

Comments on Stalin's Dialectics

Mao Zedong

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Only a part of Mao's speech at the November, 1957, Meeting of Communist and Workers' Parties was published in Mao's Selected Works, vol. 5. The remaining parts concern current affairs and his comments on a specific case of internal struggle in the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU). This was the case of the so-called "Anti-Party Group," of which V. M. Molotov was the most prominent member. Molotov, L. M. Kaganovich, G. M. Malenkov and others had attempted to remove Khrushchev as First Secretary of the CPSU in June, 1957. Khrushchev flew in many of his allies in the CPSU central committee, who voted against the Molotov proposal. Molotov and others were expelled from the Central Committee, and later from the CPSU. This concluding part of the speech concerns Mao's dialectical analysis of these events, and is notable for its evaluation of Stalin's dialectics, and its assertion that the Molotov matter represented an antagonistic contradiction.

Source: 《建国以来毛泽东文稿》，第六卷, [Mao Zedong's Manuscripts Since the Founding of the State, vol. 6], <http://www.mzdthought.com/html/mxzz/mzdwg/6/3879.html>

Perhaps you are very annoyed that I speak about his kind of question [i.e., the dialectical principle "One divides into two"] at a meeting in this way. I am a man who doesn't understand current trends, I also spoke a very long time, and then didn't I speak a little more? But I want to say a few words more. I agree with the CPSU central committee resolution about the Molotov question.

This is a struggle of opposites, and the facts show that they cannot unite and are mutually exclusive. The Molotov group made an assault, took advantage of Comrade Khrushchev's desire to go abroad, caught him unaware, and made a sudden surprise attack. But Comrade Khrushchev is not a fool, he is an intelligent person, and he immediately transferred forces, organized a counter-offensive, and gained victory.

This is a struggle of two lines. One line is wrong and one line is comparatively correct. For four or five years after Stalin's death there was a tremendous improvement in Soviet internal and foreign affairs, which bore out Comrade

Khrushchev's aspiration to stand for a comparatively correct line, and to oppose this line is wrong. Comrade Molotov is an old comrade who has very long history of struggle, but in this affair he did wrong. The struggle of two lines inside the CPSU has an antagonistic character, because these lines are mutually incompatible, mutually excluding, and one repels the other. If this struggle can be dealt with well, it cannot go wrong. If it cannot be dealt with well, there is a danger of going wrong. Stalin's leadership of the CPSU produced great works, his achievements are primary, and his shortcomings are secondary. Yet for a long time he developed metaphysics and harmed dialectics. When a person adores metaphysics, no one can criticize him. I think that the Soviet Union's four decades are a dialectical process. Lenin was dialectical. Stalin had a very metaphysical viewpoint. These points of view undergo movement, reach a limit, and are bound to arrive at their opposites and proceed in a dialectical process. I am very happy that Comrade Khrushchev, in the October revolution 40th anniversary meeting, said

socialist society has contradictions. I am very glad that Soviet philosophy has produced many essays that discuss the question of the internal contradictions of Soviet society. Some essays also discuss the issues of socialist and capitalist

contradictions. These are two different kinds of contradictions.

My talk is not finished. Finally, I have one more sentence: I approve both declarations.