

Revolutionary Dialectics or Reconciliation of Contradictions?

- A Debate with Comrades Ai Heng-wu, Lin Ch'ing-shan and P'an Ch'ing-pin

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A debate on the question of "division of one into two" or "combination of two into one" is now in progress. This question bears directly on how is the core of dialectics, i.e., the law of the unity of opposites to be understood, and is also related to the question of how the revolutionary spiritual essence of materialistic dialectics is to be understood. Therefore, the debate on this question is of extremely great significance.

The debate on this question was started by comrades Ai Heng-wu (艾恒武) and Lin Ch'ing-shan's (林青山) article. After carrying on May 29, 1964, Comrades Ai and Lin's article "'Division of One into Two' and 'Combination of Two into One,'" the Kuang-ming Jih-pao published on June 5 Comrade Hsiang Ch'ing's (项晴) article "'Combination of Two into One' is Not Dialectics," criticizing Comrades Ai and Lin's viewpoints. After that, articles by Comrades Yao Yung-k'ang (姚永抗) and P'an Ch'ing-pin (潘庆斌) were published in succession.

As I see it, the articles by Yao and P'an, apart from stating their views on what is "division of one into two" and what is "combination of two into one," have a common characteristic. Judging from some phraseologies, they both criticize the views of Hsiang Ch'ing as well as the viewpoints of Ai and Lin. P'an Ch'ing-pin holds that the viewpoints of both sides "have their points of merit but are also one-sided and subjective." Yao Yung-k'ang holds that "'division of one into two' and 'combination of two into one' are not fundamentally antagonistic." However, I hold that the two articles by Yao and P'an are in effect counter-criticisms of Hsiang's article. As far as the fundamental viewpoint is concerned, their views are identical with those of Comrades Ai and Lin. Comrade P'an Ch'ing-pin's article "'Division of One into Two' and 'Combination of Two into One' Are Two Indivisible Aspects of the Law of Contradiction," in particular, goes further in developing the viewpoint of "combination of two into one." It also advocates directly that the concept of "combination of two into one" be "brought into dialectics." It says that he who does not agree with this view and insists that the dialectical viewpoint can only be "division of one into two" but cannot at the same time be "combination of two into one" holds the "metaphysical" viewpoint of "either this or that" and "this cannot be that and vice versa," which is "one-sided, ossified, and divorced from genuine dialectical thought." It can be seen that the divergence is by no means small.

I. Can World Outlook and Methodology Be Cut Apart?

Comrades Ai Heng-wu and Lin Ch'ing-shan's article "'Division of One into Two' and 'Combination of Two into One'" has a fundamental viewpoint which is: "An objective thing is 'a combination of two into one.' In order to know it, it is necessary to 'divide one into two,' and when guidelines and policies are formulated for transforming the world and handling work, it is also necessary to 'combine two into one.'" It is also asserted that the "combination of two into one" "gives expression to the most fundamental law of dialectics -- the law of the unity of opposites."

This view is fundamentally wrong. It is wrong because it cuts apart the world outlook, the fundamental viewpoint and the general way to look at the world, from the methodology, the way to know and transform the world. According to the comprehension of dialectical materialism, the whole universe is a material world full of movement in

opposites, and this material world depends on its own inherent movement in opposites for moving continuously forward. The original look of the material world and the corresponding methods arising therefrom must be understood before the material world can be correctly understood, otherwise, the object of correctly understanding objective things cannot be achieved. The so-called transformation of the world also can only be guided by circumstances to bring about the development of things and to attain the goal of the revolution according to the objective laws of development of things. The object of knowing the world lies wholly in the transformation of the world, and the transformation of the world also depends on a correct knowledge of the world itself. Therefore, the methodology we commonly refer to includes the two aspects of how to know the world and how to transform the world. However, the views of Comrades Ai and Lin not only cause the world outlook and the methodology to stand against and to be cut apart from each other, but also cause the cognition and transformation as methodology, the two aspects of unity, to stand against and be cut apart from each other. Their "uniting two into one" formula of "combination of two into one" - method of knowing the objective things and "division of one into two" - method of transformation is a very prominent indication that the aforesaid two aspects are set against each other and are cut apart and that they run counter to the principle for unity of the world outlook and methodology.

Perhaps Comrades Ai and Lin would say that what they call "combination of two into one" for objective things also means "division of one into two," that is, it means that the objective things contain contradictions. However, this does not hold water. This is because, first, what you call "combination of two into one" is put forward precisely for the purpose of opposing what we commonly call "division of one into two," and you raise the question precisely from the opposite angle of world outlook and methodology. Second, according to our understanding, what you call "combination of two into one" is not the same thing as "division of one into two" as we understand it. "Division of one into two" is dialectics, but "combination of two into one" is not (this point will be discussed later). Third, suppose you assert that "combination of two into one" means "division of one into two," that is, it means that the objective things contain contradictions, then we must ask: Since "combination of two into one" is equal to "division of one into two" and the embodiment of contradictions in the unity of things, then why is it necessary to put forward "combination of two into one" in addition to "division of one into two?" And why is it necessary to differentiate syllogistically "combination of two into one" for objective things, "division of one into two" for the method of transformation?

Therefore, the question can only run thus: Either we implement dialectical monism on the foundation of the unity of world outlook and methodology, for there is a methodology for a world outlook, and only the commensurate methodology can correctly understand and transform objective things; or, we hold that methodology and world outlook can be cut apart, and subjective dialectics may not be a reflection of objective dialectics.

I think that when confronted by the two instances mentioned in the above, Comrades Ai and Lin may not agree to the second instance, that is, the view that the world outlook and the methodology can be cut apart. Consideration and action based on their formula of "combination of two into one" -- "division of one into two" -- and again "combination of two into one" is bound to be unable to achieve the object of correctly explaining and transforming the world, and will inevitably cause the split of world outlook and methodology.

From where does a correct method come? This is a question of general significance. This question is present and is a very important problem in philosophical theory or in practical work. It is true that a correct idea and the way of obtaining such an idea are subjective so far as the form of expression is concerned, and that subjective dialectics is a self-conscious reflection of objective dialectics. But any correct idea is bound to be objective in content, and the way of obtaining such an idea also can only be objective in content. Otherwise, the reality is divorced from, and we are not in a position to talk about the correct idea and the correct way to obtain such an idea. Precisely because the way of thinking is subjective in form of expression and is different from the dialectics of an objective thing itself, it

is also easy for one to acquire the impression that man's thought and way of thinking seem to be purely subjective, something fallen from the sky, or the outcome of intuition, or of meditation and hard thinking. As a matter of fact, this is to negate the identity of subjective and objective dialectics in content because of their variance in form. This point of departure will inevitably lead to the split of world outlook and methodology.

Subjective dialectics, as a means of knowing things, cannot of course be considered to be identical with the objective dialectics of things itself. This is because the former is a reflection of the latter. As a reflection, subjective dialectics has its own peculiar form. What Comrade Mao Tse-tung describes as man's logical thinking in the process of knowing things -- "discarding the crude and selecting the refined, eliminating the false and retaining the true, proceeding from one point to another, and going through the outside into the inside," -- concepts, judgments, deductions, and leap from perceptual knowledge to rational knowledge represent the form of expression peculiar to subjective dialectics. However, man cannot deny the objectivity of the origin of subjective dialectics and its objective content because of this peculiar form of expression. This is also why Engels says that thinking and being are subordinate to essentially the same law, that is, the law of dialectic. Lenin also points out that "it is dialectical for an object to express itself" and "the movement of cognition to the object can always only proceed dialectically." (Philosophical Notes, pp. 213 & 285) Therefore, in order to obtain a correct knowledge of things, it is necessary to conduct "dialectical thinking." A correct idea can only be drawn from the class struggle, struggle for production and scientific experiments in society. A correct method can only come from objective reality, and can only be a reflection of the dialectical laws of objective things.

I hold that to deny the dependence of subjective dialectics on objective dialectics in content, to split the unity of the two, and to split knowing the world from transforming the world (for example, knowing of things calls for "division of one into two" and transformation of things calls for "combination of two into one") all run counter to the principles of dialectical materialism.

For the sake of supporting their theory of "combination of two into one" with facts, Comrades Ai Heng-wu and Lin Ch'ing-shan have given many examples, but most of them concern socialist construction and contradictions among the people. For example, they deal with "walking on two legs," the relationship between industry and agriculture, the relationship of greater, faster, better and more economical results, the relationship between democracy and centralism, the relationships between learning and helping, merits and shortcomings, citation and criticism, etc. According to them, "when lines, guidelines, policies and measures are formulated, it is necessary to link together and integrate the two opposite aspects," and "the series of guidelines and policies of our Party are all formulated on the premise of making a 'dividing one into two' analysis of things which are 'combination of two into one,' and of finding out the conditions for the unification and integration of opposite aspects." According to their interpretation, the "integration" of industry and agriculture is the application of the theory of "combination of two into one" to practical work, the "unification" of greater, faster, better and more economical results is also the application of the theory of "combination of two into one," the implementation of "learning in helping and helping in learning" is a "combination of two into one," the "integration" of criticism with citation is also a "combination of two into one," and merits and shortcomings, democracy and centralism all represent the "combination of two into one." In short, the "integration" of democracy and centralism, merits and shortcomings, and citation and criticism arising therefrom all means the practical application of the theory of "combination of two into one." To put it the other way, the facts found in practical life, namely, the practice of "walking on two legs" by industry and agriculture, the integration of criticism and citation, "learning through helping and helping through learning" all show the correctness of the theory of "combination of two into one."

As we see it, however, all this does not hold water. Here Comrades Ai and Lin has dual misunderstanding of various problems in dialectics and practical work. On the one hand, they attempt to replace theoretically the dialectics of "division of one into two" by "combination of two into one." On this side of the question, their advocacy for "combination of two into one" for objective things and "combination of two into one" for the transformation of things are "unified," and these two "combinations of two into one" are "identical." Looking from this side, we have reasons to hold that Comrades Ai and Lin really seek to replace the dialectics of "dividing one into two" with the theory of "combination of two into one" on two most important links, that is, the two aspects of what is the way to transform things and what are the things themselves. However, a "division of one into two" for knowing things is also inserted here. As we see it, this "division of one into two," with "its head and tail cut away," has lost its objective basis because of the theory of "combination of two into one" for things themselves, and become something useless because of the theory of "combination of two into one" for the transformation of things. Let us ask: what "division of one into two" is this "division of one into two" which is without an origin and is not designed for the transformation of things? In what respect is this so-called "division of one into two" in common with the "division of one into two" in the sense of materialistic dialectics? As a matter of fact, what they call "division of one into two" here is nothing more than an abstraction and a facade for glossing over the whole theory of "combination of two into one."

The question is also misunderstood in other respect. The guidelines, lines and policies of our Party are not formulated on the basis of "combination of two into one," but are formulated on the foundation of looking squarely into and scientifically analyzing the contradictions inherent in the objective things themselves. If the general line of the Party for building socialism is talked about, then greater, faster, better and more economical results are antagonistic to lesser, slower, poorer and more expensive results. Next, "integration" or "unification" is called for among greater, faster, better and more economical results because of the existence of contradictions between quantity and quality.

At the present stage in China, between industry and agriculture and between the workers and peasants connected with them, there exist not only two different systems of ownership, two different kinds of production relationship and two different kinds of laborers. Moreover, as far as the development of industry or agriculture itself is concerned, there also exists objectively a constant imbalance, and such imbalance is also a contradiction. In order to develop the national economy, the way to deal with industry and agriculture is not to implement the "combination of two into one," that is, to deny the contradiction between them, but to formulate guidelines and policies on the foundation of looking the contradiction in the face. The general line of the Party for developing the national economy with agriculture as the foundation and industry as the leading factor was formulated on the foundation of analyzing the objective contradiction. The line of "walking on two legs" and not on one was precisely designed for correctly handling the contradiction between them.

When either industry or agriculture lags behind the other, thus hindering the development of the national economy, it is necessary to overcome the backward state of one side, or the imbalance between the two sides, thus enabling that side to be developed in common with the other side. To be sure, what is called "overcome" here cannot be used in the same sense as the "elimination of the enemy" when we handle the contradiction between the enemy and ourselves. This is because the nature of the contradiction is not the same, and the way of resolving the contradiction must of course also be different. This marks the difference of contradictions. Failure to understand this kind of difference or particularity may lead to denial of the universality of contradiction. The theory of "combination of two into one" is precisely a manifestation of denying the universality of contradiction.

As to our merits and shortcomings in practical work and the concomitant citations and criticisms, the correct attitude should also consist in distinguishing first the merits from the shortcomings. Without first setting the two against each other, there is no way to tell what are merits or shortcomings, no way to proceed

with citation or criticism and no way to know what should be cited and what should be criticized. Of course, to look upon this kind of antagonism as absolute, see only one but not both of them, or hold that the two can not be transformed under certain conditions, would be wrong, for this shows that we lack the viewpoint of "division of one into two." Likewise, it is even more erroneous if the difference or antagonism of the two is ignored, a line of distinction is not first drawn between the merits and the shortcomings, and the two are combined into one. Criticism and citation, as a means for us to carry out ideological work, is in the final analysis based on the objective existence of merits and shortcomings. The integration of criticism with citation does not mean that people can deal with merits and shortcomings by means of "combination of two into one," but means that the antagonism between them must not be made absolute, and that the transformation of the opposites can be brought about under certain conditions, namely, through overcoming the shortcomings and developing the merits, overcoming the negative factors with the positive factors, thus enabling the backward to become advanced, and the advanced more advanced. All this is precisely the practical application of the method of "division of one into two," but not any "combination of two into one."

II. Is This Revolutionary Dialectics Based on "Division of One into Two" or Reconciliation of Contradictions Based on "Combination of Two into One?"

The core of the problem under debate this time is whether or not "division of one into two" and "combination of two into one" are antagonistic, and what is the nature of this antagonism. In order to clarify this problem, we must, first of all, understand how the question of "combination of two into one" is raised. As stated in the above, Comrades Ai and Lin raised the question of "combination of two into one" in relation to "division of one into two" from the angle of world outlook and methodology. This point can be clearly discerned from the title of Comrades Ai and Lin's article and the things discussed therein. Therefore, I hold that no further verification is called for. Next, in order to clarify the aforesaid problem, it is also necessary to understand what is "division of one into two" and especially what is "combination of two into one." Therefore, without clarifying what is "combination of two into one", there is no way to know whether there is after all any difference between it and "division of one into two," whether the two are antagonistic to each other, and what is the substance of this antagonism.

All of us are more familiar with "division of one into two," but are less familiar with what is "combination of two into one." What then is "combination of two into one?" What does "combination of two into one" signify as a theoretical proposition of a general nature? In order to understand what is "combination of two into one," it is best to see how Comrades Ai Heng-wu, Lin Ch'ing-shan, P'an-Ch'ing-pin and Yao Yung-k'ang interpret it.

According to Comrades Ai and Lin, what is called "combination of two into one" is that "a thing is made up of two opposite aspects, and these two opposite aspects are indivisibly linked together." With two different aspects "integrated," the movement of things in opposites is "formed." For example, "the action and reaction among things are 'two combined into one' to form the mechanical movement of things. The attraction and repulsion among molecules within matter are 'two combined into one' to form physical movement....Productivity and productive relationship, economic foundation and superstructure are 'two combined into one' to form the movement of human society. Theory and practice are 'two combined into one' to form the movement of human cognition." In short, "all things ranging from the various phenomena of nature to human society, thinking, etc., are 'two combined into one.'" Proceeding from this, they hold that "combination of two into one" expresses precisely the most fundamental law of dialectics -- the law of the unity of opposites."

According to Comrade Yao Yung-k'ang, what is called "combination of two into one" is the "interconnection" of opposite aspects, "a profile of the identity of contradictions, that is, interdependence and interconnection;" while "combination of two into one" which has been reformed" is contradictory and complementary. According to him, if "division of one into two" is onesidedly understood without seeing the "interconnection" of opposite aspects, it may "violate dialectics and be turned into

metaphysics." This is also to say that in order to persist "thoroughly in dialectics, it is necessary to add "combination of two into one" to or incorporate it into "division of one into two," otherwise, it would mean "metaphysics." Proceeding from this, he holds that the antagonism between "division of one into two" and "combination of two into one" is not dialectical but metaphysical antagonism, and between them, there is at most only antagonism between the whole and the part ("division of one into two" being the whole, and "combination of two into one" the part).

Comrade P'an Ch'ing-pin has even more to say. According to him, "since a thing is 'one divided into two,' then what is opposite to 'division' must inevitably be 'combination.' 'Combination of two into one' is precisely the opposite of 'division of one into two,' and this constitutes the unity of contradictions and the unity of opposites." "Combination of two into one" has two meanings, "one being that the two opposites inevitably exist in the entity; the other being that the two opposites are bound to become a unity and combine into one." He holds that if "combination of two into one" is understood in this way, then "it will have a due place in the unity of opposites." The author also writes: "It is also reasonable to say that 'combination of two into one' is a reconciliation of contradictions. Since the two aspects of a contradiction are split off from a unified thing, exist in the entity, are interdependent in this entity, this itself bears the meaning of reconciliation."

We have quoted these comrades' interpretations of "combination of two into one." As we see it, the "combination of two into one" interpreted in this way can under no circumstances be "brought into the conception of dialectics." This is because this theory of "combination of two into one" is fundamentally opposed to the "division of one into two" which is the revolutionary dialectics. The antagonism between the two is not any antagonism between the part and the whole, nor any antagonism between "division of one" and "combination of two" and between this aspect and that aspect, but the antagonism between two fundamental viewpoints.

First, as a scientific world outlook and methodology, "division of one into two" holds that contradictions are inherent in objective things themselves. When things are observed from this viewpoint, it will be discovered that in a thing which appears to be an entity there exist two aspects which are antagonistic and mutually exclusive and which depend on each other for existence. For example, there exist the antagonism between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat in a unified capitalist society, and there exists the struggle between the two roads to capitalism and socialism throughout the transition period. . An advanced unit is also bound to have its own weak links, and there are also positive factors in the backward area. Things are always "divided from one into two." This "two" does not stand for two entirely unrelated things which, once "integrated" because of a certain cause, "form" a certain thing, but represents the aspects which are interconnected and are opposed to each other within the entity itself. When we say that any concrete thing contains its own negation, we mean that the thing itself contains a contradiction.

The metaphysical viewpoint is opposed to this viewpoint of "division of one into two." It denies contradiction. It holds that "one" is "one" and "two" is "two," and that one cannot be divided into two. Metaphysics sometime also deals with contradictions, but not the internal contradictions in things themselves. Metaphysics sometimes deals with "identity," but not with struggle. It sometimes also deals with "development," but it does not mention qualitative change and the leap. The "identity" or "unity" it deals with is absolute identity without difference and antagonism, that is "abstract identity" in the words of Engels. The special feature of this viewpoint of abstract identity is that two things are taken as completely identical and are combined into one thing. Such a "thing" basically does not exist in the objective world. It only exists in a hollow and abstract form in the minds of the metaphysical scholars.

The comrades who persist in the view of "combination of two into one" have quoted again and again the words used by Lenin to give a popular explanation to the law of the unity of opposites. However, they turn things upside-down. Lenin's method of formulation runs thus: "...in mechanics, action and reaction. In physics, positive electricity and negative electricity. In chemistry, combination and dissociation of atoms. In social science, the class struggle." (Philosophical Notes, p. 361). For the theory of "combination of two into one," however, there is no alternative but to talk above the "combination" of action and reaction between things to form the mechanical movement of things, and to have recourse to "combination of two into one" to "form" contradictions in things. It seems that the concrete opposites are not interconnected because of certain conditions to form either a unified thing or a realistic contradiction, but that a contradiction is "formed" as a result of "combination of two into one." It should be said that the contradiction "formed" by "combination of two into one" is unrealistic and lifeless because it lacks the necessary conditions. This is the first point.

Second, what is called "combination of two into one," as a proposition opposed to "division of one into two," can only signify denial of contradiction and transformation of two things into one thing. Under the best circumstances, there can only be an external, mechanical combination of two things. To be sure, this kind of mechanically formed "contradiction" is never inherent in an objective thing itself, but is added to it and is external.

Third, it will also not do to assert that "combination of two into one" is the identity of contradictions. If the identity of contradictions is discussed, then according to the instructions of Lenin, it is necessary to study how opposites can be made identical and how they are made identical. Comrade Mao Tse-tung has also taught us that it is necessary to study how the opposites are contradictory and complementary and under what conditions are they interdependent and transformed into each other. All this tells us that when examining the relationship of the identity of the contradiction in things, one must pay attention to studying the conditions, and must not rest content with or indulge in the discussion of the identity of contradictions in an abstract manner. At the same time, what is described by materialistic dialectics as the identity of contradictions refers to the most essential summation of the identical relationship between the opposites, it does not refer to any external "connection," much less to the combination of two opposites into one. The relationship between the interdependence of opposites under certain conditions and their transformation into each other under certain conditions cannot be formulated by means of "combination of two into one."

Fourth, Lenin sternly criticized the taking of the identity of opposites as "a summation of cases in point." Lenin said that although Engels also gave "seed," "primitive communism" and other examples to show the universality of the unity of opposites, yet this was done "for the sake of popularization." Plekhanov was different. He also listed such examples as "seed" and "primitive communism," and because he limited himself to the listing of examples, he looked upon the unity of opposites as "a summation of cases in point." In other words, in the case of Engels, the unity of opposites is taken as a universal law of the objective world, and as a result, it also exists as a universal law governing man's knowledge of things. In the case of Plekhanov, what is called the unity of opposites is not "taken as a law of knowledge" (and a law of the objective world) (Philosophical Notes, p. 361), but is taken as "a summation of cases in point." Lenin emphatically pointed out that the question of whether the unity of opposites was taken as a law of knowledge or "a summation of cases in point," that is, whether or not dialectics could be implemented in epistemology, was most important and was where the "essence of the problem" lay.

Since even the taking of the unity of opposites as "a summation of cases in point" is not permitted, is it permissible to take the view that subjective dialectics and objective dialectics may "go their own ways" with "division of one into two" for one and "combination of two into one" for the other? Can those comrades who persist in the theory of "combination of two into one" take "combination of two into one" as the unity of opposites by giving some examples? I think not. Moreover, many examples

themselves, instead of bearing out the correctness of the theory of "combination of two into one," prove precisely the universal existence of "division of one into two." It must also not be forgotten that after criticizing the viewpoint of "summation of cases in point," Lenin promptly gave such examples as "ten and one, differential and integral in mathematics." After giving these examples, he promptly drew the conclusion: "The identity of opposites...is the recognition (discovery) of the contradictory, mutually exclusive, opposite tendencies and processes of nature (including mind and society." (Philosophical Notes, p. 362). In other words, the examples given by Lenin were precisely designed to show the universal existence of contradictions and the universality of "division of one into two." The conclusion drawn by those advocates of the theory of "combination of two into one" on the basis of the instance cited that only "uniting two into one" can "constitute" contradiction is precisely not in correspondence with Lenin's proper idea and runs counter to the principle of the universal and objective existence of contradictions.

It can be seen from this that the antithesis between "division of one into two" and "combination of two into one" is primarily one between the view that contradictions are inherent in things and the view that contradictions are artificially "formed," and one between recognition and non-recognition of the universality and objectivity of contradictions.

Next, the antithesis between "division of one into two" and "combination of two into one" also finds expression in the question of whether or not the mutual transformation of opposites under certain conditions is acknowledged. According to the viewpoint of "dividing one into two," because of the contradictory nature of a thing itself, and because the mutual exclusive tendency between opposites cannot be reconciled, the struggle of contradictions inevitably results in the mutual transformation of opposites under given conditions, that is, the transformation of a thing into a new thing.

As a result of the uninterrupted struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, the unified capitalist society breaks apart, and the socialist society is built by means of socialist revolution. Because of the irreconcilability of contradictions between Marxism-Leninism and revisionism and because of the betrayal of Marxism-Leninism by the revisionists, the unified international communist movement "is divided into two." Because of the summation of experiences and the lessons learned, good results can be obtained from bad things and bad things can be turned into good things. All contradictory things transform themselves into the opposite because of given conditions. Things always head for the opposite, and are always "divided from one into two." In opposition to this, metaphysics does not acknowledge the mutual transformation of opposites. It either fundamentally denies development and change, the transformation of opposites, qualitative change, and the leap, or obliterates the conditions for mutual transformation of the opposites. It either looks upon the opposite as rigid, dead and eternal things, or goes to the other extreme and changes them back and forth unconditionally and in an abstract manner. This kind of unconditional transformation is like jugglery and is colored with mysticism. Metaphysics sometimes also deals with change, but this kind of change is not based on the contradictory nature within a thing. Therefore, it can only bring about a change in quantity or locality, and fundamentally there is no qualitative change to speak of. Metaphysics sometimes also deals with transformation, but such transformation is "non-dialectical transformation" without the leap, without any "interruption in the process of gradual progress, and without revolution in quality, and results not in the death of old things and the birth of new things, but in "inevitable separation after protracted combination or inevitable combination after protracted separation" between the original two opposites.

What is the theory of "combination of two into one?" Is it the dialectical view of transformation or the non-dialectical view of transformation? Does it acknowledge transformation or fundamentally denies transformation? This question is decided not by some speeches or statements, but by the objective logic embodied in the theory of "combination of two into one" itself. To deny that contradictions are inherent in things themselves is to deny fundamentally the possibility of transformation. To look upon the unity of opposites as absolute and interpret identity as "combination

of two into one" is to deny the absoluteness of the struggle of contradictions while at the same time distorting the identity of contradictions, thus making the transformation of opposite things fundamentally impossible. "Reconciliation of contradictions" means denial of struggle, denial of dialectical transformation, and congealing of the opposites. To say that the interdependence of opposites for existence "means the reconciliation of contradictions" is the biggest kind of distortion. In short, the proposition of "uniting two into one" itself is physically opposed to the proposition of "dividing one into two" which calls for mutual transformation of the opposites under given conditions.

Nearly all the comrades who advocate that "combination of two into one" "be brought into dialectics," and especially the law of the unity of opposites declare with one voice that "combination of two into one" represents the identity of contradictions and the interdependence and mutual transformation of opposites. There is nothing strange in this. Because the proposition of "uniting two into one" itself is directly opposed to the struggle of contradictions, it can be said that "it is irrelevant to the question." So they concentrate their attention on the question of identity of contradictions, and attempt to put the sign of equality between the identity of contradiction and "combination of two into one." They think that in this way "combination of two into one" can be brought into dialectics and "given a proper place" in the law of the unity of opposites. However, there are also difficulties in this connection. That is, the proposition of "combination of two into one" is not only directly opposed to the struggle of contradictions, but is also opposed to the mutual transformation of opposites under given conditions, a thing of greater significance to the identity of contradictions. Hence, there arises such a situation: when they place the identity of contradictions and "combination of two into one" on an equal footing, they actually put the sign of equality between "interdependence for existence" and "combination of two into one."

For example, when Comrade Yao Yung-k'ang said in general terms that "combination of two into one" was "contradictory and complementary" and the same as "the identity of contradictions," he also talked about both the interdependence and the transformation of opposites. When he concretely explained why "combination of two into one" was equivalent to the identity of contradictions, he attributed this identity to interdependence and stated that "combination of two into one" at most "could only be a flank of the identity of contradictions, meaning interdependence and interconnection." Comrade P'an Ch'ing-pin went farther. According to his explanation, "combination of two into one" has two meanings, one being "the inevitable existence of the two aspects of a contradiction in an entity," the other, "the inevitable unity of the two opposites, and hence their combination into one."

Why is it said that "combination of two into one" is the identity of contradictions at one time, and only "a flank of the identity of contradictions" at another time? Why is it that when the identical meaning of "combination of two into one" and of the identity of contradictions is discussed in general, mention is made both of interdependence and transformation, while when the matter is explained in concrete terms, only "connection" and "dependence" are mentioned, but transformation is secretly done away with? What basis is there in saying that the interdependence of opposites means "the reconciliation of contradictions?" How are things which "are bound to be combined into one" transformed? All these questions should be explained by the comrades who persist in advocating that "combination of two into one" be "brought into dialectics and the law of the unity of opposites." However, they have not given any convincing explanation.

As we see it, it is difficult to make this kind of explanation. The reason is that the theory of "combination of two into one" itself is fundamentally not in conformity with the thought of mutual transformation of opposites under given conditions.

Next, to deal with problems by "uniting two into one" will inevitably involve fusion of contradictions and the reconciliation of contradictions. We know that as methodology, "division of one into two" is scientific and at the same time revolutionary. "Division of one into two" expounds the ideas that there are contradictions in unified

things, and that the result of struggle between things inevitably leads to the splitting of the entity, the transformation of opposites, and qualitative change of things. All this manifests the revolutionary spirit of materialistic dialectics, and the unity of the scientific and revolutionary character of "division of one into two." But when the theory of "combination of two into one" is used as methodology to solve problems, it has no scientific character to speak of, and is also incompatible with the revolutionary spirit of "division of one into two." For example, the landlords and the peasants are interdependent and antagonistic to each other. According to the method of "combination of two into one," in order to solve the contradiction between them, it is necessary to have the two sides "linked together" and "integrated" (Ai and Lin), to make the two sides "dependent on each other" (Yao Yung-k'ang), to "divide them and combine them" (for they cannot be combined with division nor can they be divided without combination), and to call for "the inevitable unity and combination into one" of the two opposites" (P'an Ch'ing-pin). Let's ask: Can this method be used to resolve the contradictions between the peasants and the landlords? Can the peasants be urged to eliminate the landlord class in revolutionary ways?

The bourgeoisie and the proletariat are the two opposites. According to the method of "combination of two into one," in order to resolve the contradiction between them, it is necessary to develop unceasingly "division" and "combination" between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. "When this development reaches the stage at which the proletariat becomes the principal aspect of the contradiction, it will overthrow the capitalists at one stroke, thus bringing the struggle and unity of this kind of 'division' - 'combination' to a new turning point. That is, the capitalists are thoroughly eliminated, and the two aspects of the contradiction are 'combined into one.'" (P'an's article, words are underlined by quoter). The strange thing is that this is no longer a struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, and their "struggle" for "division -- combination," and the elimination of the bourgeoisie means not the overcoming of one aspect of the contradiction by the other aspect, but the "combination of two into one" for the two opposites of the contradiction." This proposition of Comrade P'an Ch'ing-pin is not a slip of the pen, but is the central theme of his whole article. In this article, he divorced himself from the concrete opposite in every place. Instead of talking about the struggle between opposites, he talks about division and combination, the struggle or unity of "division of one" and "combination of two," of antagonism and unity, and of unity and antagonism.

In short, the method of "division of one into two" tells us that in transforming things, it is necessary to resolve the contradiction by means of the struggle of opposites on the foundation of looking the contradiction in the face, and to bring about the transformation of the opposites in a direction favorable to the revolution. The theory of "combination of two into one" preaches the "inevitable unity" and "inevitable combination into one" of the opposites. What else is this if not the reconciliation of contradictions and the fusion of contradictions?

The theory of "combination of two into one" lays emphasis on "reconciliation of contradictions," and what it seeks to castrate is precisely the revolutionary spirit of dialectics. The antagonism between "division of one into two" and "combination of two into one" is the antagonism between revolutionary dialectics and the reconciliation of contradictions.

III. Does a Contradiction Run through a Process from End to End or Emerge at a Certain Stage?

Materialistic dialectics tells us that things always constitute a process of forward development. And any process owes its development to the interconnection of and the struggle between the two sides of a contradiction. At different stages of the process of development, the question of the easing or intensification of the contradiction arises. Some questions are temporarily or partially solved with the emergence and resolving of some contradictions determined or influenced by the basic contradiction of the process. This is the complexity of contradiction. However, there is in the world no process which is free from contradiction, nor is there any process which has contradiction at a certain stage but is free from contradiction at

another stage. "Contradiction is a process" and runs from end to end. When the basic contradiction in a certain concrete process is resolved, this process comes to the end, and a new process begins. This also means the beginning of the history of development of its own contradiction. Materialistic dialectics holds that every concrete process is different in quality, and every process has its own real history. The replacement of an old process by a new one is not an abstract "orderly substitution" devoid of content but the death of the old thing and the birth of the new thing, and the revolutionary change of the different opposites which constitute the old process into the opposites which constitute the new process.

Proceeding from this, we maintain that the theory of "combination of two into one" is unfit for application not only in the state of quantitative change but also in the state of qualitative change in the development of things. As to the use of the formulae of "division of one -- combination of two, redivision -- recombination" and "orderly replacement" to sum up the replacement of the old process by the new process, it is even less convincing. When Comrade P'an Ch'ing-pin talked about the law of the unity of opposites he said:

"The essence of this law of contradiction -- the natural law of the unity of opposites -- is 'division of one into two' and 'combination of two into one.' This kind of antagonism, unity, antagonism again, unity again; this kind of 'division' -- 'combination,' 'redivision' -- 'recombination'... and so on according to order, constitute the essence of the dialectical development and movement of objective things, for which we may not harbor any skepticism."

In order to give factual proof to the theory of "combination of two into one" which calls for "combination after division, and division after combination," Comrade P'an Ch'ing-pin also invented a certain incomplete process, citing an instance in which different processes are all mixed up. He wrote:

"We may give an instance for illustration: During the era of the downfall of the feudal society and the rise of capitalism, the capitalists workers and peasants formed one aspect of the class struggle, while the feudal nobility formed the other aspect of this struggle. The former overthrew the latter and built the capitalist society, and the feudal society and its rulers were eliminated. But as one aspect (capitalists, workers and peasants) of this struggle (contradiction) built the capitalist regime, this aspect was 'divided into two,' and what originally formed one aspect of the contradiction was divided into two aspects of a contradiction, thus giving rise to a pair of new opposites... This is the antagonism between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie in the capitalist society. This process is the process of "dividing one into two," but this process of dissolution has not come to the end. Through waging class struggle in the capitalist society, the proletariat is bound to grow strong, to triumph, and to be transformed into the principal aspect of the contradiction, and the capitalists are bound to be eliminated. Moreover, once this contradiction is transformed to the extent that the proletariat holds sway, the proletariat will eliminate the capitalists at one stroke, and build the socialist and communist society. In the communist society, it is obvious that this process of 'division of one into two' will make its way toward 'combination of two into one,' since the capitalists have been destroyed by the proletariat, and the capitalist vestiges have also been thoroughly eliminated."

If a formula is used to express this long discourse on "division of one" and "combination of two," it would run thus: During the era of the downfall of the feudal society and the rise of capitalism, the capitalists and the workers and peasants were "combined into one." The capitalists and the workers were "divided into two" when the bourgeoisie assumed State powers, but are "combined into one" again with the advent of the communist society. "Combination of two into one" -- "division of one into two" -- "combination of two into one" -- this is what the advocates of the theory of "combination of two into one" tell us concerning the formula of the development of a process.

However, there is nothing in common between this formula and Marxist dialectics. Comrade P'an Ch'ing-pin does not study such an entity as the capitalist society. He studies instead the "era" of the downfall of feudalism and the rise of capitalism. He does not study the antagonism between the landlords and the peasants in the feudal society, nor does he study the antagonism between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat in the capitalist society. He uses instead the special composition of class camps which emerged under given conditions in history as a pretext to manufacture data for his theory of "combination of two into one" between the capitalists and the workers. There is no other course open to him, for without taking this course, there is no way for him "to compose" the "combination of two into one" between the bourgeoisie and the working class.

He has forgotten, however, that even at the time the bourgeoisie opposed feudal absolutism, the third class formed by the workers and peasants with the bourgeoisie was not based on "combination of two into one," and there was also contradiction between the working class and the bourgeoisie. The contradiction between labor and capital and the "division of one into two" did not emerge after the seizure of State powers by the bourgeoisie; they have been in existence ever since a relationship was formed between labor and capital. To say that there was no "division of one into two," or that there was only difference but no contradiction between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat before the seizure of State powers by the bourgeoisie is obviously to negate the universality of contradiction. When the Deborinists analyzed the French Revolution in those years, did they not profess that there was only difference and no contradiction in the third class formed by the workers, the peasants and the bourgeoisie? Has not comrade Mao Tse-tung criticized in his "On Contradiction" this view that a contradiction emerges only at a certain stage of a process? (See the Chapter "The Universality of Contradiction" in "On Contradiction").

Apart from this, Comrade P'an Ch'ing-pin has also forgotten to give one a clear and definite idea of what entity or concrete process he is studying. In other words, what does "one" in "division of one into two" or "one" in "combination of two into one" refer to? Does it refer to "the era?" This does not seem to be the case. Does it refer to "the third class?" This also does not seem to be the case. Is it the feudal society? It does not seem to be the case. Is it the capitalist society? There is still less likelihood. Therefore, what he studies is not a concrete process of the form of a certain society. What he studies is a process of the form of a certain society. What he studies is a process that spans over several eras. In the feudal society, the bourgeoisie had not seized State powers and at that time the proletariat and the bourgeoisie were "combined into one." After the seizure of State powers by the bourgeoisie, the process of "division of one into two" began. This "process of dissolution" of capitalists and workers will last up to the communist society when "two are combined into one" again, for with "the elimination of the capitalists," "the two opposites of the contradiction" are "combined into one." (Words are underlined by quoter).

As we see it, however, different qualitative processes cannot be mixed with one another. Different constituent opposites which form different processes cannot be viewed in the same light. If a new process has begun, then this new process is by no means the outcome of "combination of two into one," that is, the combination of the two opposites of the contradiction in the old process, but is one in which one aspect of the contradiction in the old process has triumphed over the other aspect, thus bringing this old process to an end with the contradiction resolved and replacing it with a new process. For example, the basic constituent opposites of the capitalist process -- the antagonism between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat -- replace the basic constituent opposites of the feudal society -- the antagonism between the landlords and the peasants. Comrade Mao Tse-tung said: "What is the emergence of a new process? It is that the old unity and its constituent opposites yield place to a new unity and its constituent opposites, and the new process then emerges in place of the old. The old process is completed and the new one emerges. The new process in its turn contains a new contradiction, and the history of the development of its own contradiction begins." (See the Chapter "The Universality of Contradiction" in

"On Contradiction"). In this connection, the new is distinguished from the old, the constituent opposites are distinguished from each other, the completion of the old process is distinguished from the emergence of the new process. In one word, processes are different in quality, and each concrete process has a "history of the development of its own contradiction."

Before the Chinese revolution seized State powers throughout the country, the revolutionary process was that of new democracy, and the basic constituent opposites of this process were the masses and the three major enemies. But even at that time, there was also contradiction between the proletariat and the national bourgeoisie, and the two were not "combined into one." The founding of the People's Republic of China marked the beginning of the process of socialist revolution, and in this process, as far as the domestic situation is concerned, the principal elements of opposites are the contradiction between the working class and the bourgeoisie and the struggle between the two roads to capitalism and socialism. The processes are different, and the elements of opposites that constitute the different processes are also different. Although there is antagonism between the proletariat and the national bourgeoisie during the period of democratic revolution or the period of socialist revolution, yet a new problem cannot be viewed in the old light. Not only are processes different in quality, even the standing of constituent opposites in different process and the constituent opposites themselves are also different. For example, after the beginning of the process of socialist revolution, the proletariat has seized State powers throughout the country, and become the master of the country. Changes in economic standing have also transformed the proletariat into the working class (that is to say, they are no longer paupers). Under the concrete conditions of China, although the national bourgeoisie still comes under the category of a contradiction among the people, yet in the revolutionary process, it exists as a class to be eliminated.

Therefore, we do not approve the theory of "combination of two into one" which confounds various processes, nor do we approve the method of mixing the constituent opposites of the new and old processes as one. Proceeding from this, we also never approve the formula of "combination-division-combination" which is built exactly on the foundation of leaving the original opposite aspects intact. We also oppose the assertion that these things are dialectics.

The communist society is a new process of the future. But at that time, there will also be many constituent opposites as well as contradictions in this new process. A communist society without classes is itself the outcome of the old process, that is, the class struggle throughout the transition period. Its emergence is due to the ultimate victory of socialism in the struggle between the two roads to capitalism and socialism. It is not the result of "uniting" two aspects of the contradiction "into one." To deny the idea that there are still class contradiction and class struggle in the transition period and that there will still be contradiction between the advanced and the backward at the higher phase of communism is to deny the universality of contradiction and the dialectics.

The new and old processes are different in quality, and their constituent opposites are also different. It is precisely because of this that as far as we are concerned, the important thing is to study how the new and old processes are "divided one into two" and what are the characteristics of the new and old processes and their constituent opposites, to study the particularity of contradiction, and to persist in the universality of contradiction. An abstract formula of "combination of two into one -- division of one into two -- combination of two into one" cannot be used to obliterate the qualitative confines of things, and to take the place of the concrete analysis of different processes.

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Summing up the above, "division of one into two" is a scientific world outlook and methodology. It is scientific because it reflects objective dialectics. As a scientific methodology, "division of one into two" requires us to look forward, to see contradictions in unified things, and to take into account the unity and struggle of opposites and the transformation of opposite under given conditions.

From the great events at home and abroad down to our routine work, things are always "divided from one into two." Therefore, any phenomenon can be analyzed. There is nothing in the world that cannot be analyzed, no person that cannot be analyzed, for all phenomena are "divided into two."

The object of analyzing things is to reform things, to create conditions for the transformation of opposites in a way favorable to the revolution so that the revolutionary goal may be achieved. When we have made some achievements in work, "division of one into two" can prevent us from becoming conservative and making no further progress because of our achievements. When we come across certain difficulties or suffer setbacks in work, "division of one into two" can make us see the positive factors and create conditions for overcoming the difficulties. When we use the viewpoint of "division of one into two" to observe the phenomena of the different kinds of class struggles in the international arena, we shall understand that the revisionist activity to betray and split the international communist movement is not a strange phenomenon, but a reflection of the realistic class struggle. When we employ the method of "division of one into two" to examine and deal with our different kinds of problems in practical work, we can put forward revolutionary methods and measures on the foundation of looking squarely into and scientifically analyzing the different kinds of contradictions in objective existence, and implement with greater consciousness the guidelines and policies of the Party. We can on the foundation of finding out the "difference" (that is, contradiction) learn from the advanced and help those lagging behind, and launch the "compare, learn, overtake and help" campaign on a broader front and to a greater depth. We can, on the basis of the objective laws governing the development of things, give maximum play to the subjective conscious activity, and better integrate the revolutionary spirit with down-to-earth work. All this is essentially in the interests of revolution. "Division of one into two" gives concentrated expression to the revolutionary spirit of materialistic dialectics. Dialectics is essentially "revolutionary and critical." It holds that the stability of all processes is relative, and the change of one process into another process is absolute. It holds that the results of the struggle of opposites tend without exception to transform themselves into the opposite under given conditions, and dialectical transformation is always a revolutionary change and a qualitative leap. Because of this, as a scientific methodology, "division of one into two" is also revolutionary. Scientific and revolutionary unity is the essence of "division of one into two."

As an opposite to "division of one into two," "combination of two into one" is not dialectics. It is unscientific, much less revolutionary. This is because the most essential things which make dialectics scientific and revolutionary have been obscured by the theory of "combination of two into one." The theory of "combination of two into one" denies the unity of subjective and objective dialectics, the unity of world outlook and methodology. It splits apart the two aspects of knowing the world and transforming the world which give unity to methodology, describing the former as "division of one into two," and the latter as "combination of two into one." It rejects the idea that contradiction is inherent in things, and on the basis of proceeding from an incorrect presupposition, uses "combination of two into one" to "give shape" to contradiction. It uses the concept of the identity of contradictions as pretext to procure "a place" for "combination of two into one," but it denies transformation in practice. It denies the absoluteness of the struggle of contradictions but makes unity absolute, thus inevitably leading to the denial of the internal motive force in the development of things. The theory of "combination of two into one" also speaks for the reconciliation and fusion of contradictions, and even directly denies contradiction. This theory of "combination of two into one" cannot make people understand with greater "thoroughness" the law of the unity of opposites. On the contrary, it can only castrate the revolutionary spirit and essence of materialistic dialectics.

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