of letting a hundred flowers blossom and a hundred schools of thought contend.

When fragrant flowers are blossoming, you will inevitably find poisonous weeds growing. This is nothing to be afraid of, under given conditions they can even be turned to good account.

Some phenomena are unavoidable at a given time, and after their occurrence a way will be found to cope with them. For example, in the past rigid control was exercised over the repertory of drama and this or that piece was banned. Once the ban was lifted, all sorts of plays about ghosts and monsters such as *The Story of a Haunted Black Basin* and *Retribution by the God of Thunder* appeared on the stage.

What do you think of this phenomenon? I think their appearance is all to the good. Many people have never seen ghosts and monsters on the stage, and when they see these ugly images, they will realize that things are being staged which should not be staged. Then these shows will be criticized, changed or banned. Some say that a few local operas are so bad that even the local people disapprove of them. In my opinion, it is all right to stage some of them. Let practice decide whether they can survive and how large an audience they will draw, so don't be in a rush to ban them.

We have now decided to increase the circulation of *News for Reference* from 2,000 to 400,000 so that it can be read by people both inside and outside the Party. This is a case of a Communist Party publishing a newspaper for imperialism, as it even carries reactionary statements vilifying us. Why should we do this? The purpose is to put poisonous weeds and what is

non-Marxist and anti-Marxist before our comrades, before the masses and the democratic personages, so that they can be tempered. Don't seal these things up, otherwise it would be dangerous. In this respect our approach is different from that of the Soviet Union. Why is vaccination necessary? A virus is artificially introduced into a man's body to wage "germ warfare" against him in order to bring about immunity. The publication of News for Reference and other negative teaching material is "vaccination" to increase the political immunity of the cadres and the masses.

Harmful statements should be refuted forcefully and in good time.

A case in point is the article "On Unavoidability" in the People's Daily, which asserts that mistakes in our work are not unavoidable and that we use the word "unavoidable" as an excuse for these mistakes. This is a harmful statement. Perhaps that article should not have been published. Since it was to be published, preparations ought to have been made to meet the challenge with a timely refutation. In our revolution and construction some mistakes are unavoidable in any case, as past experience has proved. The article "More on the Historical Experience of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat" deals precisely with a major case of unavoidability. Who among our comrades wants to make mistakes? Mistakes are not recognized until after they are made, and at first everyone considers himself a 100 per cent Marxist. Of course we should not think that since mistakes are unavoidable, it does not matter if we make some. Nevertheless, it must be admitted that it is definitely impossible not to make any mistake in our work. The point is to make fewer and smaller ones.

Bad trends in society must definitely be overcome. Whether inside the Party, among the democratic personages or among students, bad trends, that is, mistakes which are not those of a few individuals but which have developed into trends, must definitely be overcome. The way to do so is through reasoning.

So long as the reasoning is convincing, it is possible to overcome bad trends. If it is not convincing and only a few words of condemnation are used, these trends will go from bad to worse. Where major issues are involved, full preparations should be made, and wholly convincing refutations should be published when success is certain. Party secretaries should personally supervise the newspapers and write articles.

Of the two opposing aspects of a unity in struggle with each other, one must be principal and the other secondary. In our state which is a dictatorship of the proletariat, poisonous weeds should of course not be allowed to spread unchecked. Whether inside the Party or in ideological or in literary and art circles, we must endeavour to make sure that fragrant flowers and Marxism occupy the chief and dominant position. Poisonous weeds and what is non-Marxist and anti-Marxist must be kept in the subordinate position. In a sense, the relationship between the two can be compared to that between the nucleus and the electrons in an atom. An atom has two parts, the nucleus and the electrons. The nucleus is very small but very heavy.

The electrons are very light, in fact an electron weighs only about 1/1,800th of the lightest nucleus. The nucleus of an atom can also be split, only its binding force is stronger. The electrons are somewhat guilty of "liberalism", with some going and others coming. The relationship between the nucleus and the electrons in an atom is also a unity of opposites, one being principal and the other secondary.

Seen from this viewpoint, the policy of letting a hundred flowers blossom and a hundred schools of thought contend is beneficial, not harmful.

Fifth, the question of disturbances. In socialist society the creation of disturbances by small numbers of people presents a new problem which is well worth looking into.

Everything in society is a unity of opposites. Socialist society is likewise a unity of opposites; this unity of opposites exists both within the ranks of the people and between ourselves and the enemy. The basic reason why small numbers of people still create disturbances in our country is that all kinds of opposing aspects, positive and negative, still exist in society, as do opposing classes, opposing people and opposing views.

We have basically completed the socialist transformation of the ownership of the means of production, but the bourgeoisie are still around, and also the landlords and rich peasants, local tyrants and counter-revolutionaries. They are the expropriated classes and are being oppressed by us, they nurse hatred in their hearts and many of them will give vent to it at the first opportunity. At the time of the Hungarian incident they hoped that Hungary would be thrown into chaos and, best of all, China too. That is their class instinct.

The queer statements of some democratic personages and professors are also in opposition to our views. They preach idealism whereas we advocate materialism. They say that the Communist Party is unable to direct the sciences, that there is nothing superior about socialism and that co-operative transformation is very bad indeed, whereas we say that the Communist Party has the ability to direct the sciences, that socialism is superior and that co-operative transformation is excellent.

Among the students there are also quite a few who stand opposed to us. Since most of today's college students come from exploiting class families, no wonder some of them are opposed to us. Such persons can be found in Peking, Shihchiachuang and elsewhere.

There are certain persons in society who vilify our provincial Party committees as "mummies". Are they mummies? In my view, they are not dead at all, so how can they be mummies? These

fellows vilify our provincial Party committees as "mummies", we say they are not, and the two views stand opposed to each other.

Opposing views are also found inside our Party. For instance, two opposing views, pro and con, exist about the Twentieth Congress of the CPSU finishing Stalin off with one blow. Differences of opinion constantly occur inside the Party; no sooner has unanimity been reached than new differences arise within a month or two.

With respect to the way people think, subjectivism and seeking truth from the facts are opposed to each other. I believe there will always be subjectivism. Will there be no trace of subjectivism ten thousand years from now? I don't think so.

Opposing sides exist in a factory, an agricultural co-operative, a school, an organization or a family, in short, in every place and at every time. Therefore, disturbances by small numbers of people in society will occur every year.

Then, should we be afraid of disturbances or not? We Communists have never feared imperialism, Chiang Kai-shek's Kuomintang, the landlord class or the bourgeoisie, and it would be really strange if we should now be afraid of students creating disturbances or peasants kicking up a row in a co-operative! Only Tuan Chi-jiu and Chiang Kai-shek were afraid of disturbances by the masses. Some people in Hungary and in the Soviet Union are afraid as well. We should adopt an active, and not a passive, attitude towards disturbances by small numbers of people, that is to say, we should not be afraid of them but be ready for them. Being afraid is no solution. The more you are afraid, the more the ghosts will haunt you. If you are not afraid of disturbances and are mentally prepared for them, you will not be put on the defensive. I think we should be prepared for major incidents.

When you are thus prepared, such incidents may not happen, but

when you are not, disturbances will occur.

In the development of a thing, there are only two possibilities, either a good one or a bad one. Both should be taken into consideration in dealing with international and domestic problems. You say this will be a year of peace, well, perhaps it will be. But it would not be good to base your work on this estimate, rather you should base it on the assumption that the worst may happen. Internationally, the worst would be at most the outbreak of a world war and the dropping of atom bombs.

At home, it would be at most nation-wide riots, or a "Hungarian incident", with several million people rising up against us, occupying a few hundred counties and advancing on Peking. All we would need to do then would be to go back to Yen-an where we came from. We have already lived in Peking for seven years, and what if we are requested to return to Yen-an in the eighth? Would we all lament our loss and cry our hearts out? Of course we don't intend to return to Yen-an now, to "make a feint and turn the horse round to retreat".

At the Seventh Congress, I said that we should anticipate seventeen difficulties, among them, a thousand li of parched land, severe natural calamities, famine and the loss of all the county towns. It was because we had taken all this into account that the initiative was always in our hands. Now that we have won state power, we should still anticipate the worst possibilities.

In some cases, disturbances by small numbers of people were due to bureaucracy and subjectivism on the part of the leadership and to mistakes in our political or economic policies. In other cases, they were due to the incorrectness not of our policies but of our method of work, which was too rigid. Another factor was the existence of counter-revolutionaries and bad elements. It is impossible completely to avoid disturbances by small numbers of people. Here is a

case of unavailability again. But as long as we do not make major mistakes in political line, big nation-wide disturbances will not occur. Even if they do occur owing to such mistakes, I think they will quickly subside and not lead to national ruin. Of course, if we fail to do our work well, it is still quite possible that history will to some extent reverse its course and move backward a little. The Revolution of 1911 did suffer reversals; after it dethroned the emperor, another emperor and then the warlords came on the scene. Problems give rise to revolution and after the revolution other problems crop up. If a big nation-wide disturbance flares up, I am sure the masses and their leaders, maybe we ourselves or maybe others, will certainly come forward to clean up the situation. Through a big disturbance of this kind, our country will emerge all the stronger after the boil has burst.

Whatever happens, China will march on.

As for small numbers of people creating disturbances, in the first place, we do not encourage this, and in the second, if some people are bent on creating disturbances, then let them. Freedom of procession and demonstration is provided for in our Constitution, and although freedom to strike is not provided for, it is not prohibited either, so to go on strike does not violate the Constitution. If some people want to stage a strike or present a petition and you obstinately try to prevent them, that is not good. In my opinion, whoever wants to make trouble may do so for as long as he pleases, and if one month is not enough, he may go on for two, in short, the matter should not be wound up until he feels he has had enough. If you hastily wind it up, sooner or later he will make trouble again. Where students make trouble, don't give the school a vacation but fight the matter out as at the Battle of Chihpi in ancient times. What good will come of this? It will help to expose problems to the full and to draw a clear distinction between right and wrong, so that everyone can be tempered and those who are unreasonable, those bad

types, will suffer defeat.

You should learn this art of leadership. Don't always try to keep a lid on everything. Whenever people utter queer remarks, go on strike or present a petition, you try to beat them back with one blow, always thinking that these things ought not to occur. Why is it then that these things which ought not to occur still do? This very fact proves that they ought to occur. You forbid people to strike, to petition or to make unfavourable comments, you simply resort to repression in every case, until one day you become a Rakosi. This is true both inside and outside the Party. As for queer remarks, strange happenings and contradictions, it is better to have them exposed.

Contradictions must be exposed and then resolved.

Disturbances should be differentiated into several categories and handled accordingly. In one category there are the justifiable disturbances, in which case we should admit our mistakes and correct them. In another category there are the unjustifiable ones, and these we must rebut. Disturbances having good grounds ought to occur; groundless ones will get nowhere. In yet another category, the disturbances are partly justifiable and partly not, and we should accept what is justifiable and criticize what is not; here we must not give way at every step in total disregard of principle and promise to do whatever is demanded. Don't be too ready to use force or to open fire on people, except in the case of a real, large-scale counterrevolutionary rebellion which necessitates armed suppression. In the March 18th Massacre^v which he staged, Tuan Chi-jui resorted to shooting, and he eventually brought himself down. We mustn't follow his example.

We must work well among those involved in disturbances to split them and differentiate the many from the few. Give the many proper guidance and education so that they can gradually change, and don't hurt them. I believe it is true everywhere

that people at the two poles are few while those in the middle are many. Win over the middle section step by step and we will get the upper hand. We must make an analysis of riot leaders. Some of those who dare to take the lead in rioting may become useful people through education. As for the handful of bad types, we need not arrest, jail or expel any except those guilty of the gravest offences. Let them stay on in their own unit but strip them of their political capital, isolate them and use them as teachers by negative example. If you expel him right away, you will have a clean house but then you'll not win general approval. Expelled from your place, he'll have to find a job in some other place. Therefore, to expel people like him in haste is not a good way. Such people represent the reactionary classes, and it is not a question of just a few individuals. To deal with them too crudely is good riddance, but their function as teachers by negative example will not be fully utilized. In the Soviet Union, when college students create trouble, the practice is to expel a few ringleaders, and it is not realized that bad things can serve us as teaching material. Of course, dictatorship must be exercised over the very few who stage such counter-revolutionary rebellions as the Hungarian incident.

We should allow democratic personages to challenge us with opposing views and give them a free hand to criticize us. Otherwise we would be a little like the Kuomintang. The Kuomintang was mortally afraid of criticism and went in fear and trepidation each time the Political Council was in session. Criticisms from democratic personages can be of only two kinds, those that are wrong and those that are not. Criticisms that are not wrong can help remedy our shortcomings while wrong ones must be refuted. As for such types as Liang Shu-ming, Peng Yi-hu and Chang Nai-chi, if they want to fart, let them. That will be to our advantage, for everybody can judge whether the smell is good or foul, and through discussion the majority can be won over and these types isolated. If they want to create trouble, let them have their

fill of it. He who perpetrates many injustices is doomed to self-ruin. The falser their words and the greater their mistakes, the better, and the more isolated they will become and the better they will educate the people by negative example.

We must both unite with and struggle against the democratic personages and, according to the circumstances, work among them on our own initiative in some cases, while in others let them expose themselves before we take action rather than striking first.

The struggle against bourgeois ideology, against bad men and bad things, is a long-term one which will take several decades or even centuries. The working class, the other sections of the working people and the revolutionary intellectuals will gain experience and temper themselves in the course of struggle, and this is a great advantage.

A bad thing has a dual character – good as well as bad. Many comrades are still not clear on this point. A bad thing contains good factors as well. To regard bad people and bad things as solely bad is a one-sided, metaphysical approach to problems; it is not a dialectical approach or a Marxist way of looking at things. On the one hand, bad people and bad things are bad, but on the other they can play a good role. For instance, a bad fellow like Wang Ming plays a good role as a teacher by negative example. Similarly, a good thing contains bad factors as well. For instance, the tremendous victories won in the seven years since liberation, especially those won last year, have given some comrades swelled heads, made them conceited, and they are caught unawares at the sudden outbreak of disturbances by small numbers of people.

The root cause of being afraid of disturbances on the one hand and handling them crudely on the other is the refusal to recognize in one's thinking that socialist society is a unity of opposites, in which contradictions, classes and class

struggle exist.

For a long time Stalin denied that contradictions between the relations of production and the productive forces and between the superstructure and the economic base exist under the socialist system.

Not until the year before his death when he wrote Economic Problems of Socialism in the U.S.S.R. did he hesitantly mention the contradiction between the relations of production and the productive forces under the socialist system and admit that incorrect policies and improper adjustments would lead to trouble. Even then he did not pose the question of the contradictions between the relations of production and the productive forces and between the superstructure and the economic base under the socialist system as a question of over-all importance, nor did he realize that they are the basic contradictions which propel socialist society forward. He thought all was secure under his rule.

We on our part mustn't presume that all is secure under our rule; it is secure and yet insecure.

According to dialectics, as surely as a man must die, the socialist system as a historical phenomenon will come to an end some day, to be negated by the communist system. If it is asserted that the socialist system and its relations of production and superstructure will not die out, what kind of Marxism would that be? Wouldn't it be the same as a religious creed or theology that preaches an everlasting God? How to handle the contradictions between the people and the enemy and those among the people in socialist society is a branch of science worthy of careful study. In the conditions prevailing in our country, although the present class struggle partly consists of contradictions between the people and the enemy, it finds expression on a vast scale in contradictions among the people. The disturbances stirred up by a small number of people at the moment are a reflection of this situation. If

the earth is to perish ten thousand years from now, then at least disturbances will go on occurring for these ten thousand years. However, things happening in so remote a future as ten thousand years hence won't be our business. What we are concerned with is to make serious efforts to gain experience in handling this problem within the space of several five-year plans.

Strengthen our work and overcome our mistakes and shortcomings.

What kind of work should be strengthened? Political and ideological work in the spheres of industry, agriculture, commerce, culture and education as well as in the army, government and Party. You are all preoccupied with your professional duties, with your day-to-day work in economic, cultural and educational, national defence and Party matters, but if you neglect political and ideological work, that will be very dangerous. The leading comrades of the Central Committee as well as of the provincial, municipal and autonomous region Party committees should all personally take on political and ideological work. After World War II, the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and certain East European Parties no longer concerned themselves with the basic principles of Marxism. They no longer concerned themselves with class struggle, the dictatorship of the proletariat, Party leadership, democratic centralism and the ties between the Party and the masses, and there wasn't much of a political atmosphere. The Hungarian incident was the consequence.

We must adhere to the basic theory of Marxism. Every province, every municipality and autonomous region should take up theoretical work and systematically train Marxist theorists and critics.

Streamline our organizations. The state is an instrument of class struggle. A class is not to be equated with the state which is formed by a number of people (a small number) from

the class in the dominant position. Office work does need some people, but the fewer the better.

At present the state apparatus is bloated, with many departments and with many people sitting idle in their offices. This problem cries out for solution. First, cut the personnel; second, make appropriate arrangements and see to it that those to be discharged have a place to go to. The above applies equally to the Party, the government and the army.

Go down to the grass roots and study the problems there. I hope that the comrades on the Central Committee and the leading comrades in charge of the provinces, municipalities and autonomous regions and of the central departments will all do this. I have heard that many leading comrades no longer do so, which is not good. The central organs are miserable places where you can get no knowledge at all. If you are seeking knowledge, you won't find any by staying put in your office. The factories, the co-operatives and the shops are the real sources of knowledge. If you stay in your office, you will never get a clear idea of how factories, co-operatives and shops are run. The higher the office, the less the knowledge. To tackle problems, you must go down personally or invite people to come up. If you neither go down nor invite people to come up, you won't be able to solve any problem. I suggest that the secretary of a provincial, municipal or autonomous region Party committee serve concurrently as secretary of a county Party committee or of a factory or school Party committee and that the secretary of a prefectural or a county Party committee do likewise in a subordinate unit. In this way they can gain experience for giving over-all guidance.

Keep in close touch with the masses. Alienation from the masses and bureaucracy are sure to bring punishment upon one's head. The Hungarian leaders were ignorant of the conditions among the masses for lack of investigation and study, and when large-scale disturbances broke out they did not know what had gone wrong. There have been cases of late in which the leaders

of some of our central departments and provincial, municipal and autonomous region Party committees did not keep tabs on the ideological trends among the masses, were completely unaware of the disturbances and riots being brewed by some people and were consequently at a loss when something happened. We must take warning from this state of affairs.

Comrades on the Central Committee and leading comrades in charge of the provinces, municipalities and autonomous regions and of the central departments should take some time out each year to visit grass-roots units such as factories, agricultural co-operatives, shops and schools to make investigation and study and find out the political conditions of the masses, how many are advanced, backward or in between and how well our mass work is going, and thus get a clear picture of the situation. Rely on the working class, on the poor and lower-middle peasants and on the advanced elements, for reliance there must be. Only thus can incidents such as that in Hungary be avoided.

Sixth, the question of the legal system. I am going to make three points: the law must be observed, counter-revolutionaries must be eliminated, and our achievements in eliminating counter-revolutionaries must be affirmed.

The law must be observed and the revolutionary legal system must not be undermined. Laws form part of the superstructure. Our laws are made by the working people themselves. They are designed to maintain revolutionary order and protect the interests of the working people, the socialist economic base and the productive forces. We require everybody, and not just the democratic personages, to respect the revolutionary legal system.

Counter-revolutionaries must be eliminated. Where this task has not yet been completed according to plan, it must be completed this year, and if there are still loose ends to tie up, the work must be finished next year without fail. Some

units went through the campaign to eliminate counter-revolutionaries but the work was not thorough, and it is necessary to clear them all out gradually in the course of struggle. There are not many counter-revolutionaries left, a fact that must be affirmed. Where disturbances break out, the masses will not follow the counter-revolutionaries, and those who do are few in number and do so only for a time. On the other hand, it must also be affirmed that there are still counter-revolutionaries and that the work of eliminating them is not yet finished.

Our achievements in eliminating counter-revolutionaries must be affirmed. They are great achievements. There are also mistakes, which of course should be taken seriously. We should back up the cadres doing the work of eliminating counter-revolutionaries, and there mustn't be any softening because of abuse from some democratic personages. These fellows have been at it day after day, they have nothing better to do after a good meal except abuse people; well, let them. In my opinion, the more abusive they are, the better; anyway no amount of abuse can controvert the three points I've dealt with.

No one knows how much abuse has been hurled at the Communist Party. The Kuomintang vilified us as "Communist bandits", and if people had the slightest contact with us, they were accused of "having contact with bandits". In the end it is the "bandits" who have proved to be better than the "non-bandits". From time immemorial, nothing progressive has ever been favourably received at first and everything progressive has invariably been the object of abuse. Marxism and the Communist Party have been abused from the very beginning. Even ten thousand years hence, things progressive will still be abused at the outset.

Keep up the work of eliminating counter-revolutionaries, and eliminate them wherever they are found. The legal system must be respected. Acting in accordance with the law does not mean being bound hand and foot. It is wrong to be bound hand and

foot and not to eliminate counter-revolutionaries where they are found. Be sure to act in accordance with the law and with hands and feet unfettered.

Seventh, the question of agriculture. We should strive for a good harvest this year. A good harvest this year will give people a sense of security and significantly consolidate the co-operatives. In the Soviet Union and in some East European countries, agricultural collectivization invariably brought about decreases in grain production for a number of years. We have had agricultural co-operation for several years, and we went all out last year, yet, far from falling, our grain production has increased. If another good harvest is reaped this year, there will be no parallel in the history of the agricultural co-operative movement as well as in the history of the international communist movement.

The whole Party should attach great importance to agriculture.

Agriculture has vital bearing on the nation's economy and the people's livelihood. Take heed, for it is very dangerous not to grasp grain production. If this is ignored, there will be widespread disorder some day.

(1) Agriculture is vital to a rural population of 500 million for the supply of grain, meat, edible oils and other agricultural products for daily use consumed at source. This portion of agricultural products consumed at source by the peasants is enormous. For instance, of the more than 360,000 million catties of grain produced last year, commodity grain, including grain delivered to the state, accounted for some 80,000 million catties, or less than a quarter of the total, while the remaining three quarters and more went to the peasants. If agriculture is in good shape and the peasants are self-supporting, then 500 million people will feel secure.

(2) Agriculture is vital for the supply of food to the population in urban, industrial and mining areas. Only when

the production of agricultural products for the market is increased can the needs of the industrial population be met and industry developed. With rising agricultural production, we should gradually increase the proportion of agricultural products entering the market, and particularly commodity grain. When everybody has a regular meal, we need not worry about a handful of people stirring up trouble in schools and factories.

(3) Agriculture is the chief source of raw materials for light industry, for which the countryside provides an important market. Only when agriculture is developed can light industry get enough raw materials and find a vast market for its goods.

(4) Here again the countryside is an important market for heavy industry. For example, chemical fertilizer, farm machinery of all kinds and part of our electric power, coal and petroleum are all supplied to the rural areas, and the railways, the highways and the large water conservancy projects all serve agriculture. Now that we have built up a socialist agricultural economy, the countryside is becoming an immense market for our growing heavy and light industries.

(5) Agricultural products make up the bulk of our exports at present. They earn foreign exchange with which to import various kinds of industrial equipment.

(6) Agriculture is an important source of accumulation. When expanded, it can provide more funds for the development of industry.

Therefore we may say that in a sense agriculture is itself industry.

We should persuade the industrial departments to face the countryside and support agriculture. This must be done if industrialization is to be realized.

In the earnings of the co-operatives, what should be the right

proportion between the accumulation earmarked for agriculture and the accumulation taken from agriculture by the state? Please consider this matter and work out the appropriate proportion. The aim is to enable agriculture to expand reproduction, to provide a larger market for industry and to become a greater source of accumulation. First, let agriculture accumulate more for itself, for only then can it accumulate more for industry. If agriculture accumulated only for industry and very little or none for itself, that would mean "draining the pond to get all the fish" and would only harm the development of industry.

Attention should also be paid to the ratio between accumulation for the co-operative and the income of the co-operative members. In order to increase accumulation bit by bit, the co-operatives should make use of the law of value and adopt economic accounting, and they should be run with diligence and thrift. If there is a good harvest this year, their accumulation should be a little more than last year, but not too much, for it's better to let the peasants have more to eat first.

Accumulate more in good years and less or none in years when the crops half fail or totally fail. In other words, accumulation proceeds in a wave-like manner or in spirals. Since everything in the world is itself a contradiction, a unity of opposites, its movement and development is wave-like. The light emitted by the sun is called light waves, the waves transmitted by radio stations are called radio waves, and sound is carried by sound waves. Water moves in water waves and heat in heat waves. In a sense, walking also proceeds in waves, the step-by-step movement constituting waves. Opera-singing also proceeds in waves, with the singer singing one line after another, never seven or eight lines all at the same time. Handwriting too is done in waves, for people write one word after another and not several hundred words with one stroke of the pen. Such is the undulatory nature of the

movement of opposites in all things.

In a word, we must act in accordance with dialectics. In my opinion, the whole Party should study dialectics and advocate acting in accordance with dialectics. The whole Party should pay attention to ideological and theoretical work, build up contingents of Marxist theoretical workers and devote greater efforts to studying and propagating Marxist theory. The Marxist theory of the unity of opposites must be applied in examining and handling the new problems of class contradiction and class struggle in socialist society and also the new problems in the international struggle.

iV. I. Lenin, "Conspectus of Hegel's The Science of Logic".

iiV. I. Lenin, "On the Question of Dialectics".

iii Carl von Clausewitz (1780-1831), the well-known German bourgeois military scientist. Among his chief works is On War. For Stalin's comment on Clausewitz see Stalin's "Letter in Reply to Comrade Razin".

ivV. I. Lenin, "War and Revolution".

vIn March 1926, during the war between Feng Yu-hsiang's National Army and the northeastern warlord Chang Tso-lin, the Japanese imperialists brazenly sent naval vessels to provide cover for Chang's troops who were attacking Feng's troops stationed at Taku Port. Thwarted, the Japanese aggressors, working hand in glove with seven other countries including Britain and the United States, sent the Chinese government an ultimatum, with insolent demands such as that for the dismantling of the defence works at Taku Port. On March 18, thousands of Peking workers, students and citizens held a protest rally in front of Tien An Men and started a demonstration.

When the demonstrators reached the government building and demanded the rejection of the eight-power ultimatum, Tuan Chi-

jui, the chief of the Northern warlord government, ordered the guards to fire and the demonstrators were slaughtered in cold blood.

