

**THE CONSTITUTION
OF THE
COMMUNIST PARTY OF CHINA**

**REPORT ON
THE REVISION OF THE
CONSTITUTION OF THE
COMMUNIST PARTY
OF CHINA**

TENG HSIAO-PING

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*Adopted by the Eighth National Congress
of the Communist Party of China
September 26, 1956*

GENERAL PROGRAMME

The Communist Party of China is the vanguard of the Chinese working class, the highest form of its class organization. The aim of the Party is the achievement of socialism and communism in China.

The Communist Party of China takes Marxism-Leninism as its guide to action. Only Marxism-Leninism correctly sets forth the laws of development of society and correctly charts the path leading to the achievement of socialism and communism. The Party adheres to the Marxist-Leninist world outlook of dialectical and historical materialism, and opposes the world outlook of idealism and metaphysics. Marxism-Leninism is not a dogma, but a guide to action. It demands that in striving to build socialism and communism we should proceed from reality, apply the principles of Marxism-Leninism in a flexible and creative way for the solution of various problems arising out of the actual struggle, and thus continuously develop the theory of Marxism-Leninism. Consequently, the Party in its activities upholds the principle of integrating the universal truths of Marxism-Leninism with the actual practice of China's revolutionary struggle, and combats all doctrinaire or empiricist deviations.

In the year 1949, after long years of revolutionary struggle and revolutionary wars, the Communist Party of China and the people of the whole country overthrew the rule of imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat-capitalism and founded the People's Republic of China — a people's democratic dictatorship led by the working class and based on the alliance of workers and peasants. Following this,

the Party led the masses of the people in accomplishing the task of the democratic revolution in most parts of the country and achieving great successes in the struggle for the establishment of a socialist society. During the period of transition from the founding of the People's Republic of China to the attainment of a socialist society, the fundamental task of the Party is to complete, step by step, the socialist transformation of agriculture, handicrafts and capitalist industry and commerce and to bring about, step by step, the industrialization of the country.

A decisive victory in every field has already been attained in the socialist transformation of our country. It is the task of the Communist Party of China by continuously adopting correct methods to transform what now remains of capitalist ownership into ownership by the whole people, transform what remains of individual ownership by working people into collective ownership by the working masses, uproot the system of exploitation and remove all the causes that give rise to such a system. In the process of building up a socialist society, the principle "from each according to his ability, to each according to his work" should be brought into effect step by step; and all former exploiters should be reformed in a peaceful manner to become working people living by their own labour. The Party must continue to pay attention to the elimination of capitalist factors and influence in the economic, political and ideological fields, and make determined efforts to mobilize and unite all the positive forces throughout the country that can be mobilized and united for the purpose of winning a complete victory for the great cause of socialism.

The victory of the socialist revolution has opened up illimitable possibilities for the gigantic development of the productive forces of society. It is the task of the Communist Party of China to develop the national economy in a planned way to bring about as rapidly as possible the industrialization of the country, and to effect the techno-

logical transformation of the national economy in a planned, systematic way so that China may possess a powerful modernized industry, a modernized agriculture, modernized communications and transport and a modernized national defence. In order to achieve industrialization and bring about a continuous growth of the national economy, priority must be given to the development of heavy industry, and at the same time a due proportion must be maintained between heavy industry and light industry, and between industry as a whole and agriculture. The Party must do everything possible to stimulate the progress in China's science, culture and technology so as to catch up with the world's advanced levels in these fields. The basic object of all Party work is to satisfy to the maximum extent the material and cultural needs of the people. Therefore, it is necessary that the living conditions of the people should, on the basis of increased production, gradually and continually improve. This is also a requisite for enhancing the people's enthusiasm for production.

Our country is a multi-national state. Because of historical reasons, the development of many of the national minorities has been hindered. The Communist Party of China must make special efforts to raise the status of the national minorities, help them to attain self-government, endeavour to train cadres from among the national minorities, accelerate their economic and cultural advance, bring about complete equality between all the nationalities and strengthen the unity and fraternal relations among them. Social reforms among the nationalities must be carried out by the respective nationalities themselves in accordance with their own wishes, and by taking steps in conformity with their special characteristics. The Party opposes all tendencies to great-nation chauvinism and local nationalism, both of which hamper the unity of nationalities. Special attention must be paid to the prevention and cor-

rection of tendencies of great-Hanism on the part of Party members and government workers of Han nationality.

The Communist Party of China must work untiringly to consolidate China's people's democratic dictatorship, which is the guarantee for the success of the socialist cause in China. The Party must fight for a fuller development of the democratic life of the nation and strive for the constant improvement of its democratic institutions. The Party must work in every way to fortify the fraternal alliance of workers and peasants, to consolidate the united front of all patriotic forces and to strengthen its lasting co-operation with the other democratic parties as well as democrats without party affiliations. Since the imperialists and counter-revolutionary remnants are bent on undermining the cause of the Chinese people, it is imperative for the Party to heighten its revolutionary vigilance and wage severe struggles against those forces which endanger our country's independence and security and those elements who try to wreck socialist construction in our country. The Party must work together with the people of the whole country to bring about the liberation of Taiwan.

The Communist Party of China advocates a foreign policy directed to the safeguarding of world peace and the achievement of peaceful co-existence between countries with different systems. The Party stands for the establishment and development of diplomatic, economic and cultural relations between China and other countries of the world and for the broadening and strengthening of friendly relations between the Chinese people and the peoples of all other countries of the world. The Party is resolutely opposed to any act of aggression against China by imperialist countries and to any imperialist plans for a new war; it supports all efforts made by the peoples and governments of other countries to uphold peace and promote friendly relations between nations and expresses its sympathy for all struggles in the world against imperialism

and colonialism. The Party endeavours to develop and strengthen China's friendship with all other countries in the camp of peace, democracy and socialism headed by the Soviet Union, to strengthen the internationalist solidarity of the proletariat and to learn from the experiences of the world communist movement. It supports the struggle of the communists, progressives and the labouring people of the whole world for the progress of mankind, and educates its members and the Chinese people in the spirit of internationalism, as expressed in the slogan "Proletarians of all lands, unite!"

The Communist Party of China puts into practice all that it advocates through the activity of the Party organizations and membership among the masses and through the conscientious efforts made by the people under its guidance. For this reason it is necessary to constantly develop the tradition of following the mass line in Party work. Whether the Party is able to continue to give correct leadership depends on whether or not the Party will, through analysis and synthesis, systematically summarize the experience and opinions of the masses, turn the resulting ideas into the policy of the Party and then, as a result of the Party's propaganda and organizational work among the masses, transform it into the views and action of the masses themselves, testing the correctness of Party policy, and supplementing and revising it in the course of mass activity. It is the duty of the Party leadership to ensure that in the endless repetition of this process of "coming from the masses and going back to the masses" the Party members' level of understanding and that of the masses of the people are continually raised and the cause of the Party and the people is constantly advanced. The Party and its members must, therefore, maintain close and extensive ties with the workers, peasants, intellectuals and other patriots and strive constantly to make such ties ever stronger and more widespread. Every Party member must understand that the

interests of the Party and those of the people are one, and responsibility to the Party and responsibility to the people are identical. Every Party member must whole-heartedly serve the people, constantly consult them, pay heed to their opinions, concern himself with their well-being and strive to help realize their wishes. Now that the Communist Party of China is a party in power, it must especially conduct itself with modesty and prudence, guard against self-conceit and impatience, and make the maximum effort in every Party organization, state organ and economic unit to combat any bureaucratic practice which estranges the masses or leads to isolation from the realities of life.

The organizational principle of the Communist Party of China is democratic centralism, which means centralism on the basis of democracy and democracy under centralized guidance. The Party must take effective measures to promote inner-Party democracy, encourage the initiative and creative ability of all Party members and of all local and primary Party organizations and strengthen the lively contact between the higher and lower Party organizations. Only in this way can the Party effectively extend and strengthen its ties with the masses of the people, give correct and timely leadership and adapt itself flexibly to various concrete conditions and local characteristics. And only in this way can Party life be invigorated and the cause of the Party advance on an ever wider scale and at an ever greater pace. Only on this basis, furthermore, can centralism and unity of the Party be consolidated and its discipline be voluntarily, not mechanically, observed. Democratic centralism demands that every Party organization should strictly abide by the principle of collective leadership coupled with individual responsibility and that every Party member and Party organization should be subject to Party supervision from above and from below.

Democracy within the Party must not be divorced from centralism. The Party is a united militant organization,

welded together by a discipline which is obligatory on all its members. Without discipline it would be impossible for the Party to lead the state and the people to overcome their powerful enemies and bring about socialism and communism. As the highest form of class organization, the Party must strive to play a correct role as the leader and core in every aspect of the country's life and must combat any tendency to departmentalism, which reduces the Party's role and weakens its unity. Solidarity and unity are the very life of the Party, the source of its strength. It is the sacred duty of every Party member to pay constant attention to the safeguarding of the solidarity of the Party and the consolidation of its unity. Within the Party, no action which violates the Party's political line or organizational principles is permissible, nor is it permissible to carry on activities aimed at splitting the Party or factional activities, to act independently of the Party, or to place the individual above the collective body of the Party.

No political party or person can be free from shortcomings and mistakes in work. The Communist Party of China and its members must constantly practise criticism and self-criticism to expose and eliminate their shortcomings and mistakes so as to educate themselves and the people. In view of the fact that the Party plays the leading role in the life of the state and society, it is all the more necessary that it should make stringent demands on every Party organization and member and promote criticism and self-criticism; and in particular, it should encourage and support criticism from below inside the Party as well as criticism of the Party by the masses of the people, and should prohibit any suppression of criticism. The Party must prevent and resist corrosion by bourgeois and petty-bourgeois ways of thinking and styles of work and guard against and defeat any Rightist or "Leftist" opportunist deviation inside the Party. In the case of Party members who have committed mistakes, the Party should, in the spirit of "curing

the illness to save the patient," allow them to remain in its ranks and receive education and help them to correct their mistakes, provided such mistakes can be corrected within the Party and the erring Party member himself is prepared to correct his mistakes. As for those who persist in their mistakes and carry on activities detrimental to the Party, it is essential to wage a determined struggle against them even to the point of expelling them from the Party.

The Communist Party of China requires all its members to place the Party's interests above their personal interests, to be diligent and unpretentious, to study and work hard, to unite the broad masses of the people, and to overcome all difficulties in order to build China into a great, mighty, prosperous and advanced socialist state, and on this basis to advance towards the achievement of the loftiest ideal of mankind — communism.

CHAPTER I

MEMBERSHIP

ARTICLE 1

Membership of the Party is open to any Chinese citizen who works and does not exploit the labour of others, accepts the programme and Constitution of the Party, joins and works in one of the Party organizations, carries out the Party's decisions, and pays membership dues as required.

ARTICLE 2

Party members have the following duties:

(1) To strive to study Marxism-Leninism and unceasingly raise the level of their understanding;

(2) To safeguard the Party's solidarity and consolidate its unity;

(3) To faithfully carry out Party policy and decisions and energetically fulfil the tasks assigned them by the Party;

(4) To strictly observe the Party Constitution and the laws of the state and behave in accordance with communist ethics, no exception being made for any Party member, whatever his services and position;

(5) To place the interests of the Party and the state, that is, the interests of the masses of the people, above their personal interests, and in the event of any conflict between the two, to submit unswervingly to the interests