

***ON HAVING A CORRECT UNDERSTANDING OF THE POLITICAL,
MORAL AND MATERIAL INCENTIVES***

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It is very important for social scientists to eliminate their misguided attitude of dogmatically approaching the preceding theory and foreign experience. Juche must be established thoroughly.

It is said that a new change has taken place in the attitude of the social scientists towards the preceding theory. Their way of thinking also became altered after the great leader explained an original solution to the problems of the transition period from capitalism to socialism and of proletarian dictatorship. This is very positive. However, people's ideological viewpoint and system of thought do not change in a couple of days. Flunkeyism and dogmatism still remain to a large extent in the social scientists. The social science sector should continually increase its efforts to put an end to flunkeyism and dogmatism and establish Juche. It is necessary to reexamine, from the standpoint of Juche, and in general, the existing theories and foreign experience which have been regarded as being absolute until now. Without a powerful struggle to establish Juche it will be impossible to give social scientists a full understanding of the leader's revolutionary ideas and theories. Such a comprehension is vital in making social sciences properly serve the revolution and the construction of our country.

Fully arming the social scientists with the revolutionary idea of our Party and thoroughly establishing Juche in scientific researches is all the more urgent under the present circumstances when Rightist and Leftist opportunism has appeared in the international communist movement, and is doing great harm to socialist construction. At the moment there is much argument throughout the world with regard to the problem of the transition period from capitalism to socialism, the problem of the political, moral and material incentives for labour, the problem of the rate and equilibrium of economic development and other problems which are of great importance in the building of socialism and communism. In the course of arguments over this topic, various deviations occur. The social scientists in our country also argue over these problems a great deal. Therefore, today I would like to tell you my view about some of these issues which are now of great contention among the scientists.

First I would like to address the correlation between the political, moral and material incentives in socialist society.

The arguments on the political, moral and material incentives for labour can basically be divided into two tendencies. One is the over-estimation of the importance of the material incentive for labour and an underestimation of the role of the political and moral incentive,

and the other is the neglect of the importance of the material incentive and the emphasis only on the political and moral incentive. Both positions are lacking reason and harmful both theoretically and from the point of view of practice.

A correct solution can be found to the problem of the political, moral and material incentives only when it, like the problem of the transition period, is dealt with on the basis of our Party's Juche idea. The issue of combining the political, moral and material incentives is a new problem which has been raised in socialist society following the establishment of the socialist system. Therefore, in order to have a correct idea of this problem, one must first have a right understanding of the socialist society.

Being a society which was born in defiance to the old exploiter society, the socialist society is completely new and is qualitatively different from the capitalist society. Capitalist society is a society which is based on individualism; in this society class antagonism and struggle constitute the basis of social relations. Contrary to this, socialist society is based on collectivism and workers' comradely unity and cooperation forms the basis of social relations. The essential features of socialism lie in the fact that the working masses are the masters over state power and the means of production. People unite in ideology and will and cooperate in a comradely way because of the homogeneous nature of their social status, together with their common purpose and interests. This is also an important factor promoting the development of the socialist society.

In addition to this communist characteristic, socialist society also has the character of being transitional. The transitional nature of socialist society is tied with the ideological, technological and cultural backwardness left by the exploiter society. Even after the establishment of the socialist system the vestiges of the old ideology and culture remain, the level of the development of the productive forces is not so high as to realize communist methods of distribution and therefore various inconsistencies remain such as the class differences between the workers and peasants and the differences in the working conditions of the labourers and in the standard of their material and cultural life. Because of this, socialist society is distinguished from the higher stage of communism. Having both the communist characteristic and the transitional characteristic is the hallmark of the socialist society. It is different from the already crumbled capitalist society and also from the future communist society. In considering socialist society it is wrong to see only the communist traits and fail to take the transitional traits into account; it is also misguided to see only the transitional aspects and fail to consider the communist aspects.

The communist and transitional character of socialist society is reflected in the working life of the labourers. People have both political and moral interest as well as material interest in the result of their work. If the political and moral incentive to increase their interest for labour is related to the communist nature of socialist society, the material incentive to increase their interest is related to

the transitional nature.

The position of giving prominence only to the material incentive for labour can be attributed to the neglect of the communist character of socialist society, and putting the main stress on its transitional character. Those who regard material incentive as most important demand that the system of material incentive be introduced into the whole economic framework. They claim that stimulating the working people materially is the most effective method for encouraging their enthusiasm for increased production and developing the economy rapidly. They argue that even after the establishment of the socialist system the remnants of the old ideology left over from the exploiter society remain to a large degree in the minds of workers. They even maintain that in socialist society, too, such economic levers as profit, bonus and price should be used as the basic means of economic management in order to increase returns. Along with this is the notion that enterprises should be allowed to set prices as they please and produce those goods which bring a great amount of profit. This is anti-socialist and revisionist theory which aims at reverting the socialist economy into a capitalist economy. If a socialist economy is managed in accordance with such revisionist theory, the difference between a socialist economy and a capitalist economy will gradually disappear and socialist economies will degenerate into capitalist ones. In the final analysis, mercenary egoism will gain ground among people and in the end it will reach the level where it erodes and undermines the whole socialist society.

On the other hand, those who insist on only the political and moral incentive emphasize merely the communist traits of socialist society ignoring its transitional character. They maintain that in socialist society there is no need for material reward which corresponds with the result of work, and therefore purely egalitarian principles should be applied in distribution. The argument goes that here all labourers work of their own free will displaying a high degree of political enthusiasm for the society and collective, for the country and people. The insistence that equal distribution should be made under the conditions of socialist society, where people do not yet regard nationwide undertakings or collective labour as their own work and the productive forces are not developed to such an extent that people work according to their ability and distribution can be made according to needs, is in the final analysis a Leftist theory attempting to realize communism in one swift sweep, skipping the stages of social development. The impossibility of introducing purely egalitarian distribution under the conditions of socialist society was already proved during the experience of the Commune which existed in the first period of the Soviet government in the USSR. Those countries which are building socialism ought to be able to learn a lesson from the experience of the Commune. If one applies egalitarian principles in distribution, shutting one's eyes to the reality of socialist society and the historical experience and without regard to the result of labour, this will dampen the working people's enthusiasm to increase production and could lead to a loathing to

work or trying to work little but get a large share of goods, all of which will hamper progress in the building of socialism.

If we raise the question of which to lay emphasis on, in balancing the political, moral and material incentives, I think it should be said that the political and moral incentive should be stressed and this should be backed up by the material incentive. The communist character and the transitional character do not hold the same position and do not play the same role in socialist society simply because both exist side by side. The essential features of a socialist society always lie in its communist character. The process of building socialism and communism is the process in which the communist aspects of the socialist society continually increase whereas its transitional aspects gradually fade out. Therefore, with the progress of the building of socialism and communism the role of the political and moral incentive reflecting the communist character of socialist society increases still further whereas the role of the material incentive reflecting its transitional character gradually reduces.

Putting the main stress on the political and moral incentive and properly augmenting this with the material incentive is the absolutely correct way for promoting the energetic building of socialism. This will encourage the revolutionary zeal of the popular masses and their enthusiasm to increase production. The essential superiority of the socialist system is that the working masses work by displaying voluntary and creative enthusiasm for the country and the people as well as for their own welfare; and this superiority can only be manifested fully under the conditions of increasing the political and moral incentive. It is only when all the working people conscientiously take part in labour with a master-like attitude, giving precedence to the political and moral incentive, that production, economic management and everything related to it will go smoothly. The most important aspect of stimulating the working people politically and morally is to increase political work. It is only when the working people are made to have a clear understanding of what they work for and how important their work, accomplished through efficient political work, that they will be conscious of being masters and implement their revolutionary tasks with a high sense of responsibility displaying revolutionary enthusiasm.

The experience of the building of socialism in our country shows clearly that really great strength can be displayed when Party members and working people are awakened politically and ideologically and when their revolutionary enthusiasm is stimulated. In the very difficult days of postwar reconstruction our people built new factories and rural communities over debris, tightening their belts and the workers of Kangson worked hard and displayed fortitude and miraculously produced in a single year 120,000 tons of rolled steel from a blooming mill whose rated capacity was only 60,000 tons. They did all this not because they wanted any remuneration. The major key to the great Chollima upsurge, which we brought about in the most difficult period of socialist construction to the admiration of the world's people, lies in the fact that we gave full rein to the

revolutionary enthusiasm of the popular masses, possible only through efficient political work. If the working people are made to work for mercenary ends instead of working of their own free will, as they do with proper political work, the masses will display neither creativity nor mass heroism.

It is a grave mistake to think that production can continually grow through such methods as increasing wages and giving bonuses. In socialist society the attempt to move people by money is an insult to the working class and others who together are the masters of society. Our working class is currently making a significant achievement in the building of socialism by displaying great creativity. They are not at all doing so just to earn more money. At one time in our country, too, some economic officials who were steeped in revisionism went to the Hwanghae Iron Works. Everyday they made, through '°promis?sorry note'±, the monetary assessment of the result of the workers' labour, under the pretext of making use of the law of value. As it hap?pened the workers of this iron works said that they worked not for money but for the country and the people and told these officials to go back at once with all their law of value and the '°law of valves'±. It is a capitalist method to make people work for money; we can never build socialism and communism through such a method.

We should fully equip all the working people with a collectivist spirit through intensifying political work. In this way we can ensure that they clearly understand that their own individual interests are included in the interests of the collective. They will fight with com?plete devotion for society and the collective.

It is important to educate the working people in the spirit of indus?try. The working people will not acquire the communist attitude towards work of their own accord merely because they have become the masters of production. We must increase the education in the spir?it of industry so that everyone regards labour as sacred and honourable. Workers need to come to consider it their noble duty to devote all their strength and wisdom towards toiling in the name of the country and the people, for society and the collective.

If we are to increase revolutionary enthusiasm among the working people, we must make proper political and moral assessments of the labour results. Our working people regard it as their greatest pride to make a contribution to the Party and the revolution with their wisdom and labour. They prefer to receive political appraisal of the results of their labour to getting material rewards. We should give high political appraisal to the success made by the working people in their labour and give great social prominence to innovators so that all the working people will accomplish great feats in the building of socialism by dis?playing great enthusiasm and self-confidence.

The political and moral incentive to work should always be rein?forced by the material incentive. Material incentive to labour is need?ed because there are inequalities in labour and the vestiges of the old ideology linger in the minds of people for a long time after the estab?lishment of the socialist system. What we oppose is not

material incentive itself but the promotion of egoism among people which happens when the material incentive is lauded above doing political work.

The material incentive in socialist society is fundamentally different from how it operates in capitalist society. In capitalist society where exploitation and oppression prevail, the material incentive to work serves as a means for infringing upon the independence of the workers and increasing their exploitation. However, in socialist society, the material incentive, through the material assessment of the output, plays the role of encouraging the working people to work by displaying enthusiasm and creativity with the consciousness befitting masters. We offer better material treatment to those workers who are engaged in the sectors where work is difficult and arduous than those engaged in other sectors. We do so not merely to give material incentive to work. We do not merely stimulate people materially as in capitalist society; this is done because the workers engaged in difficult and arduous sectors consume more energy both physically and mentally than those engaged in other sectors, therefore to enable them to make up for their consumed energy and do their work still better we provide them with more.

If we are to put the material incentive to work into effect properly we must fully implement the principle of socialist distribution.

Distributing a large share to those who have done a lot of work and a small share to those who have done little work, according to the amount and quality of work done, stimulates people's enthusiasm to increase production and, at the same time, serves as a major means of opposing the old idea of loathing work. If, ignoring the principle of socialist distribution, egalitarian methods are applied, equal pay given to those engaged in arduous work and those engaged in easy work and an equal amount of produce is distributed among the workers regardless of their workload, skill level, or quality of workmanship, people will not work hard to increase production and improve skills. In this case the practices of striving to have an easy life, lounging away on the job may be promoted. Therefore, we must ensure that the principle of socialist distribution is implemented accurately through proper assessment of the work norms and wages and by making use of the forms of additional payment such as bonuses.

Now I would like to make some brief remarks concerning the rate of economic development and equilibrium.

There are economic scientists in some socialist countries who insist that speed should be altered in conformity with equilibrium claiming that equilibrium is more important than speed in the development of the economy.

Speed, however, is of primary importance and this is what we must stress in the speed vs equilibrium debate in economic development.

As a matter of course, the speed in economic development presupposes equilibrium, and the economy can develop at a high rate only when it is based on proper equilibrium. However, adjusting equilibrium in the socialist economy is not an end in itself but aims at ensuring a high rate of economic development. Being the means to

ensure the speed of economic development, the equilibrium of the economy should be subordinated to speed. Therefore, in mapping out the national economic plan speed must be regarded as the central factor and equilibrium should be adjusted on the principle of ensuring speed. In other words, the speed of economic development should be paced to meet the requirements of Party policy and equilibrium should be adjusted between various branches of the national economy and between all the factors of production by actively exploiting the potentials and possibilities so as to ensure speed.

At present some people demand that the plan for the national economy should be mapped out at a low speed, claiming that it is impossible to expect a continual high rate of growth in production because the potential for the development in production decreases as the economy develops and its scale becomes larger. This is a revisionist theory which is blind to the superiority of the socialist system; it is a very harmful capitulationist tendency to retreat in the building of socialist economy. In socialist society the potentials and possibilities of growth in production increase further still with the development of the economy because manpower, raw materials and other necessities are used rationally with the uniform guidance of the state. Production, distribution, accumulation and consumption are conducted according to plan. In particular, in socialist society there is a great political, ideological factor for developing the productive forces rapidly. Those who attach greater importance to equilibrium than speed see the major factor for the development of socialist economy in such material conditions as raw materials, other necessities and tools. They are mistaken. In socialist society one's own force, not the objective conditions, is the decisive factor which determines the high rate of economic development. Socialist economy continually develops under the correct leadership of the Party and thanks to the high degree of revolutionary enthusiasm and the creativity of the working people who have become the masters of the state and society. Therefore, in the management of the economy one must first consider people before taking into account equipment or raw materials and other necessities; in order to ensure the rapid development of the national economy, one must first take into account the intense loyalty to the Party and the leader of the producer masses as well as their revolutionary enthusiasm rather than the material conditions.

Our country succeeded in overfulfilling the Five-Year Plan in four years and since this plan period has ended, the economy is continually developing at a high rate. This fact clearly proves that the economy can constantly be developed at high speed if the Party and the state put forward a correct policy and energetically rouse the masses for the policy's implementation while also making a great effort to tap reserves and potential power by organizing economic work effectively.

Emphasizing the importance of speed in the speed vs equilibrium debate does not mean that equilibrium can be neglected or that its role

can be ignored. The high rate of economic development is guaranteed by active equilibrium which is established and maintained according to plan. Planned and balanced development is an important feature and superiority of the socialist economy. There are some people saying currently that in socialist society the establishment of equilibrium is a temporary phenomenon and, therefore, the economy develops in waves. In other words, their assertion is that the socialist economy develops in such a way that at one point it grows and at another point it goes backward, owing to temporary equilibrium and constant disequilibrium. This is a very misguided theory. If, in a socialist economy, the establishment of equilibrium is a temporary phenomenon and the continual disruption of equilibrium is the overall phenomenon, there would be no qualitative difference between socialist economy and capitalist economy. In capitalist society, based on the private ownership of the means of production, equilibrium is continually upset and economic chaos and anarchy prevail because the capitalists compete with each other fiercely in order to gain more profits. However, in socialist society in which the means of production are under public ownership and the state manages the national economy in a uniform way, there cannot be disequilibrium of the economy as a matter of principle. If the Party and the state grasp promptly and accurately the requirements of the constantly changing reality and adopt proper measures, it will be possible to develop the economy at a swift pace while always ensuring equilibrium.

In our country the national economy continually develops at an unusually high rate. This is because correct and active equilibrium capable of ensuring a high rate is guaranteed in accordance with the policy of unified and detailed planning¹². However, in some socialist countries the economy stands still or does not develop at a continually brisk pace but rather undergoes fluctuations. This is not at all a shortcoming which has to do with the essential characteristics of a socialist economy. The misguided theories concerning the speed of economic development vs equilibrium, which are now advocated in other countries, are very harmful in that they defame the superiority of socialism and create obstacles and chaos for the development of the socialist economy. They are, in the final analysis, no more than sophistry attempting to justify their errors and shortcomings in economic construction.

Officials in the field of social sciences should correctly be able to discriminate and categorically reject the opportunist theories which are advocated in the world, and resolutely defend and implement our Party's theory of economic construction.

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