

***PARTY OFFICIALS MUST BECOME MEN OF REAL ABILITY, EQUIPPED  
WITH A HIGH LEVEL OF POLITICAL AND PRACTICAL  
QUALIFICATIONS***

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Talk to the Officials of the Propaganda and Agitation Department of  
the Central Committee of the Workers' Party of Korea  
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A very important task facing us at present is the improvement of the political and practical qualifications of senior officials. Therefore, the great leader said in his New Year Address this year that a revolutionary habit of studying must be established under the slogan 'Let the entire Party study!' and that in the coming year the cadres must improve their qualifications and raise their leadership ability to a higher level. However, while Party organizations stress in words the need for officials to raise the level of leadership, they do not push ahead with this task forcefully. No unit which I have visited has established the revolutionary habit of studying and no noteworthy change has taken place in the work method or work attitude of cadres. The present situation urgently requires that officials improve their working ability and raise their level of leadership quickly. If they try to work only with the knowledge and experience they acquired in the past, they can neither accelerate the revolution and construction nor fulfil their responsibility and role of the leaders of the revolution. Our revolution has now developed in its content and depth into a new stage that is different from the period of socialist transformation, or the early period of socialist construction. In our country a historic task of socialist industrialization has already been carried out. On this basis the struggle to carry out the three major tasks of the technical revolution<sup>15</sup> is being launched, at the same time another task has come to the fore: that of fully equipping all members of society with the monolithic ideology of our Party, revolutionizing the whole society and assimilating it to the working class by pushing forward the ideological and cultural revolutions vigorously. Only by rapidly improving the qualifications and leadership ability of senior officials in keeping with the new requirements of the developing revolution is it possible to speed up the revolution and construction and carry out successfully the very important tasks put forward by the Fifth Party Congress.

It is particularly important to improve the political and practical qualifications of Party officials.

Since they are to guide all fields of social life, such as politics, the economy and culture. Party officials must acquire a rich and comprehensive knowledge. Whether the Party's line and policy are implemented correctly or not depends largely on the ability of Party officials who organize and guide their implementation. No matter how correct the Party line and policy may be, it is impossible to carry

them out successfully if the officials' political and practical qualifications are low and they are incompetent.

At present, the general level of Party officials is low. Party organizational and ideological work has not been intensified in step with the developing reality. The outdated methods and style of work, such as abuse of Party authority, bureaucratism and taking administrative affairs upon themselves, have not been eliminated among the officials. This is mainly due to their low level of political and practical qualifications. Among our officials there is hardly anybody who dislikes to work or neglects his duty. They are enthusiastic and keen on their work, but because of a lack of ability they have little success in comparison with the efforts they put forth, and they often inadvertently make mistakes.

If one has poor political and practical qualifications and no ability, one can neither work in a revolutionary way in keeping with the Party's intention nor be loyal to the Party and the leader. By ability I mean creative ability. Loyalty and enthusiasm without creative ability are no more than subjective desires, which produce no result in practice. I have said that if we have only intense loyalty, we can solve any problem. By that I mean that when we make strenuous efforts to implement the leader's instructions with single-hearted loyalty to him, we can acquire ability and knowledge we did not possess before, and accordingly we can carry out tasks successfully, no matter how difficult they might be. Therefore, if we are to become true Party officials who are unfailingly loyal to the Party and the leader, we must be competent: we must have high political and ideological qualifications, a great deal of knowledge and the ability to organize work skilfully. We must also develop the ability with which to perform our revolutionary duties satisfactorily.

Party officials must, first of all, make the effort to acquire a high politico-theoretical level and learn the methods of Party work. Party officials are educators of the masses and executors of Party policy; they have the responsibility to equip the Party members and other working people firmly with the revolutionary ideology and theory of our Party and lead them politically so that Party policy is implemented correctly. If they do not have a high politico-theoretical level or a wide political vision, and if they are not familiar with the principles and methods of Party work, they will be unable to establish the Party's monolithic ideological system either among Party members or the rest of society, nor will they be able to push ahead with the revolution and construction.

At present, some Party officials lack a keen political sense and do not know how to analyze and judge things politically. They fail to distinguish between important and unimportant matters, between essential and unessential elements in their work. So they often make much ado about minor shortcomings, as if these were serious, while overlooking major problems, regarding them as trifling despite the fact that they should be dealt with seriously. Some time ago, an official of the Pyongyang City Party Committee summoned his subordinates and on behalf of the organization conveyed to them a

certain individual official's words as an instruction. This is an act contrary to the requirement of the Party's monolithic ideological system. However, it was tolerated without being criticized immediately. If they are politically dull and fail to distinguish between right and wrong, Party officials will be unable to overcome non-Party elements promptly and may greatly hamper the strengthening and development of the Party.

In order to improve their political and practical qualifications, they must arm themselves firmly with the Juche idea, the revolutionary idea of our Party, and master the Party line and policy by studying in depth the works of the great leader and the Party's policy. The leader's works and the Party's policy are an elucidation of the principles of the Juche idea and all other theoretical and practical matters relating to Party work and its activity. When they are well versed in the leader's works and Party policy, they can solve all difficult and complex problems in accordance with the leader's intentions and the requirement of the Party, and push on with all their work boldly and confidently. Party officials must study the leader's works and the Party's policy in depth comprehensively and historically. Unless they study them in this manner they cannot fully grasp their essence and are likely to deviate when implementing them.

Party officials must be familiar with Party work and their own duties. If they are not, they cannot push forward their work in a revolutionary way, but will hesitate to display initiative and mechanically transmit instructions from superiors to subordinates. In order to raise their own political, theoretical and practical levels, Party officials must read on a regular basis every issue of the Party paper and also political and theoretical magazines, particularly Party Work and Kulloja. Only then can they understand the requirements of Party policy and its intentions for each period, raise their political and theoretical levels, learn from the experience of Party work, and keep track of information coming in on the successes in socialist construction and on the South Korean and international situations. If he is to perform his duty, a Party official should become a man of wide knowledge. Only then can he work well with people—the essential part of Party work—and give substantial Party leadership to administrative and economic tasks.

Without a profound and comprehensive knowledge, one cannot work with people efficiently. It would be a mistake to think that a good style of work is all that is needed for you to mix with the masses and deal with them satisfactorily. Since working with people involves people of different ages and different jobs, intellectual standards and past histories, a comprehensive knowledge is required for conducting this work properly to suit their characteristics. If you deal with factory workers, you need knowledge of industry; if you work with farmers in rural communities you need to know about agriculture; and if you work among writers and artists in a cultural and artistic environment, you should have a good grounding in art and literature. If an official who guides the work of art and literature is ignorant in

these two areas of culture, he can understand neither the lives of writers and artists nor their mental states, nor can he go deep into their inner world. Lacking a general knowledge of art and literature as they do, quite a few Party officials are at a loss for words concerning stories or musical pieces when they talk to writers and artists. They just give monotonous instructions and then tell them to bring up any problems they may have in and out of work. If they work with people strictly as administrators or officials, people will not open up to them, since neither side understands the other, even though they meet and talk frequently.

If they lack comprehensive knowledge, Party officials cannot give effective Party leadership in administrative and economic work. Party officials must, without exception, have a knowledge of economics, science and technology. Of course, Party officials are political workers, so they cannot be as well versed in specialized knowledge as professional workers. However, in order for the Party to control and guide administrative and economic work it is necessary for Party officials to acquire knowledge on the different sectors in their charge, plus common knowledge on modern science and technology. If they are ignorant about these, they will not be able to discover exactly what deviations and problems there are in implementing the Party policy, no matter how often they may visit the relevant sectors, nor can they take appropriate measures to correct these deviations and shortcomings.

The Tsean work system is not being implemented thoroughly and production is unsteady in many national economic sectors. This is due, in no small measure, to the fact that the Party officials of factories and enterprises lack knowledge both of the theory of economic management under socialism and of industrial management. The Tsean work system is an economic management system that embodies the revolutionary mass line. Ensuring the Party committee's collective leadership over enterprise management and production is the essential requirement of the Tsean system and its greatest advantage. In order to give full play to the advantages of the Tsean system by enhancing the Party committee's function of collective leadership, and in order to manage the economy scientifically and rationally, Party officials must be familiar with economic laws and economic categories and have a knowledge of management. But Party secretaries of some factories and other enterprises are guiding the work of Party committees without any knowledge of production costs or the method of cost accounting, and without a clear idea of enterprise management regulations. Because of this they are unable to make a scientific analysis as to whether production and the management of their factories are proceeding in accordance with the Party's economic policy and the laws of the socialist economy, nor can they deal with problems correctly through their own firm conviction. Poorly qualified and incompetent people cannot shape their own opinions, nor can they push on with their work forcefully, swayed as they are by this or that opinion and vacillating between right and left. When things reach this point, they

are unable to live up to Party principles.

Party work and economic work are not now being closely coordinated with each other, mainly because Party officials are not well informed of the economy and fail to penetrate deep into economic work. Take the guidance of the Party life of Party members as an example. Their Party life is not being assessed on the basis of how they have performed their own revolutionary duties; in many cases what is talked about is the problems arising in people's personal lives and how much of planned quotas has been carried out. Some officials are in the habit of shouting at people, behaving bureaucratically and trying to maintain their prestige on the strength of their official authority. All this shows that they are incompetent. You cannot earn prestige by dint of your rank or diploma. Party officials' prestige is guaranteed by their real ability, not by their diplomas or their official authority. Only a man of real ability can formulate a correct methodology and work reasonably, and every single word he says carries weight and builds up Party prestige. Rich emotions and a high degree of cultural refinement are major qualities required of Party officials. If a Party official is unfeeling and stiff, he cannot mix with the masses easily, and the masses will not follow him. If he feels merry or pleasant, he should laugh; and when he is excited or sad, he should cry. Quite a few Party officials do not know how to appreciate music, or analyse and evaluate films, operas or other works of art and literature. A man of low cultural level is naturally unfeeling and unsympathetic. Party officials must improve their cultural standards and learn how to appreciate works of art and literature, sing songs and recite poetry. In short, Party officials must have knowledge of politics, economics, art and literature, and be able to deal with everything skilfully wherever they go.

In order to improve officials' political and practical qualifications, it is necessary to establish a revolutionary habit of studying throughout the Party.

Studying is one of the basic ways of improving officials' qualifications. No man is born with knowledge. Knowledge is acquired and accumulated only through studying and practical activities. Party officials must study hard and broaden and enrich their knowledge of politics, economics, culture, military affairs and various other disciplines.

The leader has said that our people have three bad habits—pretending to be important, pretending to be rich and pretending to be well-informed—and that the worst of them is to pretend to be well-informed. Pretending to be knowledgeable is as foolish as deceiving oneself or shooting oneself in the foot. A man who pretends to have knowledge and talks big will fail to develop and will end in becoming a good-for-nothing, simply because of his paucity of knowledge.

Party officials must be clearly aware that their knowledge and qualifications are short of the requirements of the developing realities and of the Party. A foreign writer has said that a fool who realizes he is a fool is no longer a fool. I think that the writer was

right. A man who is conscious of his ignorance strives to learn. That is a good thing, and there is nothing to be ashamed of in striving to learn.

For our officials to study is not a merely technical matter of acquiring knowledge and adding to their common sense, but a noble political task that must be carried out in order to perform their revolutionary duties successfully, prove themselves worthy of the high trust and expectations of the Party and of the leader, demonstrating loyalty to the Party and the leader. We have become Party officials because the leader trusts us, not because we are highly qualified. Although they are held in confidence by the leader, Party officials' ability falls far short of their revolutionary duties. Their qualifications are low not because they have not received systematic education in former days, but because they have not studied hard and have not made painstaking efforts to improve their qualifications. Of our cadres, those who had no access to education before liberation have now received education at Party cadre training schools, thanks to the leader's solicitude, and young cadres have all received systematic socialist education. But after their promotion to cadres they have discontinued proper study on the excuse that they are under pressure from work. In consequence, their political and practical qualifications lag behind the developing realities. Party officials must clearly understand the significance and importance of study and apply themselves to this task.

Officials say that they cannot study because they have no time under the pressure of work. That is only an excuse. Anti-Japanese guerrillas studied constantly, carrying books in their hands even during hard-fought battles and on arduous marches. They never suspended this activity, even if it meant skipping their meals. Our officials must follow the example of the anti-Japanese guerrillas and adopt study as their daily routine. Some people put it off, saying that they will study intensively, perhaps for days on end, once they have finished their urgent tasks. This is tantamount to saying that they will not study. The revolution will not be over in a day or two. It has to continue down through generations, so new revolutionary tasks present themselves before us continually. Revolutionaries must study regularly and learn and learn, right to the end of their lives.

Party officials must become diligent students and read a great deal. At present, a social atmosphere of enthusiastic reading does not exist. Whichever sector I visit, people ask for solutions to various problems at meetings, but no one asks for books. This means that they are not keen on reading and do not see reading as a primary requirement in their lives.

There is no better method of gaining a rich and comprehensive knowledge than copious reading. Books are a treasure-house of knowledge and the textbooks for a person's life. Party officials must carry books and read them when they go on official trips or on guidance tours and study, at least two hours a day, no matter how busy they are.

Studying must be done substantially and directed towards a distinct

goal. Only when you set the goal and stages distinctly and study one by one without fail can you take interest and succeed in studying. Reading a lot of books indiscriminately is not the way to increase your knowledge or raise your intellectual level. If you read this or that book for amusement without a purpose, little will remain in your memory, and reading will not benefit you much in your work or life. Reading with no purpose or thinking is not reading; it is relaxation. In order to increase your real ability you must eliminate formalism in studying and read every single page substantially and in deep thought so that you can acquire the working knowledge you need for carrying out your revolutionary duties.

Officials must study of their own accord, but considering their old habit of neglecting study, their studying will have to be controlled instead of being left to the mercy of spontaneity. In order to establish the revolutionary habit of studying, it is necessary to combine voluntarism with guidance and control. Party organizations must give cadres and Party members study assignments regularly, review the results of their study and urge them to attend the Saturday study session, Wednesday public lecture, one-month training course and other group studies without exception. A man who says that he has no time to study does not study even when he does have time. We must call to account those people who, under one pretext or another, neglect their own study and violate the system and discipline of this activity. We must combat this practice without compromise so that no one can be passed off without studying.

It is important in improving Party officials' qualifications to see that they learn and acquire a high degree of ability to organize work and develop the revolution in the course of practical work. Although studying is a good method of improving officials' political and practical qualifications, intensive studying alone is not enough for them to acquire the ability, as revolutionary leaders, to organize the masses skilfully for the implementation of Party policy and develop the revolution. Only knowledge and ability consolidated through practice can be effective and useful. Party officials must acquire a useful working knowledge and experience in Party work and increase their expertise in the course of fulfilling their basic duties. They must always study their work deeply and, after finishing a task, review it of their own accord, gaining experience and learning a lesson from it. This is the way to increase their ability to plan work and to operate and learn the method of organizing and mobilizing the masses.

In order to speed up the improvement of Party officials' qualifications, it is necessary for superiors to help their subordinates and teach them by the method of one teaching ten, ten a hundred, and a hundred a thousand. Senior Party officials in particular must help their subordinates with great care and work hard to improve their qualifications. They must help their subordinates to improve their qualifications so that they are capable of doing their bit. As the saying goes, a general by himself is no general; by the same token, senior officials cannot carry out all tasks by themselves. Senior officials of the Party Central Committee, and of the provincial, city

and county Party committees must take their subordinates with them when they go on guidance tours and teach them how to organize work, how to do political work among the masses, how to sum up the work of guidance, and so on.

Whenever they have a new task, officials request more staff to deal with it. This is the wrong way to think. The real problem in Party work at present is not the organizational structure or the number of Party officials, but their political and practical qualifications. We must find a solution to the problem by improving the officials' qualifications and let each of them do the work of two to three, rather than increasing the organizational structure. As all of you know, there is a great strain on the manpower situation in our country at the moment, and whether or not we find a solution to this problem is very important: we need to solve it in order to carry out the Six-Year Plan successfully and accelerate our revolution and construction. The leader has instructed that strenuous efforts be made to tap manpower reserves in all sectors and units, and that the organizational structure of the whole Party, too, should be examined and reduced. In the field of production and construction, manpower reserves arise from increasing the efficiency of all the working people through technical revolution and powerful political work, where, as in the Party organs manpower reserves come from increasing work efficiency of Party officials. Party officials must work hard to improve their qualifications, and each of them must become a match for a hundred, just as the People's Army is a match for a hundred.

Fully aware of the great importance of improving their political and practical qualifications. Party officials must make unremitting efforts to become capable of doing anything that is required of them.

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