

WHY SHOULD WE LET POLITICS TAKE COMMAND?

[Following is a translation of an editor's answer to a letter from a reader originally published in the Chinese-language newspaper Chieh-fang Jih-pao (Liberation Daily), and then reprinted in another Chinese-language newspaper, Ta Kung Pao, Peiping, 23 April 1966, p 3.]

Recently the Shanghai "Liberation Daily" received the following letter from a reader of the paper: "Many articles published in various newspapers have stressed that economic work, just like any other work, must serve the proletarian politics and political work should have precedence over all other work. At first, I found this theory very logical. Then I discovered one problem I don't quite understand. As we all know, the upper structure of socialism is to serve the lower economic foundation. Since politics is an important part of the upper structure, it should also serve the economic foundation. However, we are now talking about economic work serving politics. Is it contradictory? Some one said: 'Since politics serves the economic foundation, it should serve economic work and not economic work politics.' It seems to me economic work should have precedence over politics. Am I right?"

Comrade Ch'ing Wen-yuan (3237 2429 6678) of the editing staff of the paper made the following answer: Economic work must serve the proletarian politics and the upper structure must serve the socialist economic foundation. Is there any contradiction between these two statements? I don't think so. In my opinion, the reason why you and many comrades are confused is due to your confusing two entirely different concepts and two different systems. As we all know, the economic work of various enterprises such as pushing production, conducting business, implementing technical reforms, etc., is actually concrete business operation which is not identical with the economic foundation of the society. The economic foundation of society refers to productive relationship and the economic system of a society, while a business operation refers to all kinds of concrete work. The relationship between politics and the economic foundation of society must explain the following problem: "A certain economic foundation should decide the political upper structure adaptable to it and politics is the concentrated expression of economics. As the upper structure, politics will display its powerful function in

serving actively for the formation, consolidation, and development of its own economic foundation. The relationship between politics and business operation must explain the following problem: politics is the overall body of proletarian revolutionary endeavors. Since the component parts naturally must obey the overall body, all kinds of work, economic work included, must serve proletarian politics, and must be led by the latter, thus giving precedence to the latter. Consequently, the relationship between politics and economic foundation is different from the relationship between politics and economic work. Therefore, we should not think that since politics serves the economic foundation, it should not be served by economic work or that it should not put in number one position. On the contrary, in order to make politics which is the upper structure of our society serve our socialist economic foundation actively, it is necessary for our politics to take command and for our economic workers and workers in other fields to establish firmly the idea that all work should serve proletarian politics.

As we all know, the formation, consolidation and development of socialist economic foundation cannot survive without proletarian politics. If we don't seize the political power and establish a proletarian dictatorship, we cannot have our socialist economy. Any socialist economy without stressing proletarian politics cannot be consolidated and developed. Chairman Mao taught us: "Political work is the lifeline of all economic work. It is particularly true when economic institutions undergo basic changes." Socialist society is a transitional historic period from a class society to a classless society, which is exactly "the period when social and economic institutions undergo basic changes." On the one hand, the remnants of the overthrown reactionary ruling class are trying very hard to carry on conspiracy and destructive activities. The capitalist class is always dreaming of using "peaceful transformation" in carrying out a capitalist comeback. On the other hand, the bourgeoisie and the traditional influence of old society are spreading all types of non-proletarian ideas. Under this situation, the class struggle and struggles between these two roads in the society will certainly reflect on all our economic work and our business operations. If our economic workers have not established the idea of serving proletarian politics and instead only serving production in the sense of "treating all white and black cats which catch rats as good cats," we would offer a new chance for capitalist thinking. Then, how can we assure that our economic work will follow the direction of our socialism? How can we assure the continuous consolidation and development of our socialist economic foundation? Consequently, both the law of development in our socialist society and the socialist economic foundation itself demand that economic work, just like other work, must stress and serve proletarian politics. We should get a contrary conclusion from the principle that the upper structure of socialism should serve its economic foundation.

Lenin once said: "Comparing with economics, politics must take precedence. If this were not confirmed, it was equivalent to forgetting the minimum common sense of Marxism." He said that simply because politics is the concentrated expression of economics and proletarian poli-

tics concentrates in reflecting the basic interest of the majority, the people and the masses. The purpose of our production and our business operations is to build socialism, to complete socialist revolution, and to carry out communism eventually. Only through connecting all economic work with this basic mission and serving this basic mission can we have a correct political goal. If we forget that economic work must serve proletarian politics and give economic work precedence over politics, we will see only trees but not the woods. We will forget the overall situation of our proletarian revolutionary endeavor as well as the basic fact of the class struggle and the struggle between two roads. This will cause our economic work to lose direction. Then we don't need to talk about consolidation and development of our socialist economic foundation.

Consequently, our economic workers, just like workers in other fields, must treat politics as the leader and the soul and honestly establish the idea of serving proletarian politics, thus giving precedence to political work. This is the only way we will have a correct political goal, strong political sentiment, and strong revolutionary will power. Then and only then can we do a good job in economic work and make a positive contribution to our socialist revolutionary endeavor.

10,417
CS0:3575-S