

One Divides Into Two —

MORE ON THE STRUGGLE BETWEEN TWO LINES

There are two contradictory aspects in everything, a unity of opposites. This simultaneous unity and struggle is what impels things to move and change. When Marxist-Leninists examine any given phenomenon or thing they look for the two aspects, their method of examination is to start from the concept that "one divides into two". That is the concise term used by Mao Tsetung to describe what Lenin called "the splitting into two of a single whole".

Two contradictory aspects exist in the Communist Party of New Zealand just as surely as they exist in all Marxist-Leninist parties — proletarian ideology and bourgeois ideology. The struggle between these two contradictory aspects determines the effective unity of the Party in struggle. Locally and internationally it is a struggle between two lines — the Marxist-Leninist line of revolution and the opportunist revisionist line of counter-revolution.

"If there were no contradictions in the Party and no ideological struggles to resolve them, the Party's life would come to an end", said Mao Tsetung in his essay "On Contradiction", pointing out that the clash of ideas inside the Party is a reflection of the contradictions between classes and between the new and old in society.

STRUGGLE OF IDEAS

This does not mean that the Party divides its members into two camps, with "goodies" on one side and "baddies" on the other. The inner-Party struggle is between ideas and the proper application of "One divides into two" means that a sharp line is drawn between proletarian ideas and bourgeois ideas, not between persons. Only when members become dominated by bourgeois ideas to the stage where they take material form—in organisational factions, in defiance of the Party's organisational principle of democratic-centralism—is it necessary to do battle in organisational material terms. Even then great pains must be taken to get the person to stop the material disruption of Party unity. If the person proves incorrigible in this material disruption then a material division into two (with the offender outside the Party) becomes inevitable. The aim is effective unity at a higher level as the result of struggle against any bourgeois ideas carried inside the Party by any member. Through the strong bourgeois influence in our material environment, such ideological contamination is inevitable and continuous. Nevertheless, it must always be regarded as a contamination, as a sickness, and the treatment must be aimed at removing the disease not the patient.

The method of approaching inner-Party struggle, therefore, is not to divide the sum total of members into two but to divide the two contradictory sets of ideas into two, to draw a sharp line between proletarian ideology and bourgeois ideology, between the Marxist-Leninist line and the opportunist and revisionist line, between the positive and the negative, between the new and the old, between the successes and mistakes.

Unfortunately some people do not use the method of "one divides into two" in a Marxist-Leninist manner. Such people regard it as a mathematical formula for continually dividing everything in half. This springs from a subjective conceit that, if allowed to persist to its logical conclusion, would have the Party continually dividing into half until only one conceited member is left.

This may seem so absurd as to be impossible but it is precisely what happens to such hide-bound opportunists as the late Sid Scott who ended up "expelling" the whole Party from himself.

TWO OPPOSITE WORLD OUTLOOKS

This mechanical application of "one divides into two" is a product of bourgeois ideology itself. In his essay "On Contradiction" Mao Tsetung quotes Lenin as follows:—

"The two basic conceptions of development (evolution) are: de-

velopment as decrease and increase, as repetition, and development as a unity of opposites (the division of a unity into mutually exclusive opposites and their reciprocal relation)".

Lenin was referring to the two different world outlooks, the metaphysical conception of the world and the dialectical conception. Note that the mathematical conception of development as "decrease or increase" is rejected as the metaphysical or vulgar evolutionist outlook. It sees things as isolated, static and one-sided. It sees change as only increase or decrease in quantity or change of place — "one divides in half" or "one and one make two" or "one shifts its position".

This metaphysical, mechanical approach is not the only wrong method of tackling inner-Party (and other) problems. In the May issue of the "Communist Review", the National Secretariat of the Communist Party pointed out that subjectivism, sectarianism and stereotypism were also obstacles to correct work. The same issue contained Mao Tsetung's "Rectify the Party's Style of Work" which deal with the same mistakes in greater detail as they applied to the Chinese Party.

SUBJECTIVIST WEAKNESSES

Subjectivism is the method of seeing only a part and not the whole and assuming that the part is the decisive truth. This can express itself in dogmatically asserting that one's own ideas or book knowledge are the complete answer, or empirically asserting that one's own narrow experience is the solution. It is hostile to anyone else's theory and practice. It separates theory from practice and practice from theory. It does not believe that correct ideas come from practice and must be tested in practice. It results in blind practice or impotent theory. In neither case does it examine the realities of "one divides into two".

Likewise sectarianism, by not looking at the two aspects objectively, overestimates the merits and strengths of the individual or group in relation to the whole. It results in disruption and anti-democratic centralism, in selfish departmentalism. It is a product of subjectivism.

Stereotypism shows a mechanical approach to problems because it concerns itself with outward appearances without any inner sincerity, with barren sloganising and quotations, with form without content, with a ritualistic approach to serious problems, with yesterday's solution to today's changing situation. It is a technique often used by subjectivists whether of the sectarian, dogmatic, empiricist or metaphysical variety. All these errors arise from and are nurtured by bourgeois ideological weaknesses. In turn they help spread individualist bourgeois ideology within the Party. They shun collective proletarian ideology.

HOW IDEOLOGY IS FORMED

One's ideology is the general outlook based on a class that determines one's actions. Ideology expressed in a programme for action constitutes a political line for the advancement of those class interests, particularly on the question of state power. The organisation is determined by the nature of the ideology and politics—both in the relationship of the members among themselves and towards the class it serves.

It is most important to recall once again that ideology (and therefore, the politics and organisation), is not inborn or acquired from a book. It is moulded in the course of daily life in class society.

The Marxist-Leninist ideology is developed and steered in the course of struggle for proletarian state power. Man's subjective world is remoulded in the process of transforming the objective world. Marxist-Leninist ideology is based on dialectical materialism. The opposing ideology is based on idealism.

Just as proletarian Marxist-Leninist ideology is formed in political struggle, so is it tested in political struggle. The struggle of two lines boils down to the question of who is practising Marxism-Leninism and who is practising revisionism. These are the two aspects in the Party. This is the struggle that gives it movement forward. It stands to reason, therefore, that any refusal to face up to this struggle reveals a liberal, frivolous or jaded attitude towards the revolutionary goal.

This paves the way for opportunists and revisionists to push the line that "two combines into one" (two aspects combine into one aspect) — unprincipled unity with the class enemy and its agents, numerical unity replacing unity in common cause against a common enemy, subordinating the new principal aspect to the old, striving for equilibrium between aspects.

The Marxist-Leninist line, (reflecting the objective law that the people make history and that the working class will make revolution) is considerate of people, is striving for unity and is honest. Wherever there is lack of consideration for people, splitting tactics, dishonesty and intrigue, then there is also the opportunist line. Running counter to the objective laws of development, this revisionist line cannot avoid these anti-people methods.

PARTY UNITY AND PARTY BUILDING

Party unity and Party building is always closely linked with the correct handling of the objective law, as expressed in the United Front against imperialism (currently against U.S. and Soviet imperialism) and against capitalism (developing the forces capable of smashing capitalist state power). This Party-people progress is aptly summarised in Mao Tsetung's words that **"Once the correct ideas characteristic of the advanced class are grasped by the masses, these**

ideas turn into a material force which changes society and changes the world”.

Correct inner-Party examination strengthens the Party organization, unity and fighting capacity because it fearlessly examines the two aspects within the single whole. It seeks objective truth through examination and self-examination of practice (criticism and self-criticism do not mean personal attack and self-abasement), because how else can one's ideology be gauged correct or incorrect unless examined in the political practice of working towards the Party's revolutionary goal? Proletarian ideology is not inborn. It is developed, tested and steeled in the course of struggle.. It proves its worth in struggle. Verbal agreement does not necessarily prove ideological unity. Indeed it could merely be a form of stereotypism covering up an opportunist yes-man.

Only the test of practice will show who is following the Marxist-Leninist line towards revolution and who is following the opportunist, revisionist line towards keeping the status quo.

“One divides into two” is the Marxist-Leninist method of starting to examine any matter or person, because it takes account of the fundamental law of the universe, the unity of opposites.

Having made this start it is then necessary to work out the essential and main aspects of any contradiction, in any “division into two”. And that is what the following article on “Seeing the Essence of Problems” deals with.

