

## TEXT 16

# REPORT ON THE REVISION OF THE CONSTITUTION

*delivered by Chang Chun-chiao*

Fellow Deputies!

The Draft Revised Text of the Constitution of the People's Republic of China submitted by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China to the Congress for its deliberation has been issued to all the deputies. At the behest of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China, I shall explain some points.

Twenty years ago, in 1954, the First National People's Congress adopted the Constitution of the People's Republic of China. Our great leader Chairman Mao Tsetung pointed out, "**An organization must have rules, and a state also must have rules; the Constitution is a set of general rules and is a fundamental charter.**" The Constitution of 1954 was China's first constitution of a socialist type. In the form of a fundamental charter it summed up historical experience, consolidated the victories of our people and mapped out a clear, well-defined course of advance for the people of the whole country. Practice in the last twenty years has proved that that Constitution was correct. Its basic principles are still applicable today. However, as tremendous changes have taken place in China's politics, economy and culture and in international relations since 1954, some parts of the Constitution are no longer suitable. In the present revision of the Constitution our main task is to sum up our new experience, consolidate our new victories and express the common desire of the people of our country to persist in continued revolution under the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Of the new victories won by our people in the last two decades the most significant has been the step-by-step consolidation and development of the socialist system under the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party headed by Chairman Mao. Through repeated trials of strength with enemies at home and abroad, and especially through the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution of the last eight years which destroyed the bourgeois headquarters of Liu Shao-chi and of Lin Piao,

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*Documents of the First Session of the Fourth National People's Congress of the People's Republic of China* (Foreign Languages Press, Peking, 1975). (Delivered on January 13, 1975 and adopted January 17, 1975.)

the people of all nationalities in our country are more united and the dictatorship of the proletariat is more consolidated than ever. What is more important is that, in the course of the struggle, Chairman Mao formulated for us a basic line for the entire historical period of socialism by applying the principle of integrating the universal truth of Marxism-Leninism with concrete practice. He says:

**Socialist society covers a considerably long historical period. In the historical period of socialism, there are still classes, class contradictions and class struggle, there is the struggle between the socialist road and the capitalist road, and there is the danger of capitalist restoration. We must recognize the protracted and complex nature of this struggle. We must heighten our vigilance. We must conduct socialist education. We must correctly understand and handle class contradictions and class struggle, distinguish the contradictions between ourselves and the enemy from those among the people and handle them correctly. Otherwise a socialist country like ours will turn into its opposite and degenerate, and a capitalist restoration will take place. From now on we must remind ourselves of this every year, every month and every day so that we can retain a rather sober understanding of this problem and have a Marxist-Leninist line.**

Both the Ninth and the Tenth Congresses of the Party reaffirmed this basic line. Our struggles against Liu Shao-chi and Lin Biao have focused on one issue: whether to uphold this basic line or to change it. Past and present class struggles all prove that this basic line is the lifeline of our Party as well as of our country. As long as we uphold it, we shall assuredly be able to overcome all difficulties, defeat enemies at home and abroad and win greater victories. This is the main experience we have gained and also our guiding thought in revising the Constitution.

The draft revised Constitution now submitted is the continuation and development of the 1954 Constitution. It was born out of repeated discussions among the people of all our nationalities and is the outcome of combining the ideas of the leading organizations and those of the masses. The Preamble is new. The number of articles has been reduced from 106 to 30. The important revisions are as follows:

(1) Starting from the Preamble, the draft revised text records the glorious history of the Chinese people's heroic struggle. "The Com-

unist Party of China is the core of leadership of the whole Chinese people” and “Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought is the theoretical basis guiding the thinking of our nation”—such is the conclusion which the people of our country have drawn from their historical experience of more than a century and which is now inscribed in the General Principles of the draft. The draft stipulates, “The National People’s Congress is the highest organ of state power under the leadership of the Communist Party of China.” It also stipulates, “The Chairman of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China commands the country’s armed forces.” Since no chairmanship of state is instituted, the draft makes a corresponding revision of the provisions of the 1954 Constitution concerning the structure of the state. All this will certainly help strengthen the Party’s centralized leadership over the structure of the state and meet the desire of the people of the whole country.

(2) The draft stipulates, “The People’s Republic of China is a socialist state of the dictatorship of the proletariat led by the working class and based on the alliance of workers and peasants.” It stipulates that the worker, peasant and soldier deputies shall form the main body of people’s congresses at all levels. It also specifies the targets of the dictatorship of the proletariat and sets forth the policies of the dictatorship. The draft includes in separate articles the rural people’s communes, which integrate government administration and economic management, and the local revolutionary committees at various levels formed on the basis of the revolutionary three-in-one combination, both of which emerged from great revolutionary mass movements. Thus, the class nature of our state and the status of each class in our country are clearly defined. Marx and Lenin consistently teach us, “**The class struggle necessarily leads to the dictatorship of the proletariat**” and “**The proletarian state is a machine for the suppression of the bourgeoisie by the proletariat.**” Our draft adheres to this principled stand of Marxism-Leninism and is sharply demarcated from such fallacies as Confucius’ “benevolent government” or the Soviet revisionist renegade clique’s “state of the whole people.”

As for our dictatorship of the proletariat, firstly, within the country it suppresses the reactionary classes and elements and those who resist socialist transformation and oppose socialist construction, and suppresses all treasonable and counter-revolutionary activities; and secondly, it protects our country from subversion and possible aggression by external enemies. It is the magic weapon with which the people of our country vanquish enemies and protect themselves. We must treasure it and constantly strengthen it. We should strengthen the great unity of the people of all our nationalities, strengthen the People’s

Liberation Army and the people's militia which are the pillar of the dictatorship of the proletariat, and strengthen the building of state organs. We should continue to consolidate the alliance of the working class with its reliable ally, the poor and lower-middle peasants, unite with the other working people and the many intellectuals, and develop the revolutionary united front which includes the patriotic democratic parties and patriotic personages in all walks of life. Only in this way can we unite with all the forces that can be united with, exercise the dictatorship of the proletariat effectively, defend the socialist system, and consolidate the independence and security of our great motherland.

(3) The dictatorship of the proletariat on the one hand exercises dictatorship over the enemy and on the other practises democratic centralism within the ranks of the people. Without ample democracy, it is impossible to have a high degree of centralism, and without a high degree of centralism, it is impossible to build socialism. The draft stipulates that all organs of state shall practise democratic centralism and specifies the democratic rights of citizens, and especially the rights of the fraternal minority nationalities and of women. It also stipulates that the masses shall have the right to speak out freely, air views fully, hold great debates and write big-character posters. Moreover, in accordance with Chairman Mao's proposal, the specification that citizens enjoy freedom to strike has been added to Article 28 of the draft. We are convinced that the revolutionary masses, who have been tempered in the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, will apply these provisions still better and "create a political situation in which there are both centralism and democracy, both discipline and freedom, both unity of will and personal ease of mind and liveliness, and so help consolidate the leadership of the Communist Party of China over the state and consolidate the dictatorship of the proletariat."

(4) The task of socialist transformation of the ownership of the means of production put forth in the 1954 Constitution has in the main been completed. The draft fully affirms this great victory of the Chinese people and lays it down that at the present stage our country has mainly two kinds of ownership of the means of production, namely, socialist ownership by the whole people and socialist collective ownership by working people. The draft also contains provisions regarding non-agricultural individual labourers and allowing people's commune members to farm small plots for their personal needs and engage in limited household side-line production. These provisions integrate the principle of adherence to socialism with the necessary flexibility and are sharply demarcated from such fallacies as those advocated by Liu Shao-chi and Lin Piao on the fixing of farm output quotas for individual households with each on its own and the abolition

of farm plots for personal needs.

The draft reiterates the general line of going all out, aiming high and achieving greater, faster, better and more economical results in building socialism, and stipulates a series of principles and policies for the consolidation and development of the socialist economic base.

It should be pointed out that in our country we still have harmony as well as contradiction between the relations of production and the productive forces and between the superstructure and the economic base. Like the morning sun, our socialist system is still very young. It was born in struggle and can only grow in struggle. Take the state sector of the economy for example. In some enterprises, the form is that of socialist ownership, but the reality is that their leadership is not in the hands of Marxists and the masses of workers. The bourgeoisie will seize hold of many fronts if the proletariat does not occupy them. Confucius died more than two thousand years ago, yet such rubbish as his never vanishes of itself where the broom of the proletariat does not reach. The draft lays down that "state organizations and state personnel must earnestly study Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought," that "the proletariat must exercise all-round dictatorship over the bourgeoisie in the superstructure, including all spheres of culture" and that state organizations and state personnel must maintain close ties with the masses and overcome unhealthy tendencies. It is precisely the purpose of these provisions to call on us to pay keen attention to grasping socialist revolution in the realm of the superstructure and to pay attention to solving problems concerning the relations of production. We must broaden, deepen and persevere in the current movement to criticize Lin Piao and Confucius and occupy all fronts with Marxism.

(5) In accordance with Chairman Mao's teaching, "**Dig tunnels deep, store grain everywhere and never seek hegemony,**" we have written into the draft that "China will never be a superpower" in order to show that our country does not seek hegemony today and that it never will. Only by emancipating all mankind can the proletariat achieve its own final emancipation. We shall always unite with the people of all countries in the common struggle to abolish the system of exploitation of man by man over the face of the globe, so that all mankind will be emancipated.

Fellow Deputies!

The work of revising the Constitution has been going on for nearly five years. This Congress will complete the work and promulgate the new fundamental charter of the People's Republic of China. This is a major event calling for our enthusiastic celebration. In order to win and defend the right to people's democracy and socialism, smash the

schemes of Kao Kang, Jao Shu-shih, Peng Teh-huai, Liu Shao-chi and Lin Piao for restoring capitalism internally and capitulating and selling out the country externally, and defeat reactionaries both at home and abroad, the people of our country have long engaged in sharp and complex struggles, in which tens of thousands of martyrs have laid down their lives. It is precisely the victories of these struggles that have given birth to this socialist Constitution. We are confident that the people of all our nationalities and, first of all, the Communists and state personnel, will earnestly implement and courageously defend this Constitution and carry the continued revolution under the dictatorship of the proletariat through to the end, so as to ensure that our great motherland will forever forge ahead victoriously along the road indicated by Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought!