

Our urgent task: Rectify the Party's style of work--combat subjectivism and sectarianism

To rectify our Party's style of work is pivotal in the struggle for the consolidation and expansion of the Party. Through its success, we can effectively organize class struggle and implement the Party's political program. Therefore, all party members and supporters should participate in the rectification campaign and actively identify, discuss, and rectify our Party's ideological-political and organizational shortcomings and errors. Only then can we go beyond the movement's and party's period of "infancy" and "amateurishness" and fulfill the role of the vanguard of the proletarian revolution as a detachment of the international proletariat. We must learn from past mistakes to advance on building a solid party based on Marxism-Leninism-Maoism (MLM), capable of leading people's war and leading the country's new democratic and socialist revolution.

The organizational difficulties that we faced after comrade Zia's death, and the resulting discussions and debates on essential questions on method and style of work, underscored the need for the rectification campaign, as an urgent task of the Party, and subjecting all our practical, organizational, and theoretical activities to the requirements of the rectification campaign. Therefore, the general meeting of the party central committee and party units decided to put the campaign to rectify the party style of work at the center of the party agenda. The meeting decided that as part of this campaign, the Party must strive to enhance its grasp of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, to apply it to revolutionary practice and organizing proletarian class struggle. On this path, we uphold Marxism-Leninism-Maoism to combat subjectivist and sectarian errors in our Party. The essential first step in this direction is a critical evaluation and studying and learning from our own experiences, the successes, and the shortcomings of party-building efforts in Afghanistan. Our Party's previous experience with rectification efforts is a good starting point. However, we should carry out the rectification campaign in the light of grasping Marxism-Leninism-Maoism and applying it to organizing proletarian class struggle.

A look at the previous history of the rectification movement in our Party

Comrade Zia first discussed the necessity of a rectification campaign in the Party at the extended party seminar in 2011. After the seminar, Comrade Zia writing in *Sholajawid*, 24, round 3, called for "identifying the flaws and shortcomings of the party" as a step towards rectifying the Party's style of work, stating:

Admittedly, the formation of the Communist (Maoist) Party of Afghanistan was and is a principled step forward, but it could not--and cannot--have been without shortcomings. The Party's experience has shown that this was mired with significant ideological-political drawbacks and shortcomings, including organizational drawbacks and shortcomings. Identifying the weaknesses and

shortcomings of the Party and trying to eliminate or at least decrease them must be carried out in a principled and courageous manner.ⁱ

However, our Party's rectification efforts were suffering from a fundamental flaw. Despite the discussion on the need for rectification in the Party and calls for identifying and combating the Party's ideological-political and organizational "drawbacks and shortcomings," we could not identify and name the theoretical and ideological roots of the organizational "drawbacks and shortcomings." Nevertheless, the political report of the Party's second congress in 2014 thus identified areas of serious organizational weaknesses and errors that was the subject of the first rectification campaign:

A serious problem in our Party is the existence of lines that contradict the official line of the Party's program and constitution, which are implemented but not expressed. In other words, these lines are put into practice but are not theorized. This contradiction between practice and theory was unsuccessfully targeted in the campaign to rectify the Party's work style. The campaign to rectify the Party's style of work announced at the Party's extended seminar has been one of our most unsuccessful actions so far. This failure is a clear sign of our organizational weakness. The unity of theory and practice in our Party and the other two principles of the Marxist-Leninist-Maoist work style, that is, criticism and self-criticism and the mass line, have remained weak. Therefore, the campaign to rectify the Party's work style must continue after the congress.ⁱⁱ

Thus, the political report to the second congress announces the failure of the rectification campaign and evaluates it as one of the Party's "most unsuccessful actions," emphasizing the need for the rectification campaign to continue after the Second Congress. The report thus identifies and analyzes the organizational reasons for the failure of the Party's rectification campaign:

One of these problems was the unelected composition of the members of the Unity Congress, the unelected composition of the members of the Central Committee chosen by the Unity Congress, and the unelected composition of the politburo of the first plenum of the Central Committee after the Unity Congress. The participants of the Unity Congress were not chosen according to the criteria of the party constitution but according to the discretion of the factions involved in the unity process. In the Unity Congress, the members of the Central Committee of the Party were not elected according to the criteria of the Party's constitution. They were chosen according to the organizations' discretion that participated in the Unity Congress. Also, a three-member politburo was chosen, representing three participating organizations at the congress. Indeed, with this composition of the party leadership, maintaining party unity would have been the center of attention. In other words, with such a composition of party leadership, we did not have an open hand in advancing the line struggles because any internal line struggle could potentially have split the new Party along the lines of its previous constituting organizations. Therefore, restraint and toleration were needed.ⁱⁱⁱ

Thus, the political report of the Second Party Congress identifies the unelected leadership composition that required "restraint and toleration" as the primary organizational cause of the failure of the rectification campaign. Unfortunately, this composition of leadership did not end with the Party's Second Congress but lasted until the death of Comrade Zia and several months after, ruling the fate of the Party. The political report of the congress identified the composition of leadership as one of the main organizational reasons for the failure of the rectification campaign. In that case, it could indeed be said that this critical organizational "drawback and shortcoming" was the main reason for the defeat of the rectification movement after the Second Congress and a cause for a whole host of other organizational problems.

The political report of the second congress states that the party rectification movement unsuccessfully "targeted" "lines that contradict" the party line. Thus, it means our efforts bore no fruits, and our arrows missed the target. However, to successfully advance the rectification movement in the Party this time, we must gain a complete understanding of the factors that led to the failure of our Party's previous efforts at rectifying the Party's style of work. We must find out why our arrows have missed the target, why were we unable to successfully combat and eliminate lines that contradicted the line of the party program and constitution. In addition to the organizational reasons, namely the "composition of unelected leadership," the lack of proper identification of the theoretical and ideological roots of "these lines" was another important reason for the failure of the rectification movement in the Party. Until these theoretical and ideological lines are not correctly identified, they cannot be targeted appropriately and combated.

We should strive to grasp dialectical materialism and oppose subjectivism in the rectification campaign. Our shortcomings and drawbacks also have roots in this subjectivist method of thinking. The contradiction between theory and practice, our errors in criticism-self-criticism and mass line, all have roots in subjectivist modes of thinking, and sectarianism is an organizational expression of subjectivism.

The struggle against subjectivism

Combating subjectivism lies at the campaign's core to rectify the Party's work style. The history of the international communist movement shows that communists have always been in a constant battle against subjectivism. Subjectivism is a method of thinking that runs opposite to the Marxist method of thinking. Subjectivism means reaching conclusions not from studying and investigating objective reality but relying on mental aspirations and fantasies. Mao emphasized that "where there is subjectivism, there are mistakes."^{iv} The Marxist dialectal materialist method of thinking proceeds from a careful study, evaluation, and knowledge of objective reality.

It is in combating subjectivism and advocating seeking the truth based on the objective and material reality that Lenin stated, "what is most important, that which constitutes the very gist, the living soul, of Marxism—a concrete analysis of a concrete situation."^v Therefore, the Marxist method demands a careful study and investigation of objective reality to reach the truth. To have "a concrete analysis of the concrete situation," one should be cautious not to impose subjective wishes and fantasies on reality. Mao emphasized that the primary source of errors in the communist movement is subjectivism when analysis and practice are based on abstract theories detached from

an actual study and analysis of concrete time and place. Therefore, to succeed in applying the universal truth of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism to the concrete circumstances of the revolution in Afghanistan, a deep understanding of theory, accurate and scientific knowledge, and understanding of the current situation and history of the country is necessary. Only then will we integrate MLM with the concrete revolutionary practice in Afghanistan. Mao emphasizes that "integration of theory with practice is one of the fundamental principles of Marxism. According to dialectical materialism, thought must reflect objective reality and must be tested and verified in objective practice before it can be taken as truth; otherwise, it cannot."^{vi} To implement the Party's strategy and political program we must carefully study the material situation and the objective conditions. Therefore, to succeed in integrating MLM into the concrete revolutionary practice, we must pay attention to our study method and rectify our errors and shortcomings in this area.

Reform method of study in the Party

The reform of the study method in the Party forms the "fundamental core" of the party rectification movement and the core of the struggle against subjectivism. Mao emphasized that the task of communist leadership and the Communist Party is "twofold... to know conditions and to master policy; the former means knowing the world and the latter changing the world."^{vii} The path to change the world necessarily first goes through knowing the world. Without knowing the world and its history and current dynamics, it is futile to change the world. Hence, the struggle for changing the world begins with the struggle to first know the world because it is impossible to change the world without accurate knowledge of the objective situation and conditions. Hence the method of study for a communist party is of immense importance. It is the task of the Party to study and investigate objective reality. If the study method has errors and shortcomings, it will produce an incorrect result and wreak havoc on efforts to change the world. The centrality of studying and reforming the study methods in the party rectification movement is that Mao called the party rectification movement "a widespread movement of Marxist education," saying: "rectification means the whole Party studying Marxism through criticism and self-criticism. We can certainly learn more Marxism in the course of the rectification movement."^{viii} Therefore, in the same spirit, our Party, considering rectification as a widespread movement of Marxist education, must expand and deepen our understanding of theory; we must grasp MLM, apply it to the concrete circumstances of revolutionary practice in Afghanistan, and analyze and solve theoretical problems relating to our concrete practice. We should systematically study theoretical issues emanating from our actual reality and organize class struggle in the country. Lenin writes:

There can be no strong socialist party without a revolutionary theory... We do not regard Marx's theory as something completed and inviolable; on the contrary, we are convinced that it has only laid the foundation stone of the science which socialists must develop in all directions if they wish to keep pace with life. We think that an independent elaboration of Marx's theory is especially essential for Russian socialists, for this theory provides only general guiding principles, which, in particular, are applied in England differently than in France, in France differently than in Germany and in Germany differently than in Russia.^{ix}

Hence, to integrate the universal truth of MLM with the concrete practice of revolution, it is imperative to elaborate these theories according to the concrete circumstances of Afghanistan.

MLM should not be treated as a dogma to be applied everywhere in the same way. Marxism is a science, and it is a requirement of the scientific method to be constantly developing, adapting to new contexts and situations. Therefore, it should be grasped, developed, and applied to answer tactical and practical problems of revolution in concrete situations. In other words, theory should integrate with practice. Abstract theorization and propaganda that do not relate to practice and the one that does not aim to study and solve a particular practical problem are not only useless but potentially harmful.

We must plan and carry forward programs of enhancing the party capacity in the study of theory and social investigation and research. Towards this aim, the Party should pay serious and meticulous attention to training cadres that can attend to different needs of organizing class struggle. We should never forget that proletarian hegemony in society cannot be established without a capable organization of specialized and knowledgeable cadres with deep knowledge of the objective material reality. Thus, Mao emphasizes that if communists are serious about leading a revolution, they should pay attention to study and research, stating:

Conditions are changing all the time, and to adapt one's thinking to the new conditions, one must study. Even those who have a better grasp of Marxism and are comparatively firm in their proletarian stand have to go on studying, ... Naturally, we have to learn while teaching and be pupils while serving as teachers. To be a good teacher, one must first be a good pupil.^x

In the rectification campaign, we should particularly pay attention to the study of theory. Of course, there would be no revolutionary movement without a revolutionary theory. Unfortunately, the left in Afghanistan has historically paid little attention to both the study of theory and social investigation and research. Consequently, the Afghanistan left's understanding of theory, history, as well as social, political, and economic reality has been very shallow. Moreover, the left has historically suffered from errors of subjectivism, expressed as dogmatism and the negligence of theory, study, and research. Our Party has also suffered from this legacy. One of the prominent features of dogmatism in our Party has been the neglect of learning and systematic study of MLM and negligence in researching and examining the objective conditions of society and the world. Our cadre training and party schools have not been very effective. Therefore, our knowledge, understanding, and analysis of the country's history and present situation from the communist perspective is very sparse and negligible and cannot meet the serious and myriad needs of organizing class struggle and revolution in the country. Our knowledge of the situation in the country, the world, and the history and experiences of the international communist and class struggles is very limited due to our overall theoretical weakness and weakness of research and study. For example, in examining the country's history from a Marxist-Leninist-Maoist perspective, we have been satisfied with only a few short articles and irregular commentaries.

Undoubtedly, our theoretical weakness at the same time reflects the actual weakness of the revolutionary practice in the country. Due to the dominance of a subjectivist approach, some of our party cadres are content to have superficially learned a few general formulations and theories. Undoubtedly, the severe negligence of theory, study, and research has harmed our practice. The political report of the second congress of the party states:

To a large extent, our leadership and cadres pay little attention to their education; they do not read ... they do not consistently follow and study the events of the country and the world, and do not behave responsibly in educating others... This situation should not be tolerated after this congress. The Central Committee elected by this congress should not be like the previous Central Committee. It should firmly break with the dismal and pathetic style of education and study of the last Central Committee.^{xi}

Unfortunately, party practice did not change after the congress, and the central committee elected by the congress could not overcome and resolve the organizational and political weaknesses of the previous central committee and party organization as a whole. Our experience indicates that we failed in rectifying the Party's style of work; thus, the party leadership neglected its two-fold obligation of knowing the world, studying, investigating the objective conditions, and mastering the policies and tactics for changing the world. Like the situation that the political report of the second congress describes, the unity of theory and practice in our Party remained weak.

The MLM method teaches that the minimum requirement for applying theory to practice is to aim at the target. Our actions, tactics, and policy must "proceed from objective reality and not from subjective wishes." Thus, the MLM method of work begins with a comprehensive study and investigation of the concrete conditions in the country and the world. It not only studies the current conditions, but it meticulously studies the history of the country and the world and learns from the experiences of the previous revolutionary struggles of the country and the revolutionary struggles internationally. In Mao's words, this method is "the manifestation of Party spirit, the Marxist-Leninist-[Maoist] style of uniting theory and practice."^{xii} Marx, Lenin, Mao, and all classical leaders have emphasized that Marxism is not a dogma but a guide to action. Its creative application is not possible without a thorough understanding of objective reality.

Rectify our style of writing

The unscientific, contentless, repetitive, and formalistic writing style is one of the prominent manifestations of subjectivism and dogmatism. This writing style is not related to the masses and the actual class struggle, but it is instead "shooting without a target."^{xiii} Such writing contradicts the basic tenet of Marxism, the unity of theory and practice. The subjective writing style bases the analysis and understanding of everything on a dogmatic faith in the texts. Those who practice this writing style are so loyal that, in some cases, they do not even bother to write anew; they copy and reproduce previous texts and call them their own. They have a muddled and distorted picture of the objective reality; when producing analysis, they present an imaginary world based on manufactured facts, subjective aspirations, and mental fantasies.

The unscientific writing style that Mao said "does not require the use of brainpower"^{xiv} has been one of the most prominent features of dogmatism on the left. Our Party (notably some party-led new democratic publications) has suffered from this malady. Therefore, most often, some of our new democratic publications were not even worth reading, as they were often shallow, repetitive, rhetorical, and in most cases parroted and pirated from other party publications and literature. No doubt this unscientific approach, contrary to the spirit of the MLM, was not connected to any actual

practice. The "writers" that cluttered many pages entirely disregarded their readership. If we do not break away from this work style, we will not successfully advance our revolutionary tasks.

To establish proletarian hegemony in society we must strive for the communist left literature to be exemplary and up to the task. To take a step in this direction, we must improve our writing style, the quality and quantity of our publications, propaganda, and agitation if we want to apply the universal truth of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism to the particular conditions of the revolution in Afghanistan for achieving the victory of the new democratic revolution. In that case, we must "aim the arrow at the target." Mao stressed that "Communists who really want to do propaganda must consider their audience and bear in mind those who will read their articles and slogans or listen to their speeches and their talk."^{xv} We must strive to leave behind the period of the movement's infancy. For the exercise of proletarian leadership and hegemony, we must constantly strive to produce knowledge because this is the demand of the scientific method. Instead, we should not hide our ignorance but accept what we do not know and understand.

Combat sectarianism

Sectarianism is an organizational expression of subjectivism and dogmatism, and its most prominent feature is its separation from the masses and the class struggle. Sectarianism gives the utmost importance to ideological-political debates between different left grouplets and only lives to perpetuate left turf warfare. Some left groups and individuals behave as if sectarian "ideological-political" debates are their only duty. Towards this end, they are constantly striving to hone their vulgarity and ad hominem rhetorical verbiage skills. As comrade Zia criticized some of the ex-comrades' behavior, their understanding of "two-line struggle" constantly launches attacks and "assault into six directions." In intra-organizational politics, sectarianism manifests itself in hostile factional struggles and clashes against some actual or subjective ideological, political, and organizational sins. Almost all of the sectarians' efforts, energy, time, and intellectual power are wasted in factional debates and disputes. Instead of examining objective facts and trying to understand organizational and ideological issues scientifically, sectarians are constantly engaged in conspiracies and busy in hostile and unconstructive fruitless arguments and bickering against all and each other. They instrumentalize a misconception of the "two-line struggle" and the principle of "self-criticism and criticism" and keep the flames of internal strife always burning. Their theoretical and propaganda work does not have roots in revolutionary practice and is not intended to be applied to revolutionary practice. The political report of the Second Congress writes in this regard:

For two decades, the "two-line struggle" as a party principle was unknown to us. We learned this Maoist party principle from the RIM. Nevertheless, the effects of our past traits are still present in the Party. The tendency for extremist rhetoric, the tendency for immediate organizational purges, the tendency to cross all limits in internal line struggles still exist relatively strongly and as remnants of past problems..., the result of which can be nothing more than a line struggle turning into unconstructive bickering and turning a non-antagonistic internal contradiction into an antagonistic contradiction.^{xvi}

Unfortunately, the entire left movement in our country is, in varying degrees, suffering from this malady. Our Party, as the report of the congress describes, has also suffered from this. For this reason, a large part of the literature of the left groups of the country is often busy in efforts to delegitimize each other. For this reason, the cultural productions, propaganda, agitation, and practice of these pseudo-left groups in Afghanistan have nothing to do with the lives of the masses and actual class struggle, nor are they essential to them. In the party rectification movement we must combat manifestations of sectarianism in the party's relations with the masses and the Party's internal relations.

The struggle against incorrect ideas in the Party

A critical organizational malady producing harm in communist parties is, what Mao calls, the "employee mentality."^{xvii} The "employee mentality" means that party members are somehow subservient to the Party or the party leaders; in the same way, employees are subservient to employers in the capitalist economy. MLM teaches us that party members are revolutionary communists and are not employees of the revolution; as Mao states, they are the "makers of the revolution." Their behavior, conduct with party affairs, and revolutionary practice should reflect the essence of their work as "makers of the revolution." The existing and dominant attitude in society is that party leaders have to lord over the mass members, and these members must respect, follow, appreciate, and learn from the leaders. All existing societal institutions, families, schools, religions, and all existing dominant institutions promote "employee mentality." The predominant mode of thinking and behavior always finds its way into communist parties. All of us are pre-installed with this organizational malady by society; therefore, it is necessary to be actively combated. It is the job of a proletarian communist party to resist and fight the influence of this mode of thinking within us. A communist organization should reflect the germ of the future communist society and ideals. Our Party has suffered from an "employee mentality." The fact that most of the party members are not actively shouldering party responsibilities is a manifestation of the "employee mentality." Most of the members behave as if it is the job of higher leaders or someone else to do the heavy lifting. This mentality also leads some leadership to feel it is their responsibility to think and decide for everyone else. The party members believe it is their job to appreciate, read, and learn from the party leaders' work. This needs to be rectified. The communist organization model is based on democratic centralism, which also means collective leadership and individual responsibility. The communist method of leadership is different from the bourgeois and other reactionary leadership methods.

Another severe organizational problem that we have faced historically is "disregard for organizational discipline." Our party members, including the leading cadre, often easily neglect party discipline. Some even decide which party rule they prefer to abide by and which one they prefer to disregard. Lack of organizational discipline is a severe organizational malady. We should try to discover the organizational, political, and theoretical roots of this problem to combat and rectify this problem successfully. This is partly rooted in a lack of understanding of the importance of a proletarian party. The PYO failed to advance towards the formation of a communist party. Most forces gathered around the PYO were not even formally organized with the discipline of a communist organization but were mainly in a new democratic movement following a new democratic journal, and its practice is often described as "movementist." The leading cadre of most organizations' remnants of the Sholajawid movement was brought into this movementist tradition

of political practice. This past practice and negative model of political and organizational practice has proven very difficult to break from.

In the rectification movement, we study and investigate the theoretical and ideological roots of all these incorrect ideas in the Party and combat them. The correct method of rectifying most party errors and shortcomings is the successful conduct of the rectification movement as a movement of general Marxist-Leninist-Maoist education. We should grasp MLM to apply it to practice. We should reform the Party's style of study and intensify, expand, and plan for more effective programs of cadre education. We should grasp and work based on the MLM teaching that, "If there is to be a revolution, there must be a revolutionary party. Without a revolutionary party, without a party built on the Marxist-Leninist revolutionary theory and in the Marxist-Leninist revolutionary style, it is impossible to lead the working class and the broad masses of the people in defeating imperialism and its running dogs."^{xviii} The incorrect ideas such as "employee mentality" and disregard for organizational discipline and other such problems should be rectified through programs of MLM education. We should strive to combat incorrect ideas by teaching cadre to "understand the importance of party organization." In theory and practice, we should grasp the theoretical depth and the true ideological and political importance of the MLM message. There must be a revolutionary party based on MLM for there to be a revolution.

ⁱ Sholajawid # 2, round 4, November 2014.

ⁱⁱ Ibid.

ⁱⁱⁱ Ibid.

^{iv} Mao Zedong, "Strengthen Party Unity and Carry Forward Party Traditions," 30 August 1956.

^v Lenin, "Kommunismus," 1920.

^{vi} Mao Zedong, "Strengthen Party Unity and Carry Forward Party Traditions," 30 August 1956.

^{vii} Mao Zedong, "Reform Our Study", 1941.

^{viii} Mao Zeong, "Speech at the Chinese Communist Party's National Conference on Propaganda Work," 1957.

^{ix} Lenin, "Our Program," 1898.

^x Mao Zeong, "Speech at the Chinese Communist Party's National Conference on Propaganda Work," 1957

^{xi} Sholajawid # 2, round 4, November 2014.

^{xii} Mao Zedong, "Reform Our Study," May 1941.

^{xiii} Mao Zedong, "Oppose Stereotyped Party Writing," 8 February 1942.

^{xiv} Ibid.

^{xv} Ibid.

^{xvi} Sholajawid # 2, round 4, November 2014.

^{xvii} Mao Zedong, "On Correcting Mistaken Ideas in the Party," December 1929.

^{xviii} Mao Zedong, "Revolutionary Forces of the World Unite, Fight Against Imperialist Aggression!," November 1948.