**What To Do ? Formun Altı**

**Lenin's Thoughts on Party Building and Its Contemporary Enlightenment for CPC**

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【Abstract】Lenin wrote What to Do? for three reasons: first, to expose the essence of opportunist "freedom of criticism" and the mistake of the Economists' "worship of spontaneity", second, to answer urgent questions in the workers' movement, and third, to resolve the severe crisis within the Russian Social Democratic Party at that time. What Is to Be Done? is a classic document of Marxist party-building theory, which expounds the principles and ideas of proletarian party building from the aspects of ideological theory, working methods and organizational construction. What Is to Be Done? not only has important guiding significance for the construction of the Russian Social Democratic Party at that time, but also has very important enlightenment significance for the new great project of party building in the new era of China.

【Key words】 Lenin; What to do?; Party building; Proletarian party

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In 1902, Lenin published an important work guiding the construction of a new type of proletarian party, What Is to Be Done? — Urgent Questions in Our Movement. The book not only had important guiding significance for the construction of the Russian Social Democratic Party at that time, but also had very important enlightenment significance for the new great project of party building in the new era of China.

In 2021, we will usher in the 100th anniversary of the founding of the Communist Party of China.

This article will review the book What Is to Be Done? from a new historical perspective, re-sort out and historically reflect on the important viewpoints on party building in the book, and explore theoretical basis and practical guidelines for the new "What Is to Be Done?" faced by party building in the new era of China.

**1. Reasons for writing What Is to Be Done?**

At the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century, Russia's capitalism transitioned to imperialism and became the concentrated outbreak of all contradictions in imperialist countries. What is to be done? is actually a theoretical reflection of the internal contradictions in Russia's economic and social development. At that time, Russian social contradictions manifested themselves in many aspects. Economically, on the one hand, there was the contradiction between the remnants of serfdom and the development of capitalism, and on the other hand, there was the sharp contradiction between the rapid development of social productivity and capitalist production relations.

Politically, there were complex contradictions between the masses and the tsarist system, between peasants and landlords, between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, and between Great Russian chauvinism and oppressed nations in Russia. In terms of ideology, Marxism was introduced to Russia in the late 19th century, first among intellectuals and scholars, and then gradually among anarchists, left-wing terrorists, populists and other left-wing forces opposed to the rule of the Russian tsar.

The contradictions between revolutionaries and economists, the debates between Iskraists and Workers' Cause and Workers' Thought, and the struggles between Marxism and reformism, opportunism, and terrorism all occurred one after another.

In order to promote the healthy development of the Russian Social Democratic Party and completely put an end to its ideological vacillation and organizational chaos, Lenin wrote and completed What is to be Done? between the autumn of 1901 and February 1902. There were many reasons for this.

**Part 1. The ideological reasons for writing What Is to Be Done?**

The ideological reason for writing What is to be Done? was to expose the essence of the "freedom of criticism" advocated by opportunism in the European workers' movement and the mistake of the Economists in worshipping the spontaneity of the workers' movement.

Regarding the essence of "freedom of criticism", Lenin clearly pointed out that "freedom of criticism" is the freedom of opportunists within the Social Democratic Party, the freedom to transform the Social Democratic Party into a democratic party advocating reform, and the freedom to instill bourgeois ideas and bourgeois elements into the socialist movement. Those who advocated this slogan included the Fabian faction in Britain, the cabinet faction in France, the Bernstein faction in Germany, and the new "critical" faction in the Russian socialist movement. They used the excuse of "freedom of criticism" and the banner of criticizing "old and dogmatic" in order to attack Marxist revolutionary theory and belittle the guiding significance of Marxist theory to the workers' movement and the construction of the working class party. In Lenin's words, the essence of "freedom of criticism" is the freedom of various open and disguised bourgeois thinkers to criticize Marxism.

The characteristics of "freedom of criticism" are, first, compromise and lack of principle. As Lenin pointed out, "The famous freedom of criticism does not mean replacing one theory with another, but freely abandoning any complete and thorough theory. It is compromise and lack of principle." Second, it contains inherent hypocrisy. Lenin quoted the fable "Two Buckets" by Russian writer I.A. Krylov, and used the "empty bucket" in the story to describe the Russian economists who shouted "Long live freedom of criticism".

He believed that the "freedom of criticism" they advocated not only had no criticism, but also had no independent views at all. This trend of thought, in terms of its content, "is directly transferred from bourgeois books and periodicals to socialist books and periodicals." "Freedom of criticism" itself contains inherent hypocrisy, because those who support "freedom of criticism" themselves are afraid of criticism and publicity. They oppose and even hate "all theoretical disputes, factional differences, broad political issues, plans to organize revolutionaries, etc." "This is not freedom of criticism, but slave-like imitation." In response to the harm and influence of "freedom of criticism", Lenin proposed that, first, we should try to restore theoretical work and use theory to provide scientific guidance for the movement; second, we must actively fight against legal "criticism" that seriously corrodes people's consciousness; third, we should actively oppose confusion and vacillation in the actual movement, and expose and refute all actions that consciously or unconsciously lower our program and our strategy.

Regarding the mistake of the Economists in worshipping the spontaneity of the workers' movement, Lenin pointed out that, first, it led to the workers' movement being dominated by bourgeois ideology. Because there is no "third" ideology between bourgeois ideology and socialist ideology, those who oppose the inculcation of socialist consciousness in the working masses and think that the pure workers' movement itself can create an independent ideology are greatly mistaken. Since the origin of bourgeois ideology is much older than that of socialist ideology, it has more means of dissemination and is supported by the capitalist economic base and political superstructure. Therefore, spontaneous movements along the path of least resistance are prone to be controlled by bourgeois ideology. And "any worship of the spontaneity of the workers' movement, any contempt for the role of the 'conscious factor', that is, the role of the Social Democratic Party, regardless of whether the contemptors themselves are willing or not, will strengthen the influence of bourgeois ideology on workers."

Second, it led the workers' movement to the bourgeois trade union line. Because the working class can only produce trade union consciousness by its own strength, the result is nothing more than that the working class learns how to bargain with capitalists for a more favorable sale of the "commodity" of labor, thereby fighting against buyers on the basis of pure commercial contracts. The Economists despised political struggle and advocated that workers should "struggle to improve economic conditions" or even fight only for immediate economic interests, rather than for the future. They regarded economic struggle as the only "universally applicable means" of proletarian class struggle, thereby reducing the politics of the proletariat to the politics of trade unionism. "The worship of spontaneity makes people afraid to not even take a step away from the "things that the masses are capable of doing", and afraid to raise it too high simply to adapt to the immediate demands of the masses at the moment." Lenin pointed out that fighting the government for economic purposes is bourgeois politics. Under the conditions of worshipping spontaneity, it will inevitably lead to "pure trade union" struggles and non-social democratic workers' movements, which is equivalent to completely abandoning socialism. Therefore, Lenin clearly put forward: "The task of the Social Democratic Party is to oppose spontaneity, that is, to separate the workers' movement from this spontaneous tendency of trade unionism that has thrown itself under the wings of the bourgeoisie, and to attract it under the wings of revolutionary Social Democratic Party."

**2. Practical reasons for writing What to do?**

Answering the urgent questions in the workers' movement was the practical reason for writing What Is to Be Done?. Lenin made it clear in the preface that "according to the author's original plan, this pamphlet would elaborate on the ideas discussed in Where to Begin From? ", mainly answering the three questions raised in Where to Begin From?, namely, the nature and main content of political agitation, the organizational tasks, and the plan for establishing an all-Russian combat organization.

However, since there was a fundamental confrontation between two major factions in the Russian Social Democratic Party, rather than a local disagreement, and there were various different views on how to solve these three problems, Lenin had to start from the beginning in a polemical way, using the most popular way possible and a large number of concrete examples to systematically "explain" all the fundamental points of disagreement within the party to all the "economists".

In response to the Economists’ erroneous claim that political agitation should be subordinate to economic agitation, Lenin pointed out that the Social Democrats devoted almost all their energy to exposing the factories. Such exposure, under the condition of worshipping spontaneity, would inevitably lead to “pure trade union” struggles and non-socialist workers’ movements. “The Social Democrats lead the working class in the struggle not only to win favorable conditions for selling labor, but also to eliminate the social system that forces the poor to sell themselves to the rich.” Therefore, the Social Democrats cannot limit themselves to economic struggles, nor should they regard organizing economic exposures as their main activity. Economic struggles are only part of the struggles of the Social Democrats. If a comprehensive political exposure of the autocratic system is not organized, it will inevitably lead to trade union politics, which is still far from social democratic politics. Lenin pointed out that “economic struggle against the government” is trade union politics, and we must organize comprehensive political exposures, which is one of the most important functions of the entire international social democracy. The terrorists underestimated the revolutionary enthusiasm of the masses and could only desperately replace political agitation with artificial “inciting means.” In fact, whether the Economists call for giving the economic struggle itself a political character, or the Terrorists call for the use of terror, both are shirking the most pressing responsibility that Russian revolutionaries should bear. Economic exposure is a declaration of war on the factory owners, while political exposure is a declaration of war on the government. Political exposure itself is a powerful means of undermining the enemy's system. In their agitation, Social Democrats must not allow any deliberate or unintentional distortion of Marxism, and must always educate the proletariat in a revolutionary spirit and maintain the political independence of the proletariat. They must exert pressure on the government in the name of the entire people, utilize the spontaneous conflicts between the working class and the exploiters, consciously lead the economic struggle of the working class, inspire groups of proletarians and attract them to the socialist camp.

In response to the Economists’ obsession with the “handicraft method” in organizational work, Lenin pointed out that this was not a symptom of decline, but a symptom of growth. This symptom was not only in a state of confusion and looseness in terms of ideology, politics and organization, showing a lack of cultivation and small scale, but also attempted to defend this narrowness and elevate it to a special “theory”, which was actually a manifestation of worshipping spontaneity. Since this “handicraft method” organization itself lacked consciousness, it was difficult to shoulder the task of fighting spontaneity. “Any revolutionary movement cannot last without a stable and inherited leadership organization.” “The spontaneous struggle of the proletariat cannot become the real ‘class struggle’ of the proletariat without the leadership of a strong revolutionary organization.” Only by selecting more and more “professional revolutionaries”, building a centralized and unified proletarian party, formulating a unified program, and implementing a common plan can the spontaneity of the workers’ movement be gradually overcome and consciousness be improved. The revolutionary organization was to completely break the “handicraft method” advocated by opportunists and “revolutionaries”, get out of the narrowness of the political activities of the Economists, and cure the real symptom of the workers’ movement at that time.

In response to L. Nadezhdin's assertion in "On the Eve of the Revolution" that the All-Russian newspaper could not become a collective organizer, Lenin emphasized that the All-Russian newspaper was the only way to cultivate a strong political organization, and the establishment of the All-Russian Political Newspaper was a baseline for these political organizations to continue to develop, deepen and expand. Nadezhdin disagreed with this, believing that people were more likely to be gathered and organized around "more concrete" things such as local newspapers, preparing demonstrations, and solving unemployment problems. Lenin pointed out that due to the narrow vision and scope of activities of activists, local work was done very poorly, and people in a scattered state needed to rely on common newspapers to establish connections between cities and integrate various kinds of work. This All-Russian Political Newspaper "plan" is precisely to establish such an organization to save the party's reputation and prestige during the most "depressed" period of the revolution and be ready to support all protests at any time.

**3. The direct motivation for writing What Is to Be Done?**

The direct motivation for writing What Is to Be Done? was to resolve the severe crisis within the Russian Social Democratic Party at that time. First, it was to effectively strengthen the party's leadership role in the revolutionary movement. Lenin pointed out that the consciousness of the leaders of the Social Democratic Party ("thinkers", revolutionaries, and social democrats) lagged behind the spontaneous upsurge of the masses. First, they were backward in their ideological awareness. The "economists" lacked sufficient theoretical cultivation, belittled the initiative and perseverance of conscious activists, and believed that "strategy-planning was inconsistent with the basic spirit of Marxism" and that strategy was "a process in which the party's tasks grew as the party developed", and therefore could not become true revolutionary leaders and organizers. Under such circumstances, the backwardness of the Social Democratic Party was surpassed by the more active non-social democrats on the one hand, and on the other hand, it would inevitably be exploited by the non-social democrats. Therefore, workers could not become the vanguard of social democracy at all, and would eventually become the rear guard of the bourgeois democrats.

Second, practical actions were backward. Due to insufficient ideological and theoretical preparation, the Social Democrats at that time showed a typical obedience, that is, they obeyed "economism" when "economism" was popular, and obeyed terrorism when terrorism appeared. They did not reflect the vanguard nature of the party at all and violated the principle of the party leading the revolutionary movement forward. The essence of "tailism" is to be divorced from the masses, to be verbal "politicians" in the party's revolutionary cause, but to be lazy and muddle through in their work, and often be "driven" forward by the masses, blindly command and lack foresight when encountering things.

Secondly, it was to completely change the bureaucracy existing in the Social Democratic Party. Lenin believed that "the concept of the party is not to call on people to establish a militant revolutionary organization, but to defend a certain kind of 'revolutionary bureaucracy' and to play with the 'democratic' form", which is "slave-like imitation... or even worse, monkey-like imitation!" Revolutionary bureaucracy here refers to being divorced from reality, inefficient and not doing practical things. The third period in the history of the development of the Russian Social Democratic Party, that is, from 1898, entered a period of chaos, disintegration and vacillation. During this period, the activists who were trained by "legal" Marxist books and periodicals lagged behind the broad and powerful climax of the spontaneous struggle of the proletariat in terms of both theoretical and practical consciousness, and they did not realize their backwardness in thought, and tried to use various high-sounding reasons to defend their backwardness. The magazine Workers' Cause, for example, has openly defended the "economists" since its founding, which prominently reflects the "spirit" of the time, which was a combination of narrow opportunism and a complete lack of interest in theory. They confused the purpose with the means, deviated from the focus of revolutionary work, and "vulgarized" scientific socialism, turning it into a hodgepodge instead of a complete revolutionary theory. The slogan of "class struggle" became a means of comforting people, and could not really motivate people to carry out extensive and powerful activities. They only focused on drafting some "paper" charters and gave up the important and urgent task of training themselves to become professional revolutionaries. These real bureaucratic phenomena were as childish as "meaningless and harmful child's play". Their root cause was the lack of theoretical literacy and practical experience of the Russian revolutionaries and was also closely related to the narrow vision and scope of activities of the activists at that time.

**II. What to do? Proposal on building a new type of proletarian party**

What Is to Be Done? consists of a preface, a conclusion and five main parts. The book not only deeply criticizes the views of the Russian Economists, but also systematically discusses how to build a new type of proletarian party in terms of ideology, organization, methods and principles.

**1. This Work Profoundly reveals the principles of ideological construction guided by Marxist theory**

"Without revolutionary theory, there can be no revolutionary movement." "Only a party guided by advanced theory can play the role of an advanced fighter." This is a famous statement about the importance of revolutionary theory in What Is to Be Done?. In response to the popular slogans of the time, such as "oppose orthodoxy", "oppose ideological rigidity", and "Long Live Freedom of Criticism", Lenin pointed out that they "are only used to cover up people's indifference and inability to develop theoretical ideas". Lenin analyzed that with the widespread spread of Marxism in the Russian movement at that time, many people with poor or even no theoretical training joined in, thus lowering the overall theoretical level of the movement organization. Some people even tried to belittle the significance of theory in the name of Marx. For this reason, Lenin pointed out that "when the tendency to indulge in the narrowest practical activities is combined with fashionable opportunistic preaching", it is necessary to always adhere to the revolutionary theory to guide the revolutionary movement, and "without revolutionary theory, there will be no strong socialist party". In terms of the attitude towards Marxist theory, Lenin's view is that we must first persist and second develop it. In that era of ideological and theoretical confusion, Lenin always adhered to Marx's basic viewpoint, "never trade principles and never make theoretical 'concessions'". Revolutionaries must clearly realize the importance of revolutionary theory, because revolutionary theory can not only unite all socialists, but also enable them to gain faith from theory and use faith to support their actions. For the Russian Social Democratic Party, it insisted on taking Marxist theory as its guide because the thoughts and speeches of other factions in the early days of the party were in danger of causing the revolutionary movement to deviate from the correct path, and some mistakes that seemed "unimportant" at first glance could also lead to extremely tragic consequences. At the same time, the social democratic movement is essentially an international movement, and it is necessary to learn from the experience of other countries with a critical attitude. It is not enough to simply understand these experiences or copy the practices of other countries. Therefore, it is necessary to look at Marxist theory with a developmental perspective and independently test it, which requires strong theoretical power and rich political and revolutionary experience. The Russian Social Democratic Party shoulders not only political and organizational responsibilities, but also ideological leadership responsibilities.

As Engels once regarded theoretical struggle as a third form parallel to political struggle and economic struggle, and only when the struggle in theory, politics and practical economy cooperates and connects with each other, the workers' movement will become powerful and invincible. Lenin pointed out that the understanding that "politics is always subordinate to economics" is wrong, and the practice of the economists who always put economic struggle first is harmful. The three types of struggle, economic struggle, political struggle and theoretical struggle, should be determined according to specific historical conditions to determine which form of struggle takes the first place. Social Democrats should not limit themselves to economic struggles in order to guide the working masses, but should move from pure economic struggles to the path of proletarian political struggles, because "historical experience has proved that when the proletariat has no political freedom or its political rights are restricted, political struggle must always be put first". Only through political struggle can the proletariat acquire socialist consciousness, and then deeply understand the class status and historical mission of the proletariat, and turn the spontaneity of the workers' movement into consciousness. Only by adhering to the political line can the proletariat be liberated and their enslaved status changed.

**2. This Work Clearly put forward the ideological work method of "conscious" indoctrination**

The socialist consciousness of workers "can only be instilled from outside", "that is, it can only be instilled into workers from outside the economic struggle, from outside the scope of the relationship between workers and factory owners", this is the famous indoctrination theory put forward by Lenin in What is to be Done?

There were differences of understanding within the party about the "spontaneous upsurge" of the Russian workers' movement at that time, which would lead the workers' movement onto two completely different development paths, one was pure trade unionism, and the other was a social democratic revolutionary movement.

To this end, Lenin emphasized the need to strengthen the party's ideological work and further guide the workers' movement. It is necessary to "instill extremely systematic organization" into the standing army so that their work can "catch up" with the spontaneous upsurge in order to avoid "real great misfortune".

This "extremely systematic organizational indoctrination" refers to the use of "conscious" indoctrination to guide spontaneous movements. Lenin further clarified the relationship between consciousness and spontaneity. On the one hand, the "spontaneous factor" is the embryonic state of consciousness. Before accepting the guidance of Marxist theory and its political party, the working class is an "in-itself class", and the struggle they carry out is spontaneous in nature. The conscious working class has become a "class for itself". They have a further understanding and perception of their historical position, mission and tasks, and the laws of social development. By comparing the strike movements in Russia in the first half of the 19th century and the 1960s and 1970s, Lenin pointed out that the original spontaneous riots themselves have shown a certain degree of awakening of consciousness, especially the strikes in the 1890s, which showed a more distinct color of consciousness. This planned strike has shown a kind of embryo of class struggle. However, these strikes are still purely spontaneous movements, not social democratic struggles, but actually trade union struggles. On the other hand, spontaneous movements need to be guided by conscious factors. Because the working class alone cannot realize that the interests of the working class and the entire social and political system are in irreconcilable contradictions, they can only form trade union consciousness. And "the trade union politics of the working class is the bourgeois politics of the working class."

In order to prevent the workers' movement from being controlled by bourgeois ideology, it is necessary to instill social democratic consciousness into the working class from the outside. Lenin quoted Kautsky's words: "Socialist consciousness is something that is instilled (von auβen Hineingetragenes) into the class struggle of the proletariat from the outside, not something that arises spontaneously (urwüchsig) from this struggle." At the same time, "the theoretical doctrines of the Social Democratic Party also arise completely independently of the spontaneous growth of the workers' movement. Their emergence is the natural and inevitable result of the ideological development of the revolutionary socialist intellectuals."

In order to instill political knowledge into the workers and improve their political consciousness and political enthusiasm, "Social Democrats should go to all classes of the population and send their teams to all aspects." Social Democrats need to go deep into the masses and study all the characteristics of the social and political status of each class. Lenin proposed to establish a national forum - an all-Russian newspaper to arouse the enthusiasm of the conscious people's strata for political exposure. The relationship between spontaneity and consciousness is essentially the relationship between the different levels of ideological development of the working class and the different stages of the development of the workers' movement. In order to improve the Marxist theoretical level of the party and the masses through theoretical indoctrination, and at the same time, in order to instill socialist ideas into the workers' movement, it is necessary to carry out an irreconcilable struggle with bourgeois ideology. The urgent task of the Russian Marxist party in the early 20th century was to arm the workers with scientific socialist ideas and guide the workers' movement on the path of political struggle against the tsarist system and capitalism.

**3. This work is a systematic discussion on the organizational guarantee for the success of the revolutionary cause by establishing a team of professional revolutionaries**

Faced with the historical situation in which the growth of the workers' movement exceeded the growth and development of the revolutionary organization, Lenin clearly stated that "the first and most urgent practical task is to establish an organization of revolutionaries who can make the political struggle powerful, stable and continuous." "Give us an organization of revolutionaries, and we can turn Russia over!" On the one hand, the organization of professional revolutionaries can overcome the spontaneity of the workers' movement and ensure the stability of the workers' movement. Lenin pointed out that professional revolutionaries are those who take revolutionary activities as their profession.

They are not "dreamers" and will not fantasize about "establishing a broad workers' organization under the autocratic system that implements the election system, the reporting system, the unanimous voting system, etc." Instead, they start from the solid establishment of a strong revolutionary organization to ensure the stability of the entire movement, so as to achieve both the goals of social democracy and the goals of pure trade unionism. Professional revolutionaries are "smart people" in Lenin's writings. They are talented, tested, professionally trained and educated for a long time, and they cooperate well with each other. These professional revolutionaries have a "spirit of innovation" and can guide the workers' movement in a systematic way, providing all kinds of materials for improving the political consciousness and political initiative of the proletariat.

This makes them always ahead of everyone. By setting an example to awaken the sleepers and encourage the laggards, they are not only able to lead but also good at leading the movement. On the other hand, the professional revolutionary organization can ensure the inheritance of the workers' movement. They will formulate appropriate "strategies-plans" according to the current situation of the workers' movement, among which "strategy" is a top-level design with forward-looking and overall planning, and "plan" is a specific action program implemented at the implementation level. "Strategy-plan" embodies the unity of theory and practice required by Marxism. This "positive action program" will play an important leading and guiding role for excited students, dissatisfied local self-government figures, angry sectarians, aggrieved national school teachers and other people when necessary. At the same time, the "strategy-plan" itself requires flexibility, that is, it can adapt to various rapidly changing struggle conditions, respond flexibly and resolutely perform its duties in the course of events. Therefore, professional revolutionaries can lead the workers' movement to break through "dogmatism", promote the workers' movement out of narrow fields, and have an international perspective.

**Part III. What Is to Be Done?: Implications for Promoting the Great New Project of Party Building in the New Era of China**

What Is to Be Done? not only solved the urgent problems in the Russian revolutionary movement at that time, but also innovated the theory of Marxist party building and profoundly influenced the international communist movement and the Chinese revolution. As history enters the 21st century, this book still has great practical significance for promoting the new great project of party building in the new era in China.

1. The enlightenment of ideological party building on effective criticism in party building in the new era

Lenin repeatedly said: "Demagogues are the worst enemies of the working class." They are the worst because when the movement just started, these demagogues took advantage of the chaos to stimulate the bad nature of the masses. The vast majority of people who are in a period of chaos and vacillation are most susceptible to the temptation of demagogues. Only after the most painful lessons can the masses realize their mistakes. Party building in the new era faces a more profound, complex and diverse theoretical struggle in the field of ideology. In recent years, social trends such as neoliberalism, historical nihilism, and the theory of "universal values" have grown secretly. Especially in the process of the global spread of the new crown pneumonia epidemic, various struggles in the field of ideology have turned from dark to bright and are becoming increasingly fierce. Some people, under the guise of "freedom of criticism", are ostensibly criticizing current ills, but in fact they are taking the opportunity to shake the party's Marxist beliefs, attack the socialist system, and discredit the party's leadership; others hype ordinary events into hot public opinion, exaggerate and distort the events themselves, label the characters in the events, and rely on "sharp words" and "alternative criticism" to attract attention and gain attention.

At present, in the face of more complex and severe ideological struggles, the response strategies proposed by Lenin still provide us with important guidance. Today, we still need to regard theory as the "fulcrum" and "basis" of correct action, and use clear theoretical analysis to point out the correct path for complex situations. Marxist theory must not be regarded as an unchanging dogma. Through in-depth study and extensive practice, we must explore effective ways to combine the basic principles of Marxism with the actual production and life in China. We study Marxism in order to arm our minds with Marxist theory in order to effectively resist the invasion of bad ideology and actively fight against erroneous thoughts. Therefore, on the one hand, we must criticize "freedom of criticism", and on the other hand, we must summarize and explore how to carry out effective criticism.

**First, we must persist in criticism and self-criticism.**

Criticism and self-criticism are the fine traditions of the Party and an important mark that distinguishes the proletarian party from other parties. Lenin's criticism of the "freedom of criticism" of the economists does not mean hostility to any criticism. On the contrary, Lenin pointed out that we should be good at identifying constructive opinions, humbly learn from useful experiences, and constantly improve and innovate traditional concepts and practices. Lenin believed that "self-criticism is absolutely necessary for any dynamic and vigorous party."

CPC is not afraid of and welcomes constructive and well-intentioned criticism, but it is bound to show a solemn position and clear attitude towards those destructive malicious slander and wanton slander.

**Second, criticism must be constructive.**

Some criticisms and attacks on the Party and its policies are for the sake of opposition and criticism for the sake of criticism. They expand their dissatisfaction with individual special events to attacks on the entire system. Some criticisms are not aimed at solving practical problems, but will affect the unity of the Party. In Lenin's view, any criticism that is not conducive to the proletarian revolution and construction should be abolished.

**Third, freedom of criticism must be limited.**

Our Party has always advocated that there should be freedom of criticism in the struggle within the Party, and argues that only in this way can the Party develop healthily. However, if the criticism within the Party goes beyond the normal scope, it will make it difficult for the Party's resolutions and propositions to be implemented. Some criticisms are in fact splitting the Party, and even openly standing in opposition to the Party, which has a clear negative effect on the Party's construction and development. Lenin believed that "criticism should be completely free within the principles of the Party's program", "not only at Party meetings, but also at mass gatherings".

In other words, criticism should be based on the principles of the Party's program, and its freedom should not violate the fundamental interests of the Party and the broad masses of the people.

**Fourth, it is necessary to handle the relationship between freedom of criticism and consistency of action.**

In 1906, Lenin published the article "Freedom of Criticism and Consistency of Action", which focused on the principle that the exchange of ideas within the Party should follow the principle of freedom of criticism and consistency of action.

The purpose of allowing freedom of criticism within the Party is to avoid inconsistency in the Party's actions. Therefore, sufficient discussion should be carried out in the process of making Party resolutions. Lenin criticized the then Central Committee for making wrong decisions because of the lack of free criticism from party publications and various party organizations, and repeatedly reiterated that unity of action should be based on freedom of criticism. Only through sufficient criticism and discussion can the correctness and unity of action be guaranteed.

At the same time, Lenin also emphasized that the action program determined after sufficient criticism and discussion must not be destroyed, that is, it is required to maintain unity of action, which is the embodiment of the principle of party spirit. At present, theoretical consciousness is still the premise and foundation for guiding practical consciousness.

Maintaining theoretical clarity is the premise and foundation for political firmness. The key to learning the basic theories of Marxism is to learn to use the Marxist standpoint, viewpoint and method to deal with the practical problems facing the world and China today. We emphasize that the use of basic Marxist theories to arm party members and cadres and educate the masses is not to learn theoretical points in a formal way, but to effectively improve the theoretical cultivation of party members, cadres and the masses, cultivate theoretical consciousness, and further guide practical consciousness.

**2. The enlightenment of the indoctrination theory on the emphasis on "initiative spirit" in party building in the new era**

Lenin proposed that if one wants to be an outstanding revolutionary, one must not be separated from the masses of workers, but must go to all classes of residents and carry out the work of instilling political consciousness in four identities, namely, "theoretician", "propagandist", "agitation worker" and "organizer". As a theoretician, one must study all the characteristics of the social and political status of each class, and instill class political consciousness in workers from outside the economic struggle and outside the scope of the relationship between workers and factory owners.

Therefore, the Social Democratic Party is required to send its own teams to various aspects and expand its scope of activities. As a propagandist, one must use the Marxist standpoint, viewpoint and method to explain and respond to all phenomena of tyranny and oppression, and show that the ideal of the Social Democrats is to become the spokesperson of the people, and be good at using every little thing to explain the ideals and beliefs of the party and explain the world-historical significance of the proletariat's liberation struggle. As an agitator, one should arouse the enthusiasm for political exposure among all strata of the people who have a little consciousness. The more extensive this exposure movement is, the more people are mobilized and the more resolute they are, and the greater the spiritual effect of this declaration of war. As organizers, we must fully mobilize, effectively organize and coordinate mass movements, and use conscious leadership to guide spontaneous climaxes.

Today, similar to history, the party's ideological and political education work must not only fight against various erroneous thoughts, but also fight against various formalistic bureaucratic styles. Whether it is the "literary habits" that were mistaken in Lenin's era or the red tape that does exist, they are all bad habits that we should strive to overcome in our party building today. Literary habits and red tape are both manifestations of formalism and bureaucracy. "Since socialism has become a science, it requires people to treat it as a science, that is, to study it."

However, studying theory is not to stay in the study and be separated from reality. Just like the way of cultivating professional revolutionaries proposed by Lenin, the revolutionary consciousness and revolutionary qualities of revolutionaries must be trained in revolutionary practice, not just by reading classic articles.

The reason why Marxist theory has strong vitality and combat effectiveness is that it is rooted in the soil of reality and has valuable practical qualities. Implementation of details cannot be done by sitting and controlling the system remotely or giving orders from a distance. You cannot appreciate the depth of the water without getting your shoes wet, and you cannot understand the pain of sweat without getting your hands dirty.

To strengthen the Party's work style in the new era, we must not only overcome the bad practices of formalism and bureaucracy, but also be good at mobilizing the creativity of the masses. First, we must respect and protect the "initiative spirit".

The "initiative spirit" is a natural process that exceeds the changes of events. It is necessary to solve the problem in theory in advance, and then try to test its effectiveness in practice. Whether it is theoretical innovation or the process of putting theory into practice, it will inevitably encounter obstacles. Whether it can respect, support and effectively protect the "initiative spirit" is a touchstone for testing whether a political party truly believes in and relies on the masses. Our Party has always firmly believed that the people are the creators of history. Just as Lenin required the proletarian party to attach importance to the creativity of the people during the Russian Revolution, the Communist Party of China fully realized that the people are the fundamental force to promote the advancement of history as early as the early days of the Chinese revolution, and proposed that "the people, and only the people, are the driving force for creating world history". Entering the new era, we face more opportunities and challenges.

The Party must rely closely on the people, adhere to the people-centered approach, and rely on the people to create historical achievements. Of course, while respecting the initiative of the masses, we must also pay great attention to the spontaneity of mass movements. As Lenin pointed out in criticizing the harm of worshipping spontaneity, spontaneity is a kind of blindness, which is opposite to consciousness and is not a real revolutionary mass movement. The second is to cultivate and stimulate the "spirit of initiative". The materialist conception of history believes that the masses cannot create history as they please, and they are subject to certain social, economic, political, cultural and other historical conditions. Under the capitalist system, the bourgeoisie brutally exploits the initiative, perseverance and initiative of the working people, and the capitalists exclude fair competition through financial fraud, nepotism and flattery.

However, "socialism not only does not stifle competition, but for the first time creates the possibility of truly extensive and large-scale use of competition, attracting the real majority of workers to such a work stage, on which they can show their talents and display their abilities". Under the socialist system, by formulating various policies and measures that are in line with the interests of the people, truly providing the broad masses of the people with a work stage to show their initiative and initiative can greatly mobilize the people's creativity. Using the "spirit of initiative" to break the "tailism" is an inevitable requirement for maintaining the revolutionary vitality of the party.

3. The inspiration of the “professional revolutionary” thought on grasping the “key minority” in the party building in the new era of China

Lenin proposed to establish an organization of revolutionaries because the workers' movement was in a "critical transitional state" of "no people, but many people". "Many people" means that more and more people are dissatisfied and want to rise up against the autocratic system; "no people" means that there are no leaders, no political leaders, and no talents who are good at organization to carry out extensive, unified and rigorous work so that every force, even the smallest force, can be used.

To this end, a strong organization of tested revolutionaries is needed. The number of such professional revolutionaries is very limited. They are "leaders who are talented (but geniuses are not produced in hundreds and thousands), tested, professionally trained and educated for a long time, and who cooperate well with each other." At present, it is still necessary to firmly grasp the "key minority" in party building, with the focus on grasping the leading organs and leading cadres, because historical experience shows that the key to solving China's problems lies in the party; the key to solving the party's own problems lies in the party's leading cadres at all levels. In order to manage the "vast majority" well, these "key minorities" should give full play to their exemplary and leading role. The report of the 19th CPC National Congress in 2017 proposed that in order to promote the new great project of Party building in the new era, we must constantly enhance the Party's political leadership, ideological leadership, mass organization, and social appeal, and ensure that our Party always maintains its vigorous vitality and strong combat effectiveness. In terms of the "key minority" in Party building, we must put the improvement of political leadership first, while focusing on enhancing ideological leadership, mass organization, and social appeal.

**First, we should enhance political leadership and firm the political direction.**

The issue of political direction is related to the survival of the Party. To enhance political leadership is to clarify and firm the political direction by improving political cognition and political decision-making ability. Political cognition is the premise, and political decision-making ability is the core. Improving political cognition means forming scientific and correct judgments and attitudes in terms of political stance, political principles and political path. Lenin once compared the different forms of expression of opportunists and revolutionary social democrats in Germany and Russia, pointing out that we cannot "simply copy the latest German prescription for the German type of this disease", which means that only by forming a comprehensive and systematic political cognition can we make scientific and accurate political decisions. Spontaneous workers' movement provides the basis for unity. The task of the proletarian party is to unite the scattered strike organizations into an overall class struggle, and ultimately enable the working class to seize state power.

Lenin pointed out the direction and path for the workers' movement from a political and strategic perspective, showing his outstanding political leadership. The political leadership of the Party in the new era should not only improve political cognition through learning and understanding Marxist theory, but also be good at applying the basic principles of Marxism in terms of policies and strategies, and innovate ways and means to transform the real world.

**Second, we should strengthen the ideological leadership and further improve the consciousness of the masses.**

Lenin once attributed the sluggishness of the Russian Revolution to the "credulous unconsciousness" of the masses. In his view, "one of the main signs of the scientific and practical politics of all real revolutions is that the 'ordinary people' who actively, automatically and effectively participate in political life and participate in the construction of the state system have increased very rapidly and sharply".

To this end, the proletarian party should not only be the enlightener and sower of the masses' thoughts, but also the leader of the masses' ideological progress. The ideological leadership of the party in the new era should not only improve the height of the ideological realm, but also expand the dimension of the ideological pattern, and improve the effectiveness of ideological and political education. In particular, the ideological and theoretical education of the majority of young people needs to be continuously strengthened, and reform and innovation should be combined with the development of the times.

**Third, we should strengthen the organizational power of the masses to ensure that the party's cause is solid and strong.**

The masses are the source of the party's vitality and combat effectiveness. Lenin once likened the masses to "faintly burning flammable objects" and believed that "being separated from the masses is the main source of our weakness and inability to immediately carry out a resolute struggle". In the process of the Russian Social Democratic Revolution, the "people's revolutionary view" was formed and developed, and efforts were made to win political freedom for the masses. The mass organizational power of the Party in the new era is the power guarantee for carrying out great struggles, building great projects, advancing great undertakings, and realizing great dreams.

Therefore, it is necessary to further consolidate the organizational position by improving and perfecting the organizational system, innovate organizational means by using democratic consultation methods and legal thinking methods, strengthen the political, educational and service nature of the Party organization, and continuously enhance the organizational function. Fourth, use a variety of means in a comprehensive manner to expand social appeal. Lenin made a series of metaphors for party newspapers and periodicals, such as "propaganda forum", "calibrated baseline", "building scaffolding" and "combustion-supporting blower", which fully affirmed the important role of party newspapers and periodicals in ideological education and organizational construction.

Today, party newspapers and periodicals are still important carriers for the dissemination of the party's theories, lines, principles and policies. At the same time, in the era of rapid development of Internet information technology, it has become a historical trend to comprehensively use a variety of communication means such as integrated media to publicize and mobilize the general public.

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