

RECTIFICATION

Smash Yang Hsien-chen's Erroneous Theory That Opposes
Socialism

- Notes of a Forum Held by Old Workers of the Peiyang Cotton Mills in Tientsin in Criticism of the "Theory of the Comprehensive Economic Base" -

(Peking Ta-kung Pao Jan. 24, 1965)

The Struggle Between Capitalism and Socialism Is a Life-and-Death Struggle; How Can There Be Any "Balanced Development" or a "Merging into a Single Entity"?

Wang Hsiang-chen, Li Ping-ho, Wu Chia-ch'i, and others jointly pointed out that Comrade Yang Hsien-chen held that in our country's transition period the economic base included five economic elements and that capitalism and socialism were to be developed in a balanced way. This is to conceal class contradictions and to close one's eyes and not see the fact of the struggle between the two roads. In actuality, this view does not want us to engage in class struggle or to annihilate capitalism; it wants us to give up the policy of reform of capitalism and to abandon the struggle against the bourgeoisie. This is an erroneous theory opposing socialism, and we workers strongly oppose this.

Li Ping-ho said: The relation between the capitalists and the workers is that between exploiters and the exploited. Capitalists open factories in order to make money. At the age of 14, I became an apprentice, and no words could express the misery which I suffered. At that time the workers' dwellings were overrun with bugs as numerous as ants. All year long the capitalists would not let the apprentice workers go out of the gate; and even though the workers worked more than ten hours per day, they did not have enough to eat or to wear. To call on the capitalists to show "conscience" and not exploit people would be a myth to deceive people.

Li Ping-ho and Hsueh Shih-t'ien said: In order to make money, the capitalists swindled and fabricated, scamped work and cheated on materials. They were capable of anything. After the liberation, up to the time of introduction of joint state-private ownership of enterprises, they were still acting like this. They would substitute second-rate cotton for quality cotton and swindle the state. At times of weighing, if the bales of cotton were not heavy enough, they would tell the workers to pour water on it. There were losses, but the interests of the state and the people were never considered. How could the capitalist economy form part of the economic base for our building of socialism? We only know that we will go along with the Party and not be fooled by Yang Hsien-chen.

Wu Chia-ch'i and Wang Wen-kuei said: The Party's general line for the transition period has laid down tasks of reform of agriculture, handicraft industries, and capitalist industry and commerce. Every non-socialist economic aspect must be changed into a socialist one, and the oppressed, exploited working class must be thoroughly liberated. This represents our basic interests. Comrade Yang Hsien-chen said that every economic component "can develop in a balanced and mutually inter-related way." He means that the socialist economy and the capitalist economy can peacefully coexist. I believe that this view opposes the Party's general line and socialism.

When the Party adopts policies of using, restricting, and reforming capitalist industry and commerce, it is for the purpose of better destroying capitalism, and not to have peaceful competition. The bourgeoisie only pursues its own interests and is by nature exploitative. If we allow capitalism to develop, socialism will not be able to develop, and the interests of the state and the people will be harmed. In the "five-anti" movement of the past, the "five poisons" of the capitalists which were disclosed and the various crimes of traitorous merchants in trying to harm secretly the People's Volunteers are all effective proof of this. Judging by the way the capitalists accepted reform, we are sure that they had to be forced to do that. Under the conditions of the proletariat's seizure of political power and establishment of a strong dictatorship of the proletariat, bureaucratic capital was confiscated, agriculture was cooperativized, and the worker-peasant alliance was further consolidated, there was less and less room for capitalism, and the bourgeoisie was compelled to agree to joint public-private management. After this, the bourgeoisie was still not trustworthy, and given the opportunity, it would try to restore capitalism. The two economic systems of socialism and capitalism are completely opposed to each other and cannot achieve balanced development. Comrade Yang Hsien-chen's approach would have us workers always suffer oppression and exploitation. His is definitely not a proletarian theory and we must resolutely fight it.

Wang Hsiang-chen and Chang Hoi-chen said: Capitalism and socialism cannot exist together, and there is a life-and-death struggle between them. In the past we all suffered oppression and exploitation by the capitalists. In the old society, unscrupulous business people would try to harm you in every possible way. At times the food stores would be full, but they would not sell because they were waiting for prices to rise. When floods and drought came, they all the more seized the chance to make money immorally. The poor people suffered all the more and countless numbers died. Now, we lived through consecutive years of natural disasters, and prices were stable and production rapidly recovered. This fully demonstrates the superiority of the socialist system, and the awesome power of the three red banners.

If we had not undertaken reform of capitalist industry and commerce, the capitalists would be causing trouble. They would be using every opportunity to carry out large-scale speculative activities, to hoard goods and cause prices to rise. Thus socialist economy would necessarily meet with destruction, and how could the people's livelihood be as stable as it is today? It is only by annihilating capitalist economy that we can consolidate socialism.

Li Ping-ho and Hsiung Meng-yang said: The standpoints of the workers and capitalists are different, and there will be struggle over things both large and small. Before the liberation, there was only one small area for the medical room at the Pei-yang Cotton Mills. When the workers injured themselves and went there, they first had to wait, and then were indifferently given a small amount of medication and that was all. What the outcome was was not the factory's concern. After the liberation, under the Party's leadership, the workers waged struggle and finally built a hospital building. We traded our labor for this building, and everyone calls it the "happiness-prosperity building." However, the capitalists say that they showed their conscience and had it built for the workers. They inscribed on the walls the names of those on the board of directors to prove that the building was theirs. See, even in such an affair, the workers and capitalists cannot get together, much less anything else. How can we "peacefully coexist" and obliterate class struggle?

Capitalists Seek Only Profit and Don't Care If Workers Live or Die; They Block the Development of Productive Forces.

Hsiung Meng-yang and Wang Hsiang-chen said: When capitalists hire people, it's to get profit from their persons, and when they can no longer do this, or when the profit is small, they no longer want them. Their attitude to the workers is this: After the teacher has instructed the pupil, the teacher should be kicked aside. They don't want the old, they don't want the little ones, nor the weak ones; they throw out the sick and the disabled, and do not care whether workers live or die. Under these conditions, who could work well for him? If we don't annihilate capitalism, there will be a great hindrance to the development of the productive forces.

Chang Hui-chen said: The capitalists' oppression of the workers was fierce! No one cared about production safety in working in the factory. Before the liberation, I saw the following incident with my own eyes in the Pei-yang Cotton Mills: once the wife of a capitalist running dog fell ill and needed a blood transfusion. So as to save money, he told the workers to take turns in going to the hospital to give blood. The outcome was that some got sick and couldn't go to work, while others died of sickness. At that time, the workers worked very warily, without any activism. As long as capitalism exists, we workers will not be liberated, work activism will not be developed, and society will not advance.

After liberation, the Party formulated the general line and all capitalist industry and commerce was put under joint public-private management. The workers became masters of their own houses and their activism was particularly high and they carried on production according to the needs of the state and the people. Everyone consciously thought up ways to raise the quality of the products, to lower costs, and production developed rapidly. The employees at the Pei-yang Cotton Mills have already developed production to seven or eight times that of pre-liberation times, and this is a result obtained under the brilliant radiance of the general line. Comrade Yang Hsien-chen opposes the Party's general line; this is something we could never agree with.

Political Power Is a Tool for Class Struggle; The Dictatorship of the Bourgeoisie Served Capitalism. The Dictatorship of the Proletariat Serves Socialism. We Definitely Cannot "View Both in the Same Light"

Wang Wen-kuei and Wu Chia-ch'i said: Any political power serves a definite class, and in the past when the exploiting class had political power, it exploited and oppressed the workers. After liberation, the working class seized the seal of power and only then transformed itself. Comrade Yang Hsien-chen says: The socialist

superstructure cannot serve only one type of economy; the socialist and capitalist economies should both "be viewed with equal benevolence." This means that the working class should be served and the capitalists served as well. If we acted according to his ideas, we would let capitalism develop and let the capitalists exploit the workers at will. We wouldn't need to struggle against the "five poisons" of the capitalists, and we wouldn't worry about a capitalist restoration. We could consider class revenge by the capitalists as a neighborly dispute and handle it by "viewing both with equal benevolence." With this idea of Comrade Yang Hsien-chen, neither class boundaries or class struggle can be seen. Will this not change the nature of the dictatorship of the proletariat? What guarantee then would be around for the interests of the working class?

Hsiung Meng-yang said: Under the Party's leadership, after several decades of struggle, we workers first grasped the handle of the sword and the bourgeoisie was overthrown. We must definitely safeguard our political power and we cannot have "two combine into one."

In the old society, the sword handle was in the hands of the exploiting class and the empire was theirs. In walking along the streets, the workers had to walk to one side near the walls; in going to and coming home from work, the workers and capitalists could not use the same gate; they used the front gate, and we used the back gate. Once, a worker made a mistake in taking the wrong way. After the head of the guards learned of this, he dragged him out before the front of the gate, strung him up and beat him. The capitalists were so severe that even the wild vegetables around the plant grounds could not be picked. Once, a worker plucked a few wild vegetables. After this was discovered, the worker was kicked. The police and officials at that time were all protecting the interests of the capitalists.

When Comrade Yang Hsien-chen proposes that the proletarian state political power can also serve capitalism, he is in fact calling on us to hand over again the handle of the sword which was seized by us only after decades of bloody sacrifices. He is calling on us to return to the path of accepting oppression and humiliation, we resolutely oppose this.

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