

A Brief Analysis of "On the Correct Handling of Contradictions Among the People" and Its Contemporary Value

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Abstract: *Mao Zedong's original theoretical contribution to Marxism has had a profound impact on the exploration and development of socialism with Chinese characteristics. This work plays an important role in providing theoretical guidance for national construction, covering a wide range of topics, including the differentiation and resolution of socialist contradictions, issues of political repression, and the relationship between the development of agriculture and industry in China. This paper aims to explore the historical context and core ideas of this article, as well as its historical significance and contemporary value in the development of socialism with Chinese characteristics.*

Keywords: On the Correct Handling of Contradictions Among the People; The fundamental contradiction of socialism with Chinese characteristics; Contemporary values.

1. THE CREATIVE BACKGROUND AND MAIN CONTENT OF "CORRECT HANDLING"

In terms of international relations, the first half of 1956 saw the 20th Congress of the Soviet Communist Party, during which Khrushchev delivered a secret speech that publicly criticized and entirely negated Stalin. In March 1956, Chairman Mao presided over a Politburo meeting and drafted a document titled "Historical Experience of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat, " which addressed Khrushchev's secret speech and the Stalin issue. Mao keenly observed that one significant mistake made by Stalin was the denial of contradictions existing in socialist society. In the second half of 1956, the events in Poland and Hungary saw confrontations between the populace and the party and government, leading to conflicts and acts of violence. Starting in late November of the same year, Chairman Mao presided over an expanded meeting of the Standing Committee of the Politburo to discuss the events in Poland and Hungary. He also led the drafting of "Further Discussion on the Historical Experience of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat, " which underwent multiple revisions. He emphasized the need to address both contradictions between enemies and contradictions among the people. Not only do internal contradictions exist, but if not handled properly, they can also escalate from non-antagonistic contradictions to antagonistic ones. The events between Poland and Hungary had a huge impact on the international communist movement, while also exposing various contradictions and problems existing in socialist society. On November 11 of the same year, Tito delivered a speech in Pula, which stirred up a storm in the socialist camp [1]. The series of events in 1956 revealed contradictions within socialist societies, prompting Chairman Mao to further contemplate the issue of contradictions in socialist society, thereby advancing the maturation and refinement of the theory of internal contradictions among the people.

At the same time, domestically, although the socialist transformation was largely completed and the contradictions between the working class and the bourgeoisie were resolved, other internal contradictions began to emerge. This led to a certain level of tension in social, economic, and political life, resulting in widespread dissatisfaction among the people. In some areas, there were consecutive incidents of instability, including worker strikes and student strikes from the second half of 1956 to 1957. How to correctly understand and address the increasingly prominent internal contradictions among the people became a significant issue facing Chairman Mao and the first generation of leadership he headed. Overall, Mao Zedong proposed the idea of learning lessons from the experiences of the Soviet Union, which primarily included aspects such as policy adjustment, relationship coordination, and improvement of work methods. He emphasized the importance of the relationship between the central and local governments, as well as the necessity of establishing a socialist economy under highly centralized leadership. At the same time, he pointed out the existence of domestic contradictions that needed to be properly addressed. In "On the Ten Major Relationships, " Chairman Mao began to reflect the early thoughts on how to correctly handle contradictions among the people, culminating in the publication of "On the Correct Handling of Contradictions

Among the People, " which marked the formation of the Marxist theory of internal contradictions among the people.

The article emphasizes that various internal contradictions exist within socialist society, and these contradictions are inevitable. Mao Zedong first draw a line between contradictions between ourselves and the enemies and contradictions among the people. Contradictions between ourselves and the enemies are antagonistic conflicts, typically involving opposing interests and factions, and require harsh measures such as dictatorship to resolve. In contrast, contradictions among the people are generally non-antagonistic, based on common interests of the people, and do not necessitate confrontational methods. Mao stressed that, unlike in capitalist societies, the main contradictions in socialist society are internal contradictions among the people rather than class antagonisms. He advocates using coercive measures such as dictatorship to resolve conflicts between ourselves and the enemies, in order to maintain national security and social stability. As for internal contradictions among the people, he advocated resolving them through democratic means, allowing the people to freely express their opinions and resolving differences through dialogue and consultation to ensure social harmony and development. He believed that properly handling these internal contradictions was the key to ensuring social stability and the development of the Communist cause. This view reflects Mao Zedong's political wisdom, as he realized that contradictions in socialist society could not be resolved simply through suppression and violence, but needed to be handled through more complex methods. In short, Mao Zedong's views emphasized that different types of contradictions require different methods of handling, and that appropriate policies and means should be adopted according to the nature and context of the contradictions. This view reflects his complex thinking on power and governance, aiming to achieve the stability and development of the country and society. Mao Zedong introduced the concept of "basic social contradictions" for the first time in this speech. His view is that there are still basic contradictions in socialist society, which are mainly manifested between production relations and productive forces, between superstructures and economic foundations. He analyzed in detail the relationship between mutual adaptation and contradiction in these basic contradictions, which not only promote the development of socialist society, but also cause various challenges and problems. This means that the progress of socialist society is realized under the driving force of these internal contradictions.

Based on the concept of people's internal contradictions, we should scientifically analyze and guide a number of contradictions in social life, including the issue of purge, the problem of agricultural cooperation, the problem of industrialists and businessmen, the problem of intellectuals, the problem of ethnic minorities, the problem of long-term coexistence and mutual supervision, and the problem of minorities. In the article, a series of guidelines and policies to correctly handle people's internal contradictions are put forward and elaborated in detail. Specifically:

- 1) In terms of relations with democratic parties, he advocates the policy of "long-term coexistence and mutual supervision" to encourage cooperation and mutual supervision between different political factions to maintain political stability and pluralistic participation.
- 2) For problems in the fields of science and culture, Mao Zedong advocated the policy of "a hundred flowers blooming and a hundred schools competing", encouraging the expression of various ideas and views to promote the diversity and innovation of ideas.
- 3) In terms of ethnic relations, he emphasized the need to strengthen national unity and actively support the economic and cultural development of various ethnic minorities to reduce contradictions and inequalities between ethnic groups.
- 4) In the economic field, Mao Zedong advocated the principle of comprehensively considering the interests of the state, the collective and the individual according to the needs of developing production, so as to realize the rational distribution and development of the economy.

In general, the core goal of these guidelines and policies is to maintain social harmony, resolve internal contradictions, and promote progress and development in various fields to achieve the long-term stability and prosperity of socialism. This series of policies reflects Mao Zedong's profound thinking and practical experience on social governance. In the article, Mao Zedong also emphasized the importance of party democracy and self-criticism. He believes that only by encouraging party members to put forward different views and opinions through intra-party democracy can we better discover and solve problems. He also stressed that Party members must consciously accept criticism, not be afraid of criticism, and be good at criticism in order to continuously

improve the Party's work. "Unity-Criticism-Unity" is an important formula for intra-party criticism proposed by Mao Zedong during the Yan'an Rectification Movement. "Correct Handling" expands this formula from the application of intra-party rectification to the whole socialist democracy, which naturally also includes class contradictions and class struggles within the people. These ideas reflect Mao Zedong's emphasis on intra-party unity and the Party's self-correction mechanism.

2. THE HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF "CORRECT HANDLING"

Under the leadership of the Communist Party of China, in the early stage of China's construction of a socialist society, it began to learn a series of lessons learned from the Soviet Union and other Western countries in the process of building a socialist society. There are advantages in the process of rapid development in the construction of the cause of socialism internationally, but many problems have also been exposed. Starting from reality, Mao Zedong carefully reflected on the actual situation in the process of China's socialist construction, constantly studied Marxist theory, and repeatedly put forward a series of guidelines and policies suitable for China's national conditions in the process of practice. Mao Zedong believed that dogmatic learning was not suitable for China. To get a correct understanding, we must rely on practice. The development of society is inseparable from practice, which is the basis for the formation of various social relations and the driving force of social development. Facts tell us that practice is the source of all theories. Only continuous practice can verify the correct way to deal with contradictions. Practice is the source of understanding and the fundamental driving force for the development of understanding. In the process of continuous practice, Mao Zedong saw in time that there were many subtle changes in the contradictions of socialism in China, and created the doctrine of socialist social contradictions based on the objective reality. Mao Zedong's "Correct Handling" is regarded as an important document in Marxist theory. In theory, it breaks through the long-standing concept of "socialism with no contradiction" due to lack of practical experience, adheres to the principle of seeking truth from facts, and clearly points out that there are still many contradictions in socialist society. In this article, this concept theoretically enriches the understanding of the internal contradictions of socialist society and provides an important theoretical basis for a deep understanding of the complexity and development of socialist society. Therefore, this article has great theoretical innovation value and has a profound impact on the theory of Marxist political science. Mao Zedong used the law of opposition and unification to analyze the problem and discussed in detail the theory of contradiction in socialist society. He systematically answered and solved this problem that had not been fully solved in the international communist movement for a long time. This theory injects new ideas into Marxism and is an important original contribution. Through this theory, Mao Zedong provided a deeper and more comprehensive understanding of the theoretical framework of socialist society.

"Correct Handling" has made a very important contribution in theory: first of all, Mao Zedong first created a doctrine on socialist social contradictions in the history of Marxist development. He believes that socialist society is full of contradictions, and its basic contradictions are still the contradictions of production relations and productive capability, superstructure and economic foundation. However, these contradictions in socialist society are fundamentally different in nature and situation from those in the old society. According to the contradictions of different natures in China, Mao Zedong saw the particularity of the existence of contradictions. Starting from the reality of society, he specifically analyzed the specific problems of various contradictions asked by different classes and classes and classes, and put forward a series of different suitable solutions. For the first time in the history of the socialist revolution, this article regards the contradiction between the working class and the national bourgeoisie as the internal contradictions of the people. Although the goal of the socialist revolution is to eliminate the bourgeoisie, Mao Zedong did not mechanically apply the universal principle of Marxism, but divided the bourgeoisie into two different parts according to China's specific historical conditions, which fully reflects the flexible application of China's actual situation. The doctrine of internal contradictions among the people in socialist society provides a philosophical basis for various reforms. For example, the article correctly puts forward and discusses the issue of China's industrialization path. China is a major agricultural country with a dominant rural economy. How to achieve socialist industrialization in such a country is a major challenge. Mao Zedong recognized this early on. He drew on the experience and lessons learned from the industrialization of the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, combined the basic principles of Marxism and China's national conditions, and proposed the "China's Industrialization Road". This theory emphasizes the view that "the development of industry must be carried out in sync with the development of agriculture", treat the "relationship between heavy industry, light industry and agriculture" to a larger theoretical framework and provides guiding principles for China's industrialization process. In addition, in suit of the contradictions of socialist society, Mao Zedong also put forward a number of exploratory and pioneering insights in terms of understanding of national conditions, strategy of economic development, and foreign relations. Mao Zedong was unique in the development and innovation of

Marxist contradictory theory. Mao Zedong not only proposed the significant concept of correctly handling contradictions among the people but also, based on the historical experiences of the Party and the new situations and tasks during the socialist period, put forward a series of new guidelines and policies for addressing and resolving contradictions among the people, relating to issues such as agricultural cooperatives, industrial and commercial matters, intellectuals, and minority groups. Mao emphasized that when we deal with contradictions among the people, we must adhere to the guiding ideology of seeking truth from facts and the mass line; we should use democratic methods to address contradictions among the people and implement the principle of democratic centralism, correctly grasping the relationship between democracy and centralization, as well as the specific guidelines and policies to be applied in different areas. To a certain extent, Mao Zedong inherited and innovated Marxist theory, saw the specificity of contradictions, and enriched and completed the doctrine of contradictions in socialist society. Generally speaking, Mao Zedong Thought and Marxist Thought both start from the perspective of materialism and dialectics, but Mao Zedong's unshield doctrine of socialist society has further innovated in content and form, adding many new ideological principles to Marxism, enriching and innovating Marxist grace. The treasure trove of theory are also the direct sources of Deng Xiaoping's theory of building socialism with Chinese characteristics after the Third Plenary Session of the Eleventh Central Committee.

From the perspective of practice, the doctrine of socialist social contradictions created by Mao Zedong has had a profound impact on socialist theory and practice. It clarifies some vague concepts due to the lack of practical experience due to historical limitations, helps people to more clearly recognize the objective existence of contradictions in socialist society, and especially emphasizes the important role of people's internal contradictions in political life. This theory clarifies the basic contradictions of socialist society and their nature and characteristics. It emphasizes the development of productive forces as a fundamental task and fundamentally points out the right direction to deal with socialist social contradictions. In addition, this theory also provides a scientific theoretical foundation and practical experience for the later reform and opening up and the development of socialism with Chinese characteristics, and provides an important guiding ideology for the innovative historical journey. Therefore, Mao Zedong's doctrine of socialist social contradictions is of great significance in the history of China's socialist development and provides strong theoretical support for socialist construction. On the premise of clarifying that there are also contradictions in socialist society, Mao Zedong further clarified the two different views of contradictions: the existence of fundamental confrontation between the enemy and self and the non-confrontational contradictions within the people. Because the two sides of the contradiction can transform each other under certain conditions, and confrontational contradictions and non-confrontational contradictions may also be transformed into each other. Therefore, in solving two types of contradictions of different nature, we should not only vigorously advocate the creation of conditions to transform the contradictions between the enemy and us into internal contradictions of the people, but also beware of internal contradictions due to improper handling. And it turns into a contradiction between enemies and me. We should actively and properly deal with the two types of contradictions, and mobilize all positive factors at home and abroad, inside and outside the party to "create a political situation that is centralized and democratic, disciplined and free, unified will, and personal mood is comfortable and lively [2]."

In different historical periods, especially since the reform and opening up, how to correctly deal with the internal contradictions of the people has always been closely related to the major strategic decision-making and deployment of the Party and the state in various periods. The leading collectives in different periods have put forward different ideological theories that are conducive to building a socialist society with Chinese characteristics based on the actual situation and combined with Marxist theory. The Communist Party of China has shown distinctive characteristics of the times in the process of historical exploration of correctly handling the internal contradictions of the people.

3. THE CONTEMPORARY VALUE OF "CORRECT HANDLING"

Mao Zedong contributed basic philosophical thought to correctly handling various contradictions in socialist society in the new era, coordinating social relations between different interest groups, and creating a good political situation and social environment conducive to socialist development and construction. In the process of dealing with the internal contradictions of the people, Mao Zedong adhered to the relationship between material and consciousness, and formed the doctrine of contradictions in socialist society: respecting the dialectical relationship between objective laws and subjectivity and initiative, and developing China's industrialization road; creatively applied Marxist dialectics, scientifically applied contradiction analysis, The law of quantitative change and qualitative change, respect for the general trend of social and historical development, accurately analyzes the internal contradictions of the people and contributes scientific methodological guidance to the correct handling of

the internal contradictions of the people. Mao Zedong advocated giving full play to the decisive role of productive forces in the development of socialist society, strengthening and improving the socialist superstructure, consolidating the economic foundation of socialism, making full use of the great role of the people, and promoting the comprehensive construction of a socialist country.

At present, China has entered a new era of building socialism with Chinese characteristics, and "Correct Handling" still has great guiding significance today. At the same time, since the Third Plenary Session of the Eleventh Central Committee of the Communist Party of China, the Party's understanding of the contradictions of socialism and the mastery of the laws of socialism with Chinese characteristics have been greatly enriched and developed. To study Mao Zedong's glorious work, we should combine it with the Party's innovative theory, especially Xi Jinping's Thought on Governance to guide today's practice. The main contradiction in China's current society is the contradiction between the people's growing need for a better life and the unbalanced and insufficient development. The changes in the main social contradictions have not changed the basic national conditions of China in the primary stage of socialism for a long time, nor have they changed the fact that most of the social contradictions are reflected in the internal contradictions of the people. The basic contradictions in modern society are still the contradictions between productivity and production relations, superstructure and economic foundation. Although the form of expression has changed, the main contradiction has changed from the contradiction between the low level of productivity, the growing material and cultural needs of the people and the backward social production to the contradiction between the people's growing need for a better life and unbalanced and insufficient development. However, the basic contradictions in society are still the contradictions between productivity and production relations, superstructure and economic foundation. The main contradictions develop and change with the development of society, and the correct handling of people's internal contradictions is still a very important issue in the new era. The new problems of people's internal contradictions, such as education and poverty reduction, also need to be solved in a timely manner in the new era. Contradictions cannot be avoided. We should correctly realize that the times are changing, and contradictions are also changing. There are still such and such contradictions in socialist society, and the idea that there is no contradiction in socialist society is wrong. The change of major social contradictions means that the lives of the people have changed. We should strengthen ideological and moral education and legal education for the people, adhere to the method of combining moral governance and the rule of law, vigorously publicize the core values of socialism with Chinese characteristics, adhere to the core values of socialism with Chinese characteristics, and improve the whole The comprehensive quality of the people, and help the people correctly understand the core connotation of changes in the main social contradictions in China in the new era with a scientific attitude.

To correctly handle the internal contradictions of the people, we should adhere to the people-centered approach and mobilize the enthusiasm and creativity of the people to solve conflicts. With the hard work and continuous exploration of our people in the past, China's socialist cause has been unprecedentedly prosperous. In the new era, the Party and the country should adhere to the fundamental purpose of serving the people wholeheartedly, maintain close contact between the government and the people, the Party and the government always accept the common supervision of all the people, always take all actions for the people, and constantly strengthen the connection with the people. Under the new situation, Xi Jinping continues to emphasize the strength of the people. To build a modern socialist country in an all-round way, we must give full play to the strength of the people, mobilize the enthusiasm and creativity of the people to participate in the construction cause, adhere to the views of the masses and the mass line, and always maintain a flesh-and-blood relationship with the people. While participating in dealing with the internal contradictions of the people, the people will enhance their own social value and self-worth. The value of the people is reflected, which is conducive to mobilizing the people to actively cooperate with all policies of the Party and the state, and is conducive to the people's active participation in the work of the masses. Adhere to the people-oriented scientific concept of development, deeply realize the dependence between the leading role of the socialist core value system and the difference and diversity, recognize and respect differences, and tolerate and treat diversity kindly. Continuously consolidate the great unity of the people of all ethnic groups across the country, strengthen the great unity of Chinese people at home and abroad, adhere to the democratic system, and enhance the enthusiasm of the people to participate in political life. Correctly handle the different needs of the people; respect the historical main position of the people, and take the in-depth construction of party style and clean government and the fight against corruption as a major task to strengthen the construction of governance capacity, expand social identity with the pioneering and exemplary role of Communist Party members, reach ideological consensus, and constantly create socialist culture The vivid vitality of chemical construction forms a vivid situation of harmonious socialist construction.

"People's needs for a better life are becoming more and more extensive, which not only puts forward higher

requirements for material and cultural life, but also increases the requirements for democracy, the rule of law, fairness, justice, security, environment and other aspects." At the same time, although the level of productivity in China's society has generally improved significantly, "a more prominent problem is unbalanced and insufficient development, which has become a major constraint to meet people's growing needs for a better life [3]." In fact, the internal contradictions of the people are still the main factors affecting the current social stability. "Correct Handling" provides correct guidance in this regard, clarifies two different types of contradictions, and emphasizes the long-standing principle of democratic methods to deal with internal contradictions among the people. Historical practice proves that whether the internal contradictions of the people can be handled correctly is a major political issue related to whether the Party can formulate and implement the correct political line and affect the consolidation and development of the Party. When we correctly understand and deal with the internal contradictions of the people, we can enhance the unity of the people and give full play to the enthusiasm of the people. The cause of the Party will have an inexhaustible driving force and a solid foundation for governing; on the contrary, it will shake the people's trust in the Party and the government, affect the people's enthusiasm for building socialism, and even make small things turn into big things, leading to the intensification of contradictions and a big disaster. Xi Jinping pointed out, "The more our cause progresses and develops, the more new situations and problems we will face, the more risks and challenges we will face, and the more unpredictable things we will face [4]." Due to the diversification of the pattern of economic interests, the subjects of interest are also more diverse and the interests are intricate, with the wide gap between the rich and the poor, the significant gap between urban and rural areas, the sharp gender opposition and social conflicts caused by it. The manifestations and characteristics of contradictions in the new era are more complex and profound than before, but some insights can still be obtained from "Correct Handling". First of all, we need to truly understand and face the various problems and contradictions that really exist in the current social development, that is, affirm the universality of contradictions. Mao Zedong clearly pointed out that in a socialist society, contradictions are inevitable. "The idea without contradiction is a naive idea that is not in line with the objective reality" [5] Denying contradiction is denying the dialectical principle. The contradiction movement promotes social development. In the process of building a harmonious society, we should not avoid or fear these contradictions. Instead, we should conduct an in-depth analysis of them, have a strong sense of problems and contradictions, correctly deal with and continue to deepen reform and promote innovation. The peculiarity of contradictions requires a correct view of these contradictions and a wise attitude, not a simple and rough approach. Especially in dealing with emergencies and dealing with the needs of different social groups, adopting a cautious attitude, dealing with various contradictions flexibly and properly, uniting all those who can be united to the greatest extent, and mobilizing all positive factors that can be mobilized is the key to correctly handling the internal contradictions of the people, and it is also to build a harmonious socialist society. The fundamental value principle and the pursuit of the highest value. Only by taking people as the core value concept and goal, always putting the fundamental interests of the people at the top of the work of the Party and the state, ensuring that development is people-centered, relying on the people, allowing the people to share the fruits, and promoting the comprehensive development of the people at the same time, can we firmly grasp the initiative of contradiction transformation. Mao Zedong pointed out, "Our goal is to create a political situation that is centralized and democratic, disciplined and free, unified will, and personal mood is comfortable and lively" [2] Such a prospect is the concrete manifestation of a harmonious society. To achieve a harmonious socialist society, it is necessary to constantly identify and solve internal contradictions in society, so as to create a situation that satisfies the people, has stable society and orderly development. This requires proactively facing these contradictions, taking measures to resolve them, be good at creating conditions to transform the nature of contradictions in a direction conducive to the interests of the people, prevent people's internal contradictions from intensifying into confrontational contradictions, and try our best to reduce the existence of disharmony factors in order to finally achieve the goal of building a harmonious socialist society. The continuous, stable progress and harmonious development of the current society.

Reviewing China's modern history and re-examining Mao Zedong's important role in the process of Chinese revolution and construction is conducive to a more comprehensive understanding of the evolution of the Communist Party of China and Chinese society. China in the Mao Zedong era has experienced many great changes, and China has been on the road of reform and development to cope with contemporary international and domestic challenges. The analysis of his writings is a confirmation of the Mao Zedong line of every generation of leaders in modern Chinese politics under the leadership of the Communist Party of China, and also because his thought still has a guiding and inspiring reflection on the current development of China.

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