Revolution Means Solving Contradictions

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I am a plumber. I began studying Chairman Mao's philosophical works in 1958. Armed with Chairman Mao's philosophical thinking, I've used it for more than ten years as my guide in the three great revolutionary movements — class struggle, the struggle for production and scientific experiment — and have overcome many difficulties and solved many contradictions on the road of continuing the revolution. Through practice I've come to understand that revolution means solving contradictions. Solving a small contradiction means a small victory, solving a big contradiction means a big victory, and continuously solving contradictions moans continuous victories.

Tackling Contradictions in a Revolutionary Spirit

As a boy, I hardly had any schooling because my family was very poor. So there were many difficulties when I first began studying Chairman Mao's philosophical works. I used to be frightened when someone said philosophy wasn't meant for people with little schooling and that only the educated could study it. "This can't be true," I thought. "Chairman Mao's works are written for the workers, peasants and soldiers. If we can't study them, who can?" Disregarding their discouraging talk, I kept at my studies and, linking them with practice, I learnt some basic concepts in Chairman Mao's philosophical works and understood many revolutionary truths.

In On Contradiction, Chairman Mao has taught us: "There is nothing that does not contain contradiction; without contradiction nothing would exist." Studying this teaching of Chairman Mao's in the light of revolutionary practice, 1 came to a still deeper understanding: There are contradictions among people and within the Party, and the whole world is full of contradictions without which nothing would exist. The course of revolution, therefore, is one of ceaselessly solving contradictions.

In the old society, we workers all had a family history of bitter suffering. Chairman Mao and the Chinese Communist Party led the Chinese people in overthrowing imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism in China which pressed down on them like three big mountains. Solution of the contradiction between the Chinese people and these three enemies won liberation for us and we became the masters of the country. Revolution means solving contradictions and solving contradictions means struggle. Whenever a contradiction is solved, the revolution advances and society progresses. In closely following Chairman Mao and continuing the revolution today, we are solving contradictions in the period of socialist revolution and carrying the revolution through to the end!

Contradictions are an objective reality. We must not steer clear of

contradictions that crop up in the course of the revolution, but the attitude we take to solve them should be an active one. In 1960, the Kirin Chemical Plant started building some acid-resisting towers with imported stainless steel. When the whole project was half finished, the Soviet revisionists tore up the contracts and refused to supply any material. They thought they could strangle us in this way. What should we have done? Chairman Mao taught us: "We the Chinese nation have the spirit to fight the enemy to the last drop of our blood, the determination to recover our lost territory by our own efforts, and the ability to stand on our own feet in the family of nations." I told myself: 'The Soviet revisionists have torn up the contracts, so what? We'll carry on without their material, and we'll do our job even better! We use stainless steel because it's acid-resistant. Glazed bricks also resist acid, why can't we use them to replace stainless steel?" We made many experiments proving that glazed bricks, which are durable and more economical, exactly served the purpose.

However, having solved one contradiction, we ran into another. Building a round acid-resisting tower required lots of glazed bricks cut to shape. At first, there was a lot of waste because none of the bricks we cut could be used. Was there any way to solve the problem? Seeing that some of the workers were a bit worried, 1 cheered them up by saying: "Don't worry. Where there's a contradiction, there's a way of solving it. Haven't we succeeded in substituting glazed bricks for stainless steel? Surely we'll find a way to solve the new contradiction arising from cutting glazed bricks."

Many suggestions were made, but neither metal are cutting nor gas cutting could do the job. When we tried using saws, that also didn't work; hardly had the saws made an impression on the surface of the bricks when their teeth were blunted. Some workers got discouraged at this point. Should we take the bull by the horns or cave in before this new contradiction? Relying on Chairman Mao's philosophical thinking, we pooled our collective wisdom and finally succeeded in making a glazed brick cutting machine which could cut dozens of bricks at once without any waste.

This machine, which helped solve the problem of cutting glazed bricks, couldn't handle glazed pipes. At this point, someone remarked: "'Let's get the necessary equipment from abroad before we go on with our work." I talked things over with my work-mates, and we agreed that since we could find a method to cut glazed bricks, we surely could make a machine to cut glazed pipes. Applying the same principle, we started to make one ourselves. In two weeks we turned out two glazed pipe cutters which cost us only 3.7 yuan whereas an imported cutter of this kind would cost 17,000 yuan. Moreover, our machine was ten times as efficient. It was able to cut a pipe in three minutes as against 30 minutes required by an imported machine. In this way we probed for the correct methods of doing things as we continued our work and, solving one contradiction after another, we soon completed the acid-resisting towers.

Solving contradictions is a struggle. Wherever there is struggle there is sacrifice. When we have fostered wholehearted devotion to the public interest, we will fear neither hardship nor death in the struggle to transform the objective world, and we will really consider it a great honour to sacrifice

for the cause of the revolution.

An accident during a scientific experiment injured both my eyes, and I was sent to Peking for treatment. While in hospital I heard that a chemical plant there badly needed a large number of bends (pipe elbows), but there were no concrete measures yet for meeting the need. The news made me restless in bed. Refusing to be dissuaded, I bought a train ticket and returned to my factory. When I told my comrades of the plant's urgent need and the significance of supplying the necessary bends, they said: "We'll make Chinese-designed bends and win honour for Chairman Mao. Well do the job."

The workers took their bedding to the shops and worked day and night without letting difficulties stand in their way. My eyes became bloodshot and got worse. But when the comrades tried to talk me into going back to the hospital for treatment, 1 replied: "We have to be tough if we want to make revolution." All of us persisted in the battle and in 27 days we built three hydraulic presses for making the bends, thereby fulfilling the important task of aiding our fraternal plant ahead of time.

Practice has helped me get a deep understanding of the great truth of Chairman Mao's teaching: "The ceaseless emergence and ceaseless resolution of contradictions is the dialectical law of the development of things." The attitude of revolutionary workers towards contradictions is to struggle against them. We rely on the thoroughgoing revolutionary spirit of fearing neither hardship nor death to struggle against heaven and earth and the class enemies. This is our proletarian outlook on contradictions.

Analyse and Solve Contradictions

Chairman Mao has taught us: "This dialectical world outlook teaches us primarily how to observe and analyse the movement of opposites in different things and, on the basis of such analysis, to indicate the methods for resolving contradictions." Human society progresses in the course of continually knowing and resolving contradictions. Wisdom comes from practice and skill from work. We the proletariat must use Chairman Mao's philosophical thinking to continuously blaze new trails through practice to arrive at the truth.

At one time, the draining ditch In the Kirin Calcium Carbide Plant was all but clogged up with chemical sludge. Production would be held up if it was not removed promptly. As the ditch was some four kilometres long, ten metres wide and about two metres deep, it would take several hundred workers one year to clear it out. With only 12 men in our group, it was very difficult for us to do such a heavy job within a short time.

How should we have solved this contradiction? Some suggested using a suction pump. However, this could only drain off the water but not the sludge. We thought about building a dredger, but none of us had ever seen one. Chairman Mao has taught us: "There arc no such things as difficulties for Communists, for they can surmount them." We are vanguard fighters of the proletariat; if we use materialist dialectics as our sharp weapon, we'll be able to take any fortress by storm. Since we are workers with practical experience, we surely could find a way to remove the sludge if we used our brains and thought hard while doing our work.

First we studied steam boats. When the propellers revolve, they push the

water back, and the reaction of the water moves the boat forward. However, the water is not pushed back very far. To make a boat able to push the water ashore, a method has to be found to collect it in a mass. This, of course, cannot be done by an ordinary boat. So we thought about jet planes. Like steam boats, they go forward on the principle of the reaction of forces. These planes have combustion chambers; they take in air through orifices at the front, and the jet ejected through the exhaust nozzles in the rear is powerful and far-reaching. If we could apply this principle to make a boat for dredging, there would be no question of removing the sludge in the ditch.

On the basis of this principle, we designed a dredging device which gave the expected results. But the ditch was too narrow for the boat to turn round. By applying the same principle as that used in motor cars, we attached a mechanism to the boat enabling it to move forward or backward. In this way, we made the design while going on with our work, and improving it in the course of practice, we gradually enabled our knowledge to correspond with objective laws. After repeating the process of "practice, knowledge, again practice, and again knowledge," we finally succeeded in making the dredger which quickly removed the sludge and cleared the ditch.

When we took part in a rush job to make repairs at a factory in November 1968, some ten reinforced concrete pillars, each more than ten metres high, had to be removed in order to rebuild a workshop. We first spent three days trying to knock them down with big 12-pound hammers but made no progress; we only left some holes in the pillars. Everybody knew that wasn't the way. Anxious about it, I didn't go to bed for several nights. My eyes became bloodshot and my head was swimming. Seeing that I wasn't going to get any rest, some comrades hustled me into a room and locked me in. I still couldn't get to sleep even when I lay on the bed. Suddenly a picture of Tung Tsun-jui using explosives to destroy a pillbox flashed through my mind. Could explosives level the cement pillars quickly and safely? I suggested that we try. The comrades agreed but feared that the blast would damage the workshop's equipment, pipes and wiring.

How to go about it? We used Chairman Mao's philosophical thinking to analyse the question of explosives and concluded that they are most effective against hard objects and less useful against soft objects. Basing ourselves on this analysis, we wrapped thick straw matting around the pillars before setting off the blasts. It worked. When the blasts came, the reinforced concrete pillars flew into pieces, while the equipment, pipes and wiring were not affected. The rush job was thus completed in 15 days and nights.

Practice has proved to me that materialist dialectics is the key to the treasure house of the universe. If we get a firm grip on this ideological weapon, we can see clearly and become wiser and can know and grasp the laws governing objective things and overcome difficulties in moving ahead.

Resolving Contradictions in Struggle Between the Two Lines

In my work I often run up against specific contradictions in production. Of course all these contradictions should be resolved by applying Chairman Mao's philosophical thinking.

But the purpose of our studying Chairman Mao's philosophical thinking is primarily to apply it to guide us in class struggle and to solve the principal contradiction of the struggle between the proletarian revolutionary line and the bourgeois reactionary line. Only in this way can we continue the revolution and consolidate and strengthen the dictatorship of the proletariat. If we are engrossed in grasping specific contradictions in production, we'll lose our bearings in the complicated class struggle and the struggle between the two lines and vacillate. Only when we implant the Party's basic line in our minds can we have a clear political orientation.

During the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, we severely criticized the counter-revolutionary revisionist rubbish of "giving first place to technique" and understood more clearly that whether we gave first place to technique or let politics take command was a struggle between the capitalist road and the socialist road and between the two lines. The renegade, hidden traitor and scab Liu Shao-chi and his agents insisted on "giving first place to technique" to realize their aim of restoring capitalism,

Last year, eight young workers joined our team. At first, they worked quite well. But they soon became unwilling to be plumbers, thinking that the work was exhausting and dirty. One time when we were making pipe elbows, all of us were tired and soaked in sweat. One of them remarked how much one had to sweat in this work. We told him: "In making revolution, we must not be afraid of sweating and getting tired. We should take up the heavy load for the revolution even if our sweat is enough to float a ship."

Later, I thought that education in ideology and political line should not be done piecemeal. We should fundamentally raise the young workers' consciousness of class struggle and the struggle between the two lines and help them mature into successors to the revolutionary cause.

At a class education meeting, I said to Comrade Pao Ching-hung, a veteran worker in our team, "Pao, how about you telling us about how you were exploited and oppressed by the landlord and how you and your elder brother had to beg a living in the old society. . . ." As Pao gave his account in nearly half a day, the young workers got a profound education from the contrast between the new and old societies. In the light of the ideas that made the young workers feel they had grievances in making pipe elbows, we talked to them about this kind of high-pressure elbow in connection with our team's history of struggle. Small as the elbow is, I told them, it was also a product of our struggle against the counter-revolutionary revisionist line and against the imperialists and revisionists.

Before the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, we imported these elbows from capitalist countries which tried to make as much trouble as they could for us. We workers made up our minds to change the situation by making the elbows ourselves. We encountered many difficulties in our experiments. For example, while a locomotive pulling a train needs a pressure of 17 atmospheres, it calls for a pressure of 600 atmospheres to make the elbows. Technically and in equipment, many difficulties had to be overcome. One reactionary "authority" tried to bluff us: "An oxygen cylinder which can stand a pressure of 100 atmospheres rises about 300 metres when it explodes. Since 600 atmospheres are needed in

making these elbows, oil will spurt out of even a tiny hole like an arrow and pierce your belly if you're not careful" That didn't frighten us.

Chairman Mao teaches us; "Will the Chinese cower before difficulties when they are not afraid even of death?" We had courage to face up to every obstacle. Undeterred by failure in our experiments, we repeatedly summed up our experience and trial-produced a hydraulic press with 600 atmospheres of pressure and finally produced the elbow on our own, and its quality was far superior to the imported ones. Education in ideology and political line by living examples like this helps young workers gradually raise their awareness of class struggle and the struggle between the two lines.

Practice in struggle has helped me get a deeper understanding that dialectical materialism and historical materialism are the theoretical basis of Chairman Mao's revolutionary line. Only by arming ourselves with materialist dialectics and conscientiously remoulding our world outlook can we constantly raise our consciousness in implementing Chairman Mao's revolutionary line.