

The Political Paper of the COMMUNIST LEAGUE

PEOPLE'S TRIBUNE



"The Communist's ideal should not be a trade-union secretary, but a tribune of the people, able to react to every manifestation of tyranny and oppression."

Lenin

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What is Regional Autonomy?

The question of regional autonomy is an essential part of the question of socialist revolution in general, and the national question in particular. The correctness of regional autonomy as a method of insuring democracy and the unity of the working class made up of many minorities was clearly pointed out by J.V. Stalin in his Marxism and the National Question:

"The advantage of regional autonomy consists first in the

fact that it does not deal with a fiction deprived of territory, but with a definite population inhabiting a definite territory.

"Secondly, it does not divide people according to nation, it does not strengthen national partitions; on the contrary, it only serves to break down these partitions and unites the population in such a manner as to open the way for division of a different kind, division according to class.

"Finally, it provides the opportunity of utilizing the natural wealth of the region and of developing its productive forces in the best possible way without awaiting the decisions of a common center - functions which are not proper to national cultural autonomy.

"Thus regional autonomy is
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Conditions in

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an essential element in the solution of the national problem." (International Publishers, New York, 1942, page 64)

Thus the Communist League raises the slogan, "Regional Autonomy for the Southwest" as a concrete application of the Marxist line. The demand of the Anglo-American proletariat is for unity of its class, and this unity can only be achieved through the struggle for the establishment of democracy in the Southwest, with the power to enforce that democracy in the hands of the Mexican national minority workers.

Following the Marxist program developed in the Soviet Union for the solution of the national problem, the Communist Party of China, led by Mao Tse Tung have successfully implemented this program in China as a solution to the problem of guaranteeing democracy for its national minorities. The following article (reprinted from Peking Review #18, May 5, 1972, page 8) gives a concrete look at the high development and application of this important question:

May 1 this year was the 25th anniversary of the founding of the Inner Mongolian Autonomous Region. In this short historical period, the working people of the autonomous region which has Mongolian, Han and other nationalities under the wise leadership of the Chinese Communist Party and Chairman Mao, have experienced tremendous social changes, achieved thorough victory in the democratic revolution and won great victories in socialist revolution and construction. Since the start of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, in particular, the people of Mongolian, Han and other nationalities, closely united and holding aloft the banner of continuing the revolution under the dictatorship of the proletariat, are advancing in giant strides along the socialist road.

Progress and Achievements

On the northern plateau of our country, the Inner Mongolian Autonomous Region has vast grasslands, fertile soil and rich resources. More than

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ten nationalities, including Mongolian, Han, Hui, Manchu, Tahir, Olunchun and Korean, live on this rich land. Ruthlessly oppressed and exploited by the reactionary ruling classes of past dynasties, the Kuomintang reactionaries and Japanese imperialism, the region was very backward economically and culturally and the working people here lived in extreme misery.

With the victorious development of the Chinese revolution and the implementation of the policy of regional autonomy, the backward state and miserable life of the people in Inner Mongolia have gone for ever. The system by which one nationality oppresses another has been completely eliminated since the founding of the autonomous region. The Mongolians and other national minorities are jointly participating in political life on an equal footing and handling the internal affairs of their respective nationalities. The working people of various nationalities have become the real masters of the country and are totally emancipated politically.

Inner Mongolia's industrial foundation was very weak and modern industry was virtually non-existent. But the region has built its iron and steel industry centering around Paotow's modern iron and steel complex, thereby ending the situation in which Inner Mongolia produced no iron at all.

It has also developed many other industries, including electronics, non-ferrous metals, machine-building, coal, electric power, chemicals, construction, cotton and woolen textiles, tanning, dairy products and sugar refining. The number of big, medium-sized and small industrial and mining enterprises in the whole region exceeds 2,200 and modern industry has begun to take shape. Compared with the early post-liberation period, total output value of industry in 1971 had risen 102-fold and made up 76% of the total output value of industry, farming and livestock-breeding.

The farming areas have built large numbers of water conservancy works on farmland and steadily raised farm mechanization. Per-mu grain yield has almost doubled and total grain output gone up 3.2-fold, compared with pre-liberation days. People in the pastoral areas have step by step gone over to living in fixed settlements and herding animals around transformed pastures which did not have adequate water, stepped up the building up of grasslands, transformed deserts, improved animal breeds, made rational use of the pastures and increased the number of animals which can be supported by a unit area of pasture. The total number of animals in the autonomous region has increased 3.9-fold compared with the early post-liberation period.

Communications and transport have made rapid progress with transport lines extending

to a great number of places. Compared with pre-liberation days, motor vehicles of all types rose 790-fold and the length of railways increased threefold to fourfold. Two civil airlines have also been opened.

There were practically no schools in the pastoral areas in the old society and more than 90 per cent of the peasants and herdsmen were illiterate. Primary school education is now universal throughout the region, and there are more than 1,000 middle schools and secondary technical schools and seven universities and colleges. On the average, there is one Mongolian college student for every 95 Mongolians. Besides, there has been tremendous growth in the Mongolian spoken and written language.

Guided by Chairman Mao's revolutionary line on literature and art, specialized art troupes have been organized at the league (equivalent to an administrative region), city and higher levels in the region, while film projection units exceed 1,200. Active in the pastoral areas and villages the Ulanmuchi—a new type of national cultural troupes—are found in every banner (equivalent to a county) and county.

Developments in medical and health work have thoroughly transformed the former situation in which disease spread far and wide and the population fell. Medical and health institutions have been universally established, from the autonomous region to people's communes, and medical personnel rose 19-fold compared with pre-liberation days. Venereal disease and plague which had seriously endangered people's health have been completely wiped out and endemic diseases, such as undulant fever, are basically under control. Population of the national minorities has increased year by year. The Mongolian population has more than doubled since liberation.

National Regional Autonomy

National regional autonomy is the basic policy of the Chinese Communist Party in solving the national question in our country. The achievements of the Inner Mongolian Autonomous Region in the past 25 years represent a great victory for this policy.

National regional autonomy applied in the national minority areas means that, within the inalienable territory of the People's Republic of China and under the unified leadership of the Party Central Committee and Chairman Mao, the proletariat and working people in areas where national minorities live in compact communities have political power in the autonomous areas. They administer the internal affairs of their own nationalities, guaran-

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Puerto Rico

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nation by the fact that both share common oppression through the USNA state. It is in the interests of the Anglo-American proletariat to support their comrades in Puerto Rico since the island acts as a reserve of the imperialists, used to depress wages, create monopoly super-profits, establish military bases and so on. The struggle in Puerto Rico also forms part of the national liberation movement of all Latin America. It is absolutely required to support these struggles since the Latin American masses of oppressed peoples will be the principal ally of the Anglo-American proletariat in its revolution. Puerto Rico - 14% covered by military bases, source of many compradors useful in subverting Latin America (such as T. Moscoso, of "Alliance for Progress" fame) and so on - is the key to revolution in the Americas, for all Latin American revolutionaries will be watching how we carry out our proletarian internationalist duties to "our bourgeoisie's own colony". Puerto Rico is the concrete link to hemispheric revolution. It is the touchstone by which our reliability as allies will be tested.

For these reasons, the Communist League upholds Puerto Rico's independence, without which - under conditions of imperialist control - it cannot have self-determination, and upholds the necessity of a Marxist-Leninist, multi-national Communist Party in the USNA state in the slogans which serve to guide our practice:

INDEPENDENCE for PUERTO RICO!
BUILD A MULTI-NATIONAL COMMUNIST PARTY!

1. A.G. Quintero Rivera, "El desarrollo de las Clases Sociales y los Conflictos Politicos en Puerto Rico"
2. *ibid*, p. 3 and 8
3. V. I. Lenin, Imperialism, Highest Stage of Capitalism, Selected Works, Vol. 5, p. 81
4. *Ibid* p. 58
5. *Ibid*
6. Kal Wagenheim, Puerto Rico, A Profile, Praeger 1970 p. 100
7. Juan Angel Silen, We, the Puerto Rican People: A Story of Oppression and Resistance, MR Press, p. 90
8. *Ibid* p. 92
9. (Apendice a la) Declaracion General de la Asamblea Constituyente del PSP-MPI, p. 12-13
10. J.V. Stalin, Foundations of Leninism, FLP, Peking, 1970, pp. 5,6
11. Wagenheim, p 101
12. Apendice, p. 7, 8
13. Wagenheim, p 101
14. Apendice
15. *Ibid*

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tee the equal rights of the national minorities, protect unity and mutual help among the nationalities and fully mobilize and give play to the initiative of people of all nationalities in taking part in political life and economic and cultural construction so that the people of all nationalities can jointly advance along the socialist road.

The policy of national regional autonomy is decided by our Party according to the Marxist-Leninist theory and principle on the national question and in the light of historical and actual conditions of China's nationalities. Marxism-Leninism holds that the national question must be correctly solved in accordance with the interests of the development of the whole society and the interests of the class struggle of the proletariat for socialism. National regional autonomy not only meets the demands of the national minorities to liberate themselves from the system of oppression of one nationality by another and from rule by the reactionaries of their own nationalities but also the demand to found a

unified multi-national state which helps economic development and promotes the interests of the masses. This type of autonomy is a basic principle for Marxists in solving the national question in a multi-national country.

Carrying out national regional autonomy is an inevitable trend in China's historical development. It also has been the long-time and urgent demand of the Mongolian people. China has long stood as a unified and multi-national state in the world. Diligent and courageous the Mongolian nationality, like all the other nationalities in our country, have made splendid contributions to the founding of our great motherland. However, in the past few centuries, especially in the 100 years up to the time of liberation, it was enslaved and divided under the cruel oppression by the reactionary ruling classes in the country, the feudal forces in the Mongolian nationality and foreign imperialism.

During the period of reactionary Kuomintang rule, the existence of the Mongolian nationality was negated and Inner Mongolia was deleted from the map and primary school textbooks. For a long time the Mongolian

nationality urgently demanded national liberation and regional autonomy. As early as the Second Revolutionary Civil War (1927-37), the Chinese Communist Party put forward the proposal that the Inner Mongolian people should carry out regional autonomy. During the War of Resistance Against Japan (1937-45) and the War of Liberation (1945-49) the Party set up the Tachingshan Anti-Japanese Base Area in Inner Mongolia and led the Mongolian and other nationalities in the liberation struggle and the regional autonomy movement. Following nationwide victory in the revolutionary war and progress in national construction, Inner Mongolia carried out regional autonomy. The long-cherished ideal of the Mongolian people was finally realized.

The organs of self-government in the Inner Mongolian Autonomous Region not only exercise the functions and powers of ordinary local organs of state, but enjoy the rights of self-government invested by the Constitution. These rights are chiefly: (1) Administer the internal affairs of their nationalities. In the people's congresses at all levels in the autonomous region, there are delegates of workers, poor and lower-middle peasants and herdsmen, revolutionary cadres revolutionary intellectuals of the Mongolian nationality and other national minorities as well as delegates of upper strata patriots of various nationalities. The autonomous region's state power at all levels relies on them to maintain links with the masses and administer the region's internal affairs in accordance with the wishes of the vast majority of people of various nationalities. (2) Train and use national minority cadres. Many Mongolian and other national minority cadres hold leading posts in the autonomous region's Party committees and revolutionary committees at all levels. Minority nationality cadres and scientific and technical personnel are all fully playing their role on the economic, cultural and educational, national defence and scientific research fronts and in various departments. (3) Use and develop the spoken and written languages of the national minorities. In the Inner Mongolian Autonomous Region, both the Mongolian and Han (Chinese) languages are used not only in government documents but in the press, broadcasting, education, publication and literature and art. (4) Adopt appropriate methods and steps to carry out social reform in the light of actual conditions in the region and according to the wishes of the various nationalities. (5) Under the unified state plan, draw up the regions's socialist economic construction plan and develop local economic construction. (6) Develop the cultural, education, art and public health of the various nationalities according to concrete conditions

China Medicine

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proletarian cultural revolution. In response to Chairman Mao's call for putting the stress on the rural areas in medical and health work, we have organised many medical teams which tour villages, factories and neighbourhoods.

The march of our times spurs me on. Despite my age, I repeatedly applied for going to the countryside. Eventually, I got the opportunity to stay several months in the Changhsichuang People's Commune of suburban Peking. I learned a good deal from the commune members' diligence and simplicity and their fine quality of putting the interest of others above their own. I treated sick commune members at home, took part in training "bare-foot doctors", that is, peasant doctors who are not divorced from productive labour and with them did educational work among the commune members on prevention of diseases. We were welcomed and trusted. This stay of several months, short but rich and colourful, left an indelible impression on me.

Chairman Mao's revolutionary line on medical and health work puts the stress on prevention of diseases. Socialist medicine calls for doing all we can for the health of the people and not for profit. The Peking Children's Hospital has a special health protection department for popularising hygiene among residents and in schools, nurseries and kindergartens in the district and for guiding mass health campaigns. Our hospital regularly gives

prophylactic inoculations to 16,000 children. Vaccines, including oral sugar-coated poliovirus vaccine are given free of charge. Smallpox and cholera were wiped out in China long ago. Measles and poliomyelitis have been in the main eliminated in the past decade in the district around our hospital, thanks to the popularisation of measles-virus and polio-virus vaccines made in China. And in the country as a whole, the incidence of these two diseases has also dropped remarkably.

Chairman Mao has said, "Chinese medicine and pharmacology are a great treasure house. Efforts should be made to explore them and raise them to a higher level." In developing pediatrics, we firmly take the road of combining western medicine and traditional Chinese medicine as pointed out by Chairman Mao. We conscientiously apply the theory and technique of modern medical science to sum up the rich experience in traditional Chinese medicine and pharmacology. Our emphasis in medical research is on common diseases frequently seen among children of the labouring people. The level of pediatrics in China is being constantly raised.

I feel very proud of the fact that I can still contribute my remaining years to the people's cause. Recently, my main work has been to sum up experience and compile a new book on children's diseases in collaboration with a number of pediatricians under the Party's leadership.

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Regional Autonomy

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Realization of the rights of national regional autonomy has fully mobilized the socialist enthusiasm of the various nationalities, strengthened unity among the people of Mongolian, Han and other nationalities, consolidated the unity of the motherland and safeguarded its northern frontiers.

Fitting the needs of the country's overthrown reactionary classes and echoing the imperialists, revisionists and reactionaries abroad, the renegade, hidden traitor and scab Liu Shao-chi and his agents in Inner Mongolia did whatever they could to oppose the application of regional autonomy. They created contradictions and sowed dissension among the various nationalities in a vain attempt to undermine national unity and the unification of the motherland. However, the Party's policy of national regional autonomy fully conforms to the common aspirations and interests of the Mongolian nationality and the other national minorities in the region and therefore wins the whole-hearted support of the Mongolian, Han and other nationalities. Intrigues by the class enemies at home and abroad to sabotage national unity and split the unification of our country met a harsh defeat. From the long historical experience of carrying out national regional autonomy, we have arrived at the profound understanding that the unification of our motherland and the unity of our various nationalities are the basic guarantees for building socialism and for resisting subversion and aggression by imperialism and social-imperialism.

Socialist Road

Chairman Mao has pointed out: "In the final analysis, national struggle is a matter of class struggle." In a class society, the national question is in essence a class question. The exploiting classes and systems built on the basis of the private ownership of the means of production are the social origin giving rise to oppression and conflicts between the various nationalities. It holds true for all nationalities that any revolutionary struggle detached from wiping out class oppression cannot solve the national question. Precisely as Lenin pointed out: "It is impossible to abolish national (or any other political) oppression under capitalism, since this requires the abolition of classes, i.e., the introduction of socialism."

Pre-liberation Inner Mongolia was a semi-feudal and semi-colonial society with slave system remnants in the pastoral areas. The major means of production in these areas, the vast majority of animals was owned by feudal exploiters. Although the princes and aristocrats, herd-owners and rich

herdsmen made up only 7 or 8 per cent of the population in the pastoral areas, they owned 75 per cent of the total number of animals. Accounting for 75 per cent of the population in these areas, the poor and lower-middle herdsmen had only 7 or 8 per cent of the total number. Princes, aristocrats and feudal herd-owners also enjoyed many privileges, such as inheritance of aristocratic titles, slaves and imposing corvee. The working herdsmen were not only deprived of political rights, but their personal freedom was not guaranteed. Princes, aristocrats and feudal herd-owners used the herdsmen as they would use draught animals and practised the most ruthless exploitation by taking away nearly all of what they produced. What the herdsmen got from their labor could hardly keep them at the lowest living standards. Under the rule of such a feudal exploitation system, Inner Mongolia was in a miserable state—a stagnated society, a run-down economy, backward culture and a dwindling population. The founding of the Inner Mongolian Autonomous Region in 1947 wiped out the system of nationality oppression. After nationwide liberation, democratic reform and socialist transformation were carried out and the system of feudal exploitation of the nationalities was completely eliminated. People of various nationalities set out on the socialist road.

Based on the complex class and national relations in the areas where national minorities live in closely knit communities, the Party and state in the course of the democratic reform and socialist transformation adopted an active and cautious principle, and a policy and measure suited to actual conditions. In the first place, by firmly relying on the poor and lower-middle peasants and herdsmen, solidly uniting with the middle peasants and herdsmen and uniting all the forces that could be united, the Party and state abolished the feudal privileges, gradually wiped out the system of exploitation by landlords, herd-owners, rich peasants and rich herdsmen and thus completed the democratic reform. The socialist transformation of agriculture and animal husbandry was then realized step by step and individual peasants and herdsmen were organized into different types of agricultural and livestock-breeding mutual-aid teams or producers' co-operatives. When people's communes were universally established in 1958, the people in Inner Mongolia took the road of socialist collectivization. In the social reform we firmly fostered the absolute superiority of the poor and lower-middle peasants and herdsmen and at the same time adopted the principle of unity, education and remoulding towards the upper-strata patriots of the national minorities who had contributed to the motherland's revolution and construction. The guidance of the Party's correct principle

and policy ensured the smooth progress of the democratic reform and socialist transformation in Inner Mongolia.

Liu Shao-chi and his agents in Inner Mongolia made maximum effort to spread the theory of "the dying out of class struggle," jettisoned the class essence of the national question, opposed class struggle, liquidated socialist revolution and protected the exploiting classes and systems in a futile effort to prevent the people of different nationalities from taking the socialist road and to restore capitalism. But this counter-revolutionary revisionist line ran counter to the objective law of China's social development and was firmly resisted by the Mongolian, Han and other nationalities. Persevering in taking the socialist road and correctly implementing the Party's national policy, we have liberated the productive forces to a great extent and united all the forces that can be united. This provided favourable conditions for rapidly transforming the backwardness in the whole region.

Support From the State

The completion of the democratic revolution and victory in socialist transformation, however, cannot immediately eliminate the legacy of economic and cultural backwardness left over from history in the national minority areas. To develop Inner Mongolia's economy and culture, the Party and state gave tremendous assistance. The development of the autonomous regions' socialist economy and culture in the last 25 years is inseparable from this aid. It mainly takes the following forms: (1) Special consideration in capital construction investments. The state has invested more than 7,120 million yuan in the Inner Mongolian Autonomous Region since liberation, ensuring the region's construction in different fields to go ahead at a rate faster than the national average. (2) Since the founding of the People's Republic of China, the state has given 2,200 million yuan in financial subsidies to Inner Mongolia, of which 200 million was specially allocated to the region's national minorities by the state since 1964. (3) The state gives priority to Inner Mongolia in supplying materials and in developing culture, education and public health. (4) By raising the purchasing prices of animal, farm and side-line products, the state has steadily increased the people's income and thereby improved their livelihood. At the same time, the state has also transferred large numbers of technical personnel and workers from provinces and municipalities in the rest of the country to help the autonomous region develop economic construction, science and culture.

Diligent work by people of various nationalities and
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powerful support from the state have tremendously promoted the growth of industry, farming and livestock-breeding in Inner Mongolia. For many years now, the region has supplied the state with large amounts of animal, agricultural and side-line products and other capital and consumer goods, thereby contributing its share to building our great socialist motherland.

The revolution and production in the Inner Mongolian Autonomous Region today is unprecedentedly excellent and will get increasingly better. Guided by Chairman Mao's revolutionary line, the Mongolian, Han and other nationalities in the region together with the people in the rest of our country are uniting to win still greater victories!