

PROLETARIAN DICTATORSHIP AND PROLETARIAN
EXTENSIVE DEMOCRACY

[Following is a translation of an article by T'an Hou-lan (6223 0624 5695), Ching-kang Mountain Commune of Peking Normal University, in the Chinese-language periodical, Hung-ch'i (Red Flag), Peiping, No 2, 16 January 1967, pages 37-39.]

"Thousands of willows sway in the spring breeze; all the 600 million people of the divine country are Shun or Yao."

In this thunderous and heroic great proletarian cultural revolution, millions of the revolutionary masses in our great country have tasted the first time extensive democracy in human history. The revolutionary people enjoy democracy in speech, in holding meetings and making demonstrations, in publishing publications and in freedom of association. They can air their views and conduct debates in a big way, put up wall posters, establish revolutionary ties and exchange revolutionary experience.

Looking through the history of human civilization over several thousand years, in which dynasty or in which country had there been such extensive democracy? No, absolutely not. The bourgeoisie and the counter-revolutionary revisionists sometimes also talk loudly about democracy and freedom, but all of such talks are sheer lies for deceiving people. As far as the proletariat is concerned, they mean exploitation, oppression and fascist dictatorship.

Our great leader Chairman Mao has utmost faith in the masses. He understands best the wishes of the popular masses and respects most the revolutionary creative spirit of the popular masses. It is precisely our most respected and beloved leader Chairman Mao who first supports the revolutionary wall posters, the revolutionary Red Guards and the establishment of revolutionary ties and the exchange of revolutionary experience. Only so great a Marxist-Leninist and so ingenious a

revolutionary leader of the proletariat as Chairman Mao can display such a great spirit and can give birth to extensive democracy under the conditions of proletarian dictatorship.

Extensive democracy of the proletariat is great in that it is the first of its kind in the international communist movement, and is a great development of the Marxist-Leninist doctrine by Chairman Mao.

Proletarian extensive democracy means making masters of the masses of the people. The question of primary importance in extensive democracy is to arouse the masses with a free hand, to give the people the most extensive democratic rights, and to exercise dictatorship over all enemies of socialism.

With such extensive democracy, the broad masses can be aroused to the full extent to rebel against all forms of revisionism and all reactionaries, thus leaving the enemies no place to hide themselves.

With such extensive democracy, we can bring into great play the revolutionary spirit of the masses and fully arouse the activism of the masses for socialist revolution and socialist construction.

With such extensive democracy we can bring into being a social custom, and the common laborers can criticize the leading organs of the Party and the government and the people responsible for them.

With such extensive democracy, the hundreds of millions of the masses can supervise our Party and government leaders at all levels as well as our Party and government organs at all levels.

The development of proletarian extensive democracy is of great and far-reaching significance toward consolidating the dictatorship of the proletariat and guarding against capitalist restoration.

The extensive democracy we refer to is extensive democracy under proletarian dictatorship. Proletarian dictatorship and proletarian extensive democracy are unity of opposites. Without proletarian dictatorship, there is no guarantee for proletarian extensive democracy. For the same reason, if there is no proletarian extensive democracy, proletarian dictatorship also cannot be consolidated, and may even degenerate to become bourgeois dictatorship or fascist dictatorship.

The reason that our country can enforce such extensive democracy is that we have a consolidated dictatorship of the proletariat and the invincible People's Liberation Army. At a time when the struggle between the two classes and the two roads still exists, any departure from proletarian dictatorship will mean that we are not in position to talk about proletarian extensive democracy. This is especially so during the present scrimmage between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie.

Proletarian dictatorship must closely coordinate dictatorship over the counter-revolutionaries with extensive democracy for the people. Proletarian dictatorship is powerful because it stands for the dictatorship of the working masses over the exploiters and the dictatorship of the majority over the minority, and also because it brings into being extensive democracy for the broad working people. Divorced from the criticism and supervision of the broad masses and their active support, there cannot be any proletarian dictatorship -- at least there cannot be any consolidated proletarian dictatorship. The more intense the class struggle is, the greater is the need for the proletariat to rely most resolutely and thoroughly on the broad masses of the people and to mobilize their revolutionary activism to triumph over the reactionary forces.

Of late, a tiny handful of power holders who are taking the capitalist road within the Party and an extremely small number of diehards who cling to the bourgeois reactionary line are not reconciled to their defeat. Working in collusion with the monsters and demons in society, they launch frantic counter-attacks against the proletarian revolutionary line in the attempt to undermine the great proletarian cultural revolution, proletarian extensive democracy and proletarian dictatorship. In the name of extensive democracy, they arbitrarily accuse the proletarian revolutionaries of all kinds of crimes and direct the brunt of the struggle toward the proletarian command post. Finding that this is beyond their tolerance, the broad revolutionary masses have exercised dictatorship over the tiny handful of bad eggs at the head.

This revolutionary measure has greatly strengthened the determination of the revolutionaries and dampened the arrogance of the reactionaries. The revolutionaries jump with joy and applaud it. But the tiny handful of clowns are enraged. They become hysterical and viciously assail our revolutionary action.

"You have undermined extensive democracy!" Because we exercise dictatorship over the clowns who bombard the proletarian command post, you call this the sabotage of extensive democracy. It can be seen that the democracy you have in mind is bourgeois democracy. Dear sirs, we indeed want to undermine such "democracy."

Chairman Mao taught us: "There is in the world only concrete freedom, concrete democracy, but no abstract freedom, abstract democracy. In the society of class struggle, when the exploiting classes are free to exploit the working people, the latter have no freedom from exploitation, and when there is bourgeois democracy, there is no democracy for the proletariat and the working people." The case can only be for one to eliminate the other, and there can be no compromise. By eliminating bourgeois democracy to a greater extent and with greater thoroughness, proletarian democracy will greatly expand. As the bourgeoisie sees it, this means no democracy in this country or sabotage of democracy. Actually this is eradicating what is bourgeois and promoting what is

proletarian, and the promotion of proletarian democracy means the eradication of bourgeois democracy.

"You have contravened the freedom of speech!" Dear sirs, you are right. We mean to forbid the reactionaries to speak and act in an unruly way. Our freedom is given only to the people, but not the reactionaries. Anybody among the people can say what he wants to say, write wall posters against other persons, and put up such posters in whatever place he chooses. Just look at our factories, organs, schools, rural villages and city streets, and you will find wall posters everywhere. Let us ask: In which country is there so high a degree of freedom or democracy?

"You have no faith in the masses!" This is completely nonsense! You tiny handful of counter-revolutionaries are definitely not the "masses," and we absolutely have no faith in you. Our taking sanctions against you bad eggs is in compliance with the demand of the broad revolutionary masses, and is a manifestation of our great faith in the masses.

In refutation of renegade Kautsky, Lenin said:

"With the attitude of a learned bookworm or the innocence of a ten-year-old girl, Kautsky asked: Since you have the support of the majority, why is dictatorship still necessary? Marx and Engels explained:

"-- in order to break the resistance of the bourgeoisie.

"-- in order to strike fear in the reactionaries.

"-- in order to uphold the authority of the armed people to oppose the bourgeoisie.

"-- in order to enable the proletariat to suppress their own enemies with brute force."

These teachings of Lenin's were beyond the comprehension of renegade Kautsky, and are also beyond the comprehension of our clowns who attack us of "having no faith in the masses." Only genuine revolutionaries can comprehend them.

Some muddle-headed people always adopt the philistine view toward the current life-and-death class struggle. They fail to see the class contradiction and the great struggle of the two lines. They do not understand why we are so resolved in repulsing the frantic attack of the tiny countercurrent against the revolution. They say: "Why must dictatorial means be adopted when other people make known their views?" They see only the phenomenon but not the essence of things.

When some comrades among the people make known their views, even though they are radical and harsh, we must humbly heed what they say. But those fellows with an ulterior object in view actually attack the

proletarian command post in the name of criticism. Their criminal aim must be exposed. Otherwise we would be trapped.

Chairman Mao taught us: Democracy is a means but not the end. We use this means of extensive democracy to attain the great end of making a success of the great proletarian cultural revolution, of consolidating the dictatorship of the proletariat and of developing the socialist cause. Only the strengthening of proletarian dictatorship can safeguard proletarian extensive democracy. Anybody who wants to bombard the revolutionary command post of the proletariat and to undermine the dictatorship of the proletariat in our country is a pipe-dream which can never be done!

Right now, the great proletarian cultural revolution has entered a new stage. The proletarian revolutionaries must warmly respond to the great call of the Party and Chairman Mao and learn from the Shanghai revolutionaries. Let the proletarian revolutionaries unite, tighten their grip on the destiny of the proletarian dictatorship, the destiny of the great proletarian cultural revolution and the destiny of the socialist economy, and fight for repulsing the new counter-attack of the bourgeois reactionary line and winning a new victory in the great cultural revolution.

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