

Politics Must Take Command Over Work

Following is the second "Renmin Ribao" editorial (April 14) on putting politics first. The first editorial, "Putting Politics First Is Fundamental to All Work," appeared in our issue No. 17 (April 22). — Ed.

WHAT is the correct way to understand and handle the relationship between politics and the particular work one does? Should politics come first, or should it be neglected and work be placed first? This is a vital question affecting the success or failure of China's revolution and construction.

The overthrown class enemy inevitably attempts a come-back. In the struggle for production, in scientific experiment and in the realm of ideology (for instance, in literature and art, history, philosophy, economics, education and journalism), bourgeois elements and bourgeois intellectuals hostile to socialism, on the strength of their "professional knowledge," always pretend to be detached from politics, as if they have "no interest in politics," while spreading all kinds of preposterous views stressing work and belittling politics so as to confuse the masses, usurp the leadership in work and side-track it on to the capitalist road. Some comrades, because of the influence of bourgeois ideas or a lack of a clear understanding, often have blind faith in bourgeois specialists and professors, put work above politics, and consciously or unconsciously develop a purely technical viewpoint. They immerse themselves in their jobs and pay no attention to politics, and so lose sight of the correct direction for their work that it may even end up on the wrong track.

If politics is not put first, if it is not put in command over the particular work one does, if the tendency among some of our comrades to put work above politics is not overcome and a resolute struggle against the attempts of bourgeois elements and bourgeois intellectuals to usurp the leadership is not waged, the revolution and construction of our country will not be able to advance but will be seriously endangered.

The Relation Between Politics and Work

What then is the relation between politics and one's work? Politics determines the direction of advance, and the particular work one does serves as the means or the technique for carrying out the political direction. Politics should be in command of work; the latter is subordinate to and should serve the former. Politics, therefore, occupies the primary place and work the secondary place. This is true in all class societies.

In the capitalist countries, all work of the bourgeoisie is subordinate to bourgeois politics and serves it.

Every kind of work, whether military, economic, cultural, educational, or scientific or technical, serves to maintain the rule of the bourgeoisie and consolidate the capitalist system of exploitation and oppression. Because the interests of the bourgeoisie and those of the working people are diametrically opposed to each other, the bourgeoisie tries its best to cover up the relationship between politics and work, and describes its work as having nothing to do with politics, as being done for "the welfare of the people" and so on and so forth, in order to deceive the mass of the people.

In our socialist country, all work is subordinate to and serves proletarian politics. Our military, economic, cultural, educational, scientific and technical and other work are all part of the undertaking of the proletarian revolution. They are all done for the sake of the proletarian revolution, for the consolidation and development of the dictatorship of the proletariat and the socialist system, and for preparing full material and ideological conditions for the gradual transition to communism. This is a matter of fundamental direction. All our work must be done along this line and not depart from or run contrary to it.

Political Work in the Primary Place

Putting politics first and political work in the primary place means: we must make certain that all our work advances in line with proletarian politics and along the socialist road; we must make certain that the Party's principles and policies are correctly carried out and that the Party's absolute leadership in all our work is ensured; in all our work we must trust the masses and rely on them, bring their creative initiative into full play and put into practice the methods of leadership of "from the masses and to the masses"; in all our work we must adhere strictly to dialectical materialist views and methods and combat subjectivism and metaphysics and be good at summing up experience, constantly make discoveries and inventions and go on creating and advancing. The tendency to stress one's work and belittle politics is wrong because it will make our work lose its direction and run counter to the Party's principles and policies and deviate from Party leadership, and as a result, our work will be deprived of its soul and becomes quiescent, stagnant and lifeless. Thus, instead of developing, all our work will take the wrong path which leads away from socialism. Therefore, we must wage a constant and repeated struggle against this tendency. This is the primary question we must tackle at present in putting politics first.

Politics must take command over work means that it must find expression in work and be closely integrated with work. If this is not the case, then politics will become empty and political aims will not be realized. In that case, proletarian politics will lose its commanding role and bourgeois politics will take over our work. In our ceaseless struggles in the course of the socialist revolution on the economic, political and ideological fronts, we must try hard to train proletarian revolutionaries in every sphere of work who are both politically "red" and professionally expert. Under the command of proletarian politics, we must diligently study scientific knowledge and production techniques and do all work well. The view that to stress putting politics first means we can relax our grip on work and production is obviously a misconception.

At present, however, the main danger in various fields of work is the tendency to neglect politics, the tendency to stress work above politics. Certain defects in our work and in our political and ideological work have been used as pretexts for attacking putting politics first by those who oppose having politics in command. Our vigilance must be heightened against such a situation.

It must be understood that politics and work form a contradiction, and politics is the principal aspect in this contradiction. On the one hand, politics is the commanding factor, the soul. It determines the direction and the essence of the particular work involved in every calling. On the other hand, politics must find expression in work and be put into effect through work. Careful attention must be paid to integrating work with politics. The unity of politics and economics, of politics and technique, of politics and work—this allows for no doubt; it is true every time and for all time. This means that being "red" gives the impetus to becoming expert, that we should become both "red" and expert. This is the correct handling of the relationship between politics and one's work.

The reactionaries and bourgeois elements always accuse us Communists of "making a living out of politics" and "gaining success through politics." These lords and gentlemen are quite right. We Communists never hide our views. Since the day the Communist Party was founded, we have openly declared that we deal with politics, that we deal with class struggle. In the stage of democratic revolution, our Party led the country's broad masses in opposing the three big enemies—imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat-capitalism; this was dealing with politics, with class struggle. Even at that time we put proletarian politics first and put politics in command over our work in developing production, finance and trade, culture and education and all other fields of work in the base areas and liberated areas. In the stage of socialist revolution and construction, we carried out land reform, the *san fan* and *wu fan* movements,¹ the movement to suppress counter-revolutionaries; we carried out the socialist transformation of agriculture, handicrafts and capitalist industry and commerce and

subsequently set up people's communes in the countryside, while on the political and ideological fronts, a series of socialist revolutionary movements including the anti-Rightist struggle were carried out. Again, all this dealt with politics, with class struggle. It was precisely through putting politics first and taking a firm grip on class struggle that China made such rapid progress in economic construction and cultural, educational and other work. In recent years, in particular, we have further stressed the need for putting politics first, and have carried out a deep-going socialist education movement throughout the country and strengthened political and ideological work. As a result, there have been great achievements in the socialist revolution and socialist construction. All this proves that we must put politics first, and put politics in command of work. We have done so in the past, are doing so at present and must do so in the future.

The Most Serious Lesson in the International Communist Movement

In a socialist country, when the socialist revolution in the ownership of the means of production is in the main completed, if one considers classes eliminated and class struggle at an end, neglects the contradictions between the enemy and ourselves and the numerous contradictions among the people which actually exist, fails to distinguish between and correctly handle these two types of contradictions and fails to carry the socialist revolution on the political and ideological fronts through to the end; and if, on the question of building socialism, one considers that "cadres decide everything" or "technique decides everything," then in practice the tendency will arise to get immersed in work and pay no attention to politics, and a style of work such as commandism will develop which alienates one from the masses; the result will be that all kinds of bourgeois elements who have not been remoulded and degenerates will worm their way into various branches of work in the guise of "specialists" and "scholars" and seize the leadership in some places and some organizations. It is precisely under the slogans of "putting economics first," "putting technique first," "putting one's work first" and "putting specialists first," and by relying on the many bourgeois elements and degenerates who claim to be "specialists" and "scholars," that the Khrushchov revisionist clique usurped the leading positions in all spheres of work, and under the signboard of "building communism," is diverting work in all spheres on to the road of capitalist restoration. This is the most serious historical lesson in the international communist movement.

In the reality of our country today, bourgeois elements and bourgeois intellectuals who have not been

¹ The *san fan* movement in 1952 was directed against corruption, waste and bureaucracy among personnel in government institutions and state enterprises; the *wu fan* movement of the same year was against capitalist bribery of government employees, tax evasion, theft of state property, cheating on government contracts and stealing economic information for speculation.—Ed.

remoulded or who have not been sufficiently remoulded always attack us as being ignorant and uneducated, for knowing nothing about science and technology. They say such things as "laymen cannot lead experts" and attempt to take over leadership in literature and art, history, philosophy, economics, education, journalism and science and technology. They reject the political leadership of the proletariat and co-operate with us only in appearance. Whenever there is the chance, they break loose and oppose the Party, the people and socialism. Facts have shown that if we relax our vigilance and do not put politics first, do not insist on having politics take command over work, then our work in various fields may become tools for the bourgeoisie to make its come-back, our socialist cause may fail half way, and great disaster will befall our people. This is a question which we must pay constant attention to and must deal with seriously.

The task before us is one of correctly understanding and dealing with the inter-relationship between politics and work, of always putting politics first, of placing politics in the lead and making work subordinate to it. On the one hand, we must resolutely prevent bourgeois elements and bourgeois intellectuals from usurping the leadership in the various spheres of work; on the other hand, we must make the cadres and the masses understand the great significance of putting politics first and in command of one's work, so that they will strive to be politically "red" and, through this, to be professionally expert and consequently become both "red" and expert.

An Important Issue for Everyone

How to correctly treat and deal with the relation between politics and work is an important issue for every one of us. Because of the lack of a clear understanding, some comrades do not comprehend the unity of politics and work, and treat the two as separated and unrelated. They erroneously think that putting politics first is the business of the Party committees, the political departments, or the Party committee secretaries; that the administrative and the technical departments, county heads, factory directors, commune directors and the technical personnel need only do their jobs well. They do not understand that every type of work is a unity of politics and the particular job. There is no work without politics, and vice versa. If proletarian politics is not in command of any particular work, then bourgeois politics is. All political aims are inevitably achieved through particular work. To cut off politics from one's work, to think that one can be separated from the other runs completely counter to objective reality and is therefore erroneous. Although the concrete jobs and emphases of the work of the political, administrative and technical departments as well as of those who do political, administrative or technical work are different, yet the aim is the same—to make our country march along the socialist line. And the basic working method also is the same, that is, to persist in putting Mao Tse-tung's thinking

in command, to carry out the Party's principles and policies, to do ideological work, to have faith in and rely on the masses, and to mobilize their initiative. Therefore, putting politics first persistently should be done in every kind of work. If the administrative and technical work is divorced from politics, then this work cannot be done well, and what is more, it will make people immerse themselves in everyday work. As a result they will lose their bearing and get on a wrong track. No matter what the excuse, it is wrong to separate politics from one's work, to shirk the responsibility of putting politics first.

Since politics and work form a unity, then can we say that if one does his job well, he must also be strong in politics? No. Politics takes command over work, it is the soul. If one's political consciousness is high, one is sure to earnestly seek ways to master his job; his work must be good. But work is not an equivalent to politics. There are some comrades who have some professional skill, who may temporarily make some achievements in their work, but if they are not really strong in politics, then it is hard for them to continue to raise their professional skill or consolidate their achievements and continue making them. Since they are not really strong politically, these comrades, instead of working in the interest of the people, often do things in their own personal interest or in the interest of their own departments. They may even try to attain their personal aims by hook or by crook, work to benefit themselves at the expense of other people, and violate the Party's policies. If these comrades neglect politics, relax their efforts in ideological remoulding on the ground that they have some professional skill, then the danger of degeneration awaits them. Therefore no good work can be talked about if it is cut off from politics. Those who stress that being good in work is being good in politics want, in effect, to do away with the latter.

Some comrades think that politics is important and work is also important, fifty-fifty. This is also wrong. That politics must be in a commanding position has already been stated. It cannot be equated with one's work. Neither can both be shuffled about at different times like the banker in a card game. Politics, not work, should always take first place. This does not mean, of course, that we should not pay attention to work. The point is that we must persist in putting politics in command. If one only pays attention to his particular work, and cuts himself off from politics, then one cannot really do his job well. To put politics and one's work on an equal footing amounts to eclecticism in philosophy and opportunism in politics. Those who commit the error of eclecticism are not of the same category. Some are against putting politics first; they pay lip-service to it but do not carry it out in action. They disseminate a series of eclectic ideas to substitute work for politics, using the excuse that both are equally important. All of us should be vigilant against such people. Some comrades erroneously deem that politics is a means for accomplishing their work, so sometimes

they emphasize politics, and sometimes they cast it aside. They deal with politics when they have time; they ignore it when they are busy. This attitude towards putting politics first is a pragmatic one. The error is that these people do not regard putting politics first as something fundamental in raising the political consciousness of the masses and in accomplishing work. As a result of not fully understanding the significance of putting politics first, some other comrades pay attention to everything and every aspect of their work, giving priority to nothing. They do not place politics in command and do not take Mao Tse-tung's thinking as the guide to all work. They pay lip-service to putting politics in command, but actually they are trapped in the

quagmire of routinism. All these are extremely harmful and should be effectively corrected.

A big debate on the relation between politics and work is now taking place across the land. Through this debate, the cadres and masses will certainly be further revolutionized ideologically, and reach a clear understanding of the relation between politics and work. We must persevere in putting politics first and in putting it in command of any particular job. To persevere in putting politics first we must place Mao Tse-tung's thinking in command. In running military affairs, agriculture, industry, finance and trade, culture and education, science and technology, and all other work we must learn to proceed from politics.