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RECTIFICATION

Opposing Ideologies Cannot "Combine Two Into One"

by

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Comrade Yang Hsien-chen holds that opposing ideologies also "combine two into one." He says: "To learn dialectics is to learn the ability to join together two opposing thoughts." He also says: Dialectics aim to "seek the unity while preserving the difference" between opposites and "search out a common point." According to this, the ideologies of the bourgeoisie and the proletariat can be "joined together" and can possess "points in common." Is this viewpoint not extremely preposterous?

During a certain period in the past, because I lacked vigilance against the bourgeois ideology of seeking fame and position for myself, I relaxed the ideological struggle, vainly hoped to "combine" the idea of serving the people with that of winning individual fame and position, and to live a "peaceful coexistence," and I followed a winding path. I will now use my own personal experience to refute Comrade Yang Hsien-chen's errors.

After graduating from senior middle school in 1962, I started to do commercial work. On entering the store, I thought that since I was a senior middle school graduate, I could work in the general office. But I was assigned to the storage and shipping department as a keeper of stores; I not only received goods and shipped them out, but I also had to push carts out into the place of business. There was then a sickness in my thinking, for I believed that to have me do this sort of physical labor was truly "putting great talent to little use." I thought: If I had known of this type of work before, I would rather have stayed at home to do private study and to wait for a chance to get into college to become an engineer or a specialist. I would then have been well trained and would have had a position of some standing also. How much better that would be! At times I would hear comrades say: "We should do our jobs and like them whatever they may be. We should ardently love the work of keeper of stores." I thought that this was not right.

I thought: To hold such a job is of course to serve the people, but isn't one similarly serving the people as an engineer or specialist? If I could both serve the people and satisfy my personal desire for fame and position, wouldn't I be killing two birds with one stone?

It is very clear that my idea at that time was to "join together" the two opposing ideas of serving the people and satisfying my own desire for fame and position. I energetically tried to find "points in common" between them in defense of myself. I also understood in theory that under the socialist system, all positions were in service of the people, and that one shouldn't pick and choose. Therefore, at the team meetings, when I spoke, I was always unwilling to expose my own thoughts, fearing that I would give myself away. However, in the deep recesses of my mind, I was always first of all considering my own "position," "face," and so forth. I was reluctant to cut myself off from the fame and position idea.

What were the results of my "joining together" two opposing ideas?

Because the idea of personal fame and position was troubling me, I was not enthusiastic about my job; I was afraid of getting tired and dirty, and I did only light work and avoided heavy chores. Sometimes when I carried goods to the market and the supervisor said to me that the color was good and that he wanted to have it changed. I did not care if we had different colors in the warehouse or not, but would say curtly: "We have only this kind; if you don't believe me, go get the goods yourself." At that time, I caused loss to the store's business because my heart was not in my job. It is very evident that with regard to the idea of personal fame and position and that of serving the people, the word "selfish" describes the former and the words "public spirited" describe the latter. It is not as Comrade Yang Hsien-chen has said that one can find "points in common" between them. If one relaxes the struggle against the idea of fame and position, one will not only not be able to serve the people well, but one will also cause harm to the interest of the state and the people.

Just at this time, my advisor instructed me in a timely way, and the organization called a discussion forum of young workers. The Party branch secretary said at the meeting: "In our socialist country, no matter whether you work at this job or that, you are still serving the people; there is no distinction of high and low jobs." His talk greatly enlightened me, and reminded me of Comrade Liu Shao-ch'i's speech to the sanitary workers: "You are serving the people as sanitary workers, and I am a servant of the people as Chairman. The only difference is a revolutionary division of labor." So, an ideological struggle started in my mind: Do I want to serve the people, or satisfy my own desire for fame and position? Could these two ideas be "combined"? With this in mind, I studied the works of Chairman Mao, and I learned that to serve the people one must do it whole-heartedly, "proceeding from the interests of the people" and not from the interests of the individual or a clique. (On Coalition Government) I then told myself that Chairman Mao said that "everything must start from the interests of the people," and yet my ideas such as a job being "inglorious," "a waste of talent," and "having no future" actually started from the interests of the individual. One thing must take precedence; one either first considers the Party and the people, or one considers first oneself. How can these two diametrically opposed viewpoints be reconciled?

Later, with the help of the Party and my comrades, and after repeated ideological struggle, I finally gradually overcame the bourgeois idea of fame and position, and established the beginning of a viewpoint of serving the people. It is strange but as soon as my thinking was clear, my work activism rapidly increased, and in my work I was not afraid of getting tired. I began to take the initiative, became enthusiastic, patient, and took care of everything. I also made some initial successes in my job.

The tortuous path which I followed in the past fully shows: The idea of serving the people is diametrically opposed to the idea of fame and position, and the two cannot tolerate each other. My former idea of "both wanting to serve the people and to satisfy my desires for fame and position," in actuality an idea of "combining" two opposites, was completely erroneous. This is because one cannot

simultaneously serve the people wholeheartedly and half-heartedly also. Either one serves the people wholeheartedly, or one does it half-heartedly and hesitantly and then gradually falls into the swamp of individualism. The proletarian ideology definitely cannot "peacefully coexist" with the bourgeois ideology; there can be no "mutual existence and mutual glory." The contradictions of different ideologies cannot "exist together." It is only by revealing them and unfolding ideological exchanges that the proletarian ideology will overcome the bourgeois ideology. Otherwise, if we were to act as Comrade Yang Hsien-chen has advised and "combine two into one," then the breach made by bourgeois ideology would become greater and greater, and finally there would be a "merging" into bourgeois ideology. In the drama "The Younger Generation," Lin Yu-sheng, because he has been afflicted by the poison of bourgeois individualism and has let it spread, finally reaches a point where he forges a doctor's license to avoid construction work in another area. Is that not a good mirror to hold up?

"If we don't destroy, we cannot build." This is a truth in the struggle to "promote the proletariat and destroy the bourgeoisie." However, today when the socialist revolution is gradually deepening, Comrade Yang Hsien-chen publicly proclaims that opposing ideas must "join together" and that we must "seek unity and preserve differences." His goal, very clearly, is to oppose "promoting the proletariat and destroying the bourgeoisie," to oppose thought reform, and to allow the bourgeoisie to draw our younger generation to their side. This is a sugar-coated bullet of the bourgeoisie; it is a "theory" to open wide the gate of opportunity for them. We absolutely must not fall into their trap.

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