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| **Jiang Yihua: The United Front in the New Era: What is the Basic Economic System of Socialism?** |
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| |  | | --- | | **Summary:**  For all kinds of non-public economic people and new social strata, solving the problem of people's hearts and strength requires a correct understanding of what socialism is and what the basic economic system of socialism is.  This is the key to whether the united front can be firmly established and healthily developed in the new era. After the outbreak of the October Revolution in Russia, Lenin's New Economic Policy was a brand-new interpretation of what socialism is. Shortly after Lenin's death, public ownership, planned economy, and distribution according to work were determined as the three major criteria for judging whether it is socialism, forming the Stalin model of socialism. The Chinese Communists, represented by Mao Zedong, founded the theory of the new democratic revolution based on China's reality. Subsequently, influenced by the international communist movement, the rationality and authority of socialism during the Russian war communism period were quickly confirmed.  Based on the profound historical summary of the Soviet socialist model and the successful experience and setbacks of Chinese socialism, the Communist Party of China and the Chinese people embarked on the road of reform and opening up.  From the theory of the primary stage of socialism, the theory of socialism with Chinese characteristics, to the theory of the basic economic system of socialism, from "a basic economic system in the primary stage of socialism" to "socialist system with Chinese characteristics", and then to "socialist basic economic system", this process of theoretical& pratical innovation reflects that our understanding of the essential characteristics of socialism is deepening step by step, and our confidence is also increasing step by step. The rock-solid foundation of the united front in the new era lies in socialism, a socio-economic form and social form. In this article we will also give historical information on how top CPC leaders such as Mao, Liu Shao Shi, Zhou Enlai discussed the basic economic system of socialism..  Keywords: socialism; economic form; united front  1. How Should We Put the Problem  Xi Jinping pointed out: "China social structure has undergone profound changes, and the role of the united front in strengthening the party's class foundation and expanding the party's mass base has become even more important." [1]  To do a good job in the united front work, whether it is party relations, ethnic relations, religious relations, class relations, or relations between compatriots at home and abroad, we must solve the problem of people's hearts and strength. People's hearts and strength are actually what Xi Jinping emphasized at the Central Nationalities Work Conference to build a common spiritual home for the Chinese nation, "to bring the hearts of all ethnic groups together and rely on each other in spirit, and form a strong spiritual bond that unites the people and strives forward." [2]  It means that people "unite in ideals, beliefs, emotions, and culture, and help each other and have a deep brotherhood." For various non-public economic people and various new social classes, how to solve the problem of people's hearts and strength and form a spiritual bond that unites the people and strives forward is very necessary to correctly understand what socialism is and what the socialist basic economic system is.  The 15th CPC National Congress in 1997 proposed that the basic economic system of the primary stage of socialism should be one in which the public sector is the mainstay and multiple forms of ownership develop together. The 16th CPC National Congress in 2002 proposed “two unshakable” principles: first, the public sector must be consolidated and developed unshakably. Second, the development of the non-public sector must be encouraged, supported and guided unshakably. The “Decision of the CPC Central Committee on Several Major Issues Concerning Comprehensively Deepening Reform” adopted at the Third Plenary Session of the 18th CPC Central Committee in 2013 called the basic economic system of the public sector being the mainstay and multiple forms of ownership developing together “an important pillar of the socialist system with Chinese characteristics and the foundation of the socialist market economic system” and reiterated: “We must unshakably consolidate and develop the public sector, uphold the dominant position of the public sector, give full play to the leading role of the state-owned economy, and continuously enhance the vitality, control and influence of the state-owned economy. We must unshakably encourage, support and guide the development of the non-public sector and stimulate its vitality and creativity.” 202 In October 2023, the 20th CPC National Congress put forward a more explicit statement: “Build a high-level socialist market economic system. Adhere to and improve the basic socialist economic system, unswervingly consolidate and develop the public economy, unswervingly encourage, support and guide the development of the non-public economy, give full play to the decisive role of the market in resource allocation, and better play the role of the government.” At a symposium in Shanghai on November 30, 2023, Xi Jinping particularly emphasized that the Yangtze River Delta “should take the lead in implementing policies and measures to encourage, support and guide the healthy development of the private economy, further optimize the development environment for private enterprises, and promote the healthy and high-quality development of the private economy.” [3]  China’s practice has proven that the public and non-public sectors of the economy are not mutually exclusive. As General Secretary Xi Jinping pointed out, “Our country is so large and has such a large population. To promote economic and social development, we need concerted efforts from all sides. The public and non-public sectors of the economy should complement and bring out the best in each other, rather than exclude or offset each other.”[4] Therefore, in socialist construction, they are an indispensable and important part of the united front led by the Communist Party of China, just as they were during the New Democratic Revolution.  How to correctly understand what socialism is and what the socialist economic form is is the key to whether we can consolidate and healthily develop the united front in the new era and establish the united front on a rock-solid foundation.  **II. Practice after the October Revolution in Russia and Lenin’s Thoughts in His Later Years**  On August 28, 1985, Deng Xiaoping met with Zimbabwe African National Union Chairman and Prime Minister Robert Mugabe and said: “We have summed up decades of experience in building socialism. In the past, we did not fully understand what socialism and Marxism are.”[5]  The so-called "not completely clear" means that for a long time, people have simplified and dogmatically regarded whether the means of production are publicly owned, the economy is planned, and distribution according to work as the criteria for judging whether a country is socialist and how much socialist content it has. Whether this issue is clear is directly related to the fate of the united front.  What is socialism? After the October Revolution in Russia, there was an attempt to regulate production and distribution directly on the basis of communist principles in a small peasant country by means of the laws and coercive measures of the proletarian state[6], to hastily transform all means of production into social public property and to try to eliminate commodity production immediately in many areas. This is what Lenin said: "On the first day of the dictatorship of the proletariat, October 26 (November 8), 1917, private ownership of land was abolished and the large landowners were expropriated without compensation. Within a few months, almost all the big capitalists, the owners of factories, joint-stock companies, banks, railways, etc., were expropriated without compensation. The organization of large-scale industrial production by the state, the transition from "workers' supervision" to "workers' management" of factories and railways - this has basically been achieved, but in agriculture, things are only just beginning (the establishment of "state farms", that is, large farms run by the workers' state on state-owned land). Similarly, the organization of small peasants into various cooperatives, the method of transitioning from small commodity agriculture to communist agriculture, has only just begun." [7] This is actually equating the socialism to be built with the communism envisioned by Marx and Engels.  In October 1919, Lenin made a further theoretical summary of the characteristics and tasks of this period in Economics and Politics in the Era of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat: “There is a transition period between capitalism and communism, which is beyond any doubt in theory. This transition period cannot but have the characteristics or features of both social and economic structures. This transition period cannot but be a period of struggle between declining capitalism and growing communism, in other words, between capitalism, which has been defeated but not yet destroyed, and communism, which has been born but is still very young.”[8] During this period, the public ownership economy and the non-public ownership economy, the planned economy and the market economy, are in a life-and-death relationship, and are absolutely incompatible with each other. In this article, Lenin also emphasized that another important task of this period is to wage an irreconcilable struggle against peasant petty commodity production, because peasant petty commodity production “is an extremely broad and extremely deep capitalist foundation. On this basis, capitalism can be preserved and revived, and it can wage an extremely fierce struggle against communism.” [9] This statement was later summarized in the more famous conclusion of Left-Wing Communism and an Infantile Disorder: “Small-scale production constantly, daily, spontaneously and en masse produces capitalism and the bourgeoisie.”[10]  The result of this was the intensification of social contradictions and the decline of production. As Lenin said, in the spring of 1921, the Soviet Union suffered a serious economic crisis, political crisis and social crisis. This is the first model of socialism that we are familiar with.  On October 29, 1921, Lenin reflected on this at the Seventh Moscow Province Party Conference: “If you recall the various official and unofficial statements made by our party from the end of 1917 to the beginning of 1918, you will see that we believed at that time that the development of the revolution, the development of the struggle, could take place either on a relatively short road or on a long and arduous road. However, in estimating the possible development, we mostly (and I do not remember any exceptions) started from the assumption that there would be a direct transition to socialist construction, an assumption that we may not always express openly, but always tacitly understand.”[11]  Under Lenin's leadership, the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks) turned to the implementation of the New Economic Policy. Lenin clearly stated: "How to build socialism in a country full of small farmers must be completely rethought, and the whole view must be fundamentally changed." [12] The most important result of "rethinking" and "fundamental change" is to recognize that non-public ownership economy, commodity production, and market economy will still be necessary for a considerable period of time. Lenin also put forward a slogan that everyone can understand: "We must educate Russian peasants to learn how to do business and learn how to do business in the European way." [13] Lenin specifically reminded: "We will never be dominated by the 'emotional socialism' that despises business or the old Russian, semi-aristocratic, semi-serf, patriarchal sentiment." [14] Based on Lenin's latest thinking before his death, Bukharin repeatedly emphasized that depriving the peasants would destroy the peasant economy and undermine the worker-peasant alliance. He advocated that it must be recognized that the socialism that the Soviets are building "will be a backward socialism for a long period of its development." The decisive factor is that there are a large number of small peasant economies in Russia, which makes Russia's economy and technology extremely backward. Therefore, the socialism that Russia is going to establish will be a backward socialism during the development period. It is different from the first stage of the future society without classes envisioned by Marx, but is in the "primary stage of socialism" where class distinctions still exist. Bukharin's 1924 article "Marxist Lenin" pointed out that from the perspective of production relations, the economic composition of the Soviet Union is mixed, with both public ownership and private ownership, which is consistent with Russia's productivity. The mixed economic composition requires that the economic operation mechanism is a market relationship, so the existence of market relations is a prominent feature of backward socialism. The existence of market relations determines the essence of the New Economic Policy to a certain extent. Due to the backward productivity and the diverse ownership of the means of production, the existence of market relations in the Soviet Union is objective, inevitable and necessary. Due to the existence of small merchants and small owners, they will continue to exist for a considerable period of time even under the socialist system. Due to the existence of a very large peasant class in Russia, the road to complete socialism is quite long. Bukharin pointed out that the planned economy of future communism is undoubtedly correct if "from the perspective of higher algebra", but it can only be established on the basis of the growth and concentration of socialist large-scale production. In Russia's "backward socialism", it is necessary to attach great importance to market relations, the huge role of currency, exchanges and banks, and it is impossible to implement a planned economy immediately.  These new thoughts of Lenin and Bukharin are a completely new interpretation of what socialism is. The coexistence of multiple ownership systems and the positive significance of the commodity market economy are completely different from the socialism during the war communism period, but Lenin called it the New Economic Policy and Bukharin called it socialism in backward countries and socialism in the primary stage.  Soon after Lenin's death, these new thoughts began to be criticized and denied as wrong tendencies. Under Stalin's leadership, the New Economic Policy was actually ended in 1928. In order to speed up the pace of industrialization, many practices of the War Communism period were replicated under the name of fully realizing agricultural collectivization, and farmers' land, livestock, farm tools, and food were once again deprived. In Stalin's report on the Draft Constitution of the Soviet Union on November 25, 1936, the New Economic Policy was interpreted as a temporary concession that had to be made. As a stopgap measure, he said: The New Economic Policy is to "consolidate the socialist position, eliminate capitalist elements, and complete the victory of the socialist system as the basic system of the national economy." The symbol of this victory is the complete elimination of capitalist private ownership and peasants' small private ownership, so that the socialist ownership of production tools and means of production has achieved complete victory in all sectors such as industry, agriculture, and commerce. In this way, public ownership, planned economy, and distribution according to work were determined as the three major criteria for judging whether it is socialism, forming the Stalin model of socialism.  Deng Xiaoping lamented this when talking to Mugabe: “The Soviet Union has been working on socialism for many years but has not yet fully understood what it is. Perhaps Lenin’s ideas were better and he came up with a new economic policy, but later the Soviet model became rigid.”[15]  **III. The Successful Practice of New Democracy in China**  Since its birth, the Communist Party of China has aimed to achieve communism as its ultimate goal. The Party Constitution formulated at the First National Congress of the Communist Party of China in 1921 stipulated that in the future, "capitalist private ownership will be eliminated, and means of production such as machinery, land, factories and semi-finished products will be confiscated and returned to public ownership." Of course, the issue of the united front was not considered at that time.  At the Second National Congress of the Communist Party of China in 1922, the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks) had realized that it was impossible to implement communist production and distribution in one step, and turned to the implementation of the New Economic Policy. Under the guidance of the Communist International, the Chinese Communists determined the minimum and maximum programs of the party. The maximum program of the party was to establish the political dictatorship of the workers and peasants, eradicate the private property system, and gradually achieve a communist society; while the minimum program was to first carry out a democratic revolution: eliminate civil strife, overthrow the warlords, establish domestic peace; overthrow the oppression of international imperialism, achieve the complete independence of the Chinese nation; unify China into a true democratic republic. The issue of establishing a united front with the oppressed progressive classes of society other than the proletariat was first placed before the newly born Communist Party of China. In 1923, the Third National Congress of the Party determined the policy of establishing a united front with the Chinese Kuomintang established by Sun Yat-sen.  The Chinese Communists, represented by Mao Zedong, created the theory of the New Democratic Revolution based on China's reality, led the Chinese people in the magnificent New Democratic Revolution and the All-People's War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression, and laid a solid foundation for establishing and developing the revolutionary democratic united front and the anti-Japanese national united front. On New Democracy, completed in January 1940, first proposed the concepts of "New Democratic Society" and "New Democratic State", and explained that the victory of the New Democratic Revolution "will not and cannot establish a capitalist society under the dictatorship of the Chinese bourgeoisie, but will establish a New Democratic society under the joint dictatorship of all revolutionary classes in China, led by the Chinese proletariat" [16]. The New Democratic Republic is different from both a capitalist republic and a socialist republic. "It is a form of a certain historical period, and therefore a transitional form, but an irreplaceable and necessary form." [17]  The most important feature of New Democracy is that while striving to establish public ownership of the main means of production, it recognizes that small-scale peasant production and capitalist private ownership still have a legitimate reason to exist and develop, and recognizes that the market economy still has a legitimate reason to exist and develop. In March 1945, when explaining "On the Coalition Government" at the Seventh Plenary Session of the Sixth Central Committee of the Communist Party of China, Mao Zedong said: "Only through democracy can we reach socialism. This is the natural law of Marxism." Combining the historical experience of the Soviet Union's New Economic Policy period, Mao Zedong said, "The extensive development of capitalism is harmless and beneficial under the New Democratic regime." "State capitalism also existed in the Soviet Union for a few years. After the October Revolution, Lenin wanted to develop state capitalism but failed. Rich peasants existed for a longer time." [18] In May, in the conclusion of the Seventh National Congress of the Communist Party of China, Mao Zedong reiterated: "What we advocate is new democratic capitalism. This kind of capitalism has its vitality and revolutionary nature. ... New democratic capitalism will still be useful in the future. It will still be useful in China and some agricultural countries in Europe and South America. Its nature is to help socialism. It is revolutionary, useful, and conducive to the development of socialism." [19]  This shows that we agreed very much with Lenin's new thinking in his later years on how a country like Russia could move towards socialism. It was also for this reason that we mobilized the peasants to carry out the land revolution, established a solid alliance with the peasants, and established a broad united front with the petty bourgeoisie, the national bourgeoisie and other patriotic forces. The convening of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference in 1949, the formulation of the "Common Program", and the founding of the People's Republic of China were all inseparable from the great unity of all the Chinese people who formed a united front. This new democracy is very close to the socialist model of the New Economic Policy advocated by Lenin and Bukharin.  While the new democratic revolution in China was advancing rapidly, in June 1948, under the leadership of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, the European Communist and Workers' Party Information Bureau launched a fierce criticism of Tito and other Yugoslav Communists and their leaders. The Yugoslav Communists were accused of not recognizing that the class struggle in the transition period from capitalism to communism was becoming increasingly intensified, and not recognizing that peasant small producers were constantly, spontaneously, and massively producing capitalism and the bourgeoisie every day and every hour, and were keen to establish a "people's front" with rich peasants, businessmen, and small factory owners. The Yugoslav Communists were also accused of emphasizing starting from their own country's reality and using nationalism to oppose the internationalism represented by the Soviet Communist Party. [20]  The Yugoslav Communist Party was therefore expelled from the European Communist and Workers' Party Information Bureau. Soviet newspapers published a series of long articles, bombarding the Yugoslav Communists with these views. Most of the views and practices involved in the Soviet Union's attack on the Yugoslav Communist Party were very close to the new democracy held by the Chinese Communists.  This major event in the international communist movement forced the Chinese Communists to consider how to make adjustments and adopt the transitional period theory advocated by Lenin during the war communism period, which was upheld by the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party, to replace their original new democratic theory. In early September 1948, Liu Shaoqi proposed in his article "On the Economy and Cooperatives of New Democracy" that the main contradiction in New China would be the contradiction between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, and between socialism and capitalism. He said that the new democratic economy is divided into three specific forms: state economy, cooperative economy and private capitalist economy. “These capitalist elements, even under the new democratic social system, are bound to compete with the state economy and the cooperative economy. This competition will become more intense as time goes on and will continue for a long time. This is the basic and main contradiction in the new society that has gradually developed after the overthrow of the rule of imperialism, feudalism and bureaucratic capitalism.” At the subsequent September Politburo meeting of the Central Committee, Liu Shaoqi put forward and emphasized this point more clearly, saying: “In the new democratic economy, the basic contradiction is the contradiction between capitalism (capitalists and rich peasants) and socialism. After the victory of the anti-imperialist and anti-feudal revolution, this will be the main contradiction in the new society.”[21] February 3, 1949 Mikoyan, who made a secret visit to Xibaipo in Japan, reported in a telegram to the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolsheviks) after talking with Liu Shaoqi: "Liu Shaoqi claimed that they would confiscate the enterprises of the comprador bourgeoisie under the pretext of confiscating bureaucratic capital. As for the issue of private enterprises of the national bourgeoisie, it will be resolved after one or two years when they formulate a nationalization plan." "Liu Shaoqi emphasized that 'we must bear in mind Lenin's teachings: the petty-bourgeois economy is the source of capitalism'" and "the transition to socialism will be characterized by a long period of time and an arduous struggle. We are currently facing the question of 'who will win' that Lenin once raised." [22] This confirmed the rationality and authority of socialism during the period of Russian War Communism.  In March 1949, the Second Plenary Session of the Seventh Central Committee of the Communist Party of China analyzed the social and economic composition after the victory of the Chinese revolution. It believed that the state-owned economy, cooperative economy, private capitalist economy, individual economy and state capitalist economy would be the main forms of the new China's economy. It was determined that "the state-owned economy is socialist in nature, and the cooperative economy is semi-socialist in nature." The meeting also proposed that "after the victory of the Chinese revolution throughout the country and the resolution of the land issue, there will still be two basic contradictions in China. The first is domestic, that is, the contradiction between the working class and the bourgeoisie. The second is foreign, that is, the contradiction between China and imperialist countries." [23] In June, in the outline of the report written by Liu Shaoqi in preparation for his visit to the Soviet Union, he emphasized that the China's economic construction must oppose the two wrong tendencies of capitalist tendency and adventurism, oppose pinning all hopes on the development of private capitalist economy, making unprincipled concessions to capitalists, accommodating the weaknesses of the petty bourgeoisie, and consciously or unconsciously trying to build China into a capitalist republic. [24] On June 15, 1953, the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee proposed the general line and general tasks for the transition period, which were formally adopted at the Fourth Plenary Session of the Seventh CPC Central Committee in February 1954. The general line and general tasks for the transition period determined that China's socialist industrialization should be gradually realized, and China's socialist transformation of agriculture, handicrafts, and capitalist industry and commerce should be gradually realized.  The difference between the theory and practice of New Democracy and the theory and practice of the transition period is that the former recognizes that non-public ownership economy and commodity market economy still have the necessity to exist and develop in China. It is mainly manifested in the "Common Program" formulated by the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, which stipulates "taking into account both public and private interests, benefiting both labor and capital, mutual assistance between urban and rural areas, and internal and external exchanges", which is closer to the New Economic Policy advocated by Lenin in his later years; while the latter requires the elimination of various non-public ownership economies and commodity market economies in a relatively short period of time, and recognizes that public ownership economy and private ownership economy are incompatible, and the proletariat must completely eliminate the bourgeoisie and small peasant producers and small handicraftsmen who will "constantly and spontaneously produce the bourgeoisie and capitalism". At this time, although there are many differences in specific methods and steps from the previous Soviet practice, in judging what socialism is, we have undoubtedly used war communism and the Soviet model during Stalin's rule as the standard.  **IV. Comprehensively learn from the lessons of the Soviet model**  On April 23, 1953, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China issued a special "Instructions on the Theoretical Education of Cadres in 1953-1954", requiring cadres to study Chapters 9 to 12 of the History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolsheviks) and some works of Lenin and Stalin on socialist economic construction. The senior group was required to read 4 works of Lenin (Economy and Politics in the Era of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat, On Unified Economic Planning, On Grain Tax, On Cooperation), 16 works of Stalin, 1 work of Kuibyshev, 2 works of Molotov, and 1 work of Malenkov.  The intermediate group was required to read 8 works of Stalin. The instructions required that "all the main cadres of the party should systematically understand the basic laws of the Soviet Union in realizing national industrialization, agricultural cooperation and completing socialist construction, so as to correctly use the Soviet experience in the process of China economic construction according to China specific conditions." On October 27, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China issued the "Supplementary Notice on the Theoretical Education of Cadres in 1953-1954", which expanded the scope of readers and made separate provisions for the time and content of theoretical study for party members and cadres, non-party cadres, cadres of party, government and mass organizations, cadres of industrial and mining enterprises, technical personnel and artists, teachers in universities, colleges and primary and secondary schools, and doctors.  By 1956, the "three major reforms" had been basically completed. Mao Zedong once believed that the large-scale, storChina class struggle had ended, and the main contradiction in the country would be the contradiction among the people. The united front would be established on a new basis, so the slogan of "long-term coexistence and mutual supervision" was put forward between the Communist Party of China and the democratic parties. However, the anti-rightist struggle that was launched immediately expanded the class struggle, and "long-term coexistence and mutual supervision" gradually became a formality.  In order to further improve the industrialization level of agricultural production cooperatives in rural areas, transform small collectives of farmers into large collectives as soon as possible, and transform collective ownership into public ownership, a vigorous people's commune movement was launched across the country in the fall of 1958. People's communes, basically based on townships, integrated farmland, agricultural production, rural industry, social services and other aspects, and implemented collective ownership and unified distribution of means of production and income. For many farmers who were still basically engaged in individual manual labor, this actually caused a large-scale deprivation, seriously damaged economic development and social stability, and destroyed the alliance with the vast majority of farmers.  There was a major disagreement among the top leaders of the Party over whether to agree to the peasants’ demand for “contracting production to households”. Since it was about whether to uphold the principle of public ownership of the means of production, Mao Zedong re-emphasized class struggle in his speech at the opening meeting of the 10th Plenary Session of the 8th CPC Central Committee on September 24, 1962, saying: “Are there still classes and class struggle in socialist countries? We must affirm that there are. It still exists. Lenin once said that for a long period after the victory of the socialist revolution, because of the existence of the international bourgeoisie, because of the existence of the remnants of the domestic bourgeoisie, and because capitalist elements continue to grow among the domestic petty bourgeoisie, mainly the peasant class, the exploiting class will continue to exist for a long time after it has been overthrown, and may even be restored.”[25] The basis for this was still Lenin’s argument during the period of war communism. The subsequent Four Cleanups Movement and the “Cultural Revolution”, as well as the so-called “theory of continuing revolution under the dictatorship of the proletariat”, can be said to be the inevitable result of an attempt to maintain the Soviet Union’s war communism and the Stalinist socialist model.  Mao Zedong's talk on the theoretical issues of the dictatorship of the proletariat in the autumn and winter of 1974 was part of the "theory of continuing revolution under the dictatorship of the proletariat". In accordance with Mao Zedong's instructions, the People's Daily published on February 22, 1975 and the Red Flag magazine published on March 1 published 33 quotations from "Marx, Engels, and Lenin on the Dictatorship of the Proletariat", of which 10 were from Marx and Engels and 23 were from Lenin. Except for 4 of Lenin's quotations selected from "The State and Revolution" written in August-September 1917, the remaining 19 were all from Lenin's works during the period of war communism. This shows the profound influence of the Soviet war communism model on the Chinese Communists and Mao Zedong himself.  To equate socialism with the full public ownership of the means of production and planned economy in the communist stage is essentially to deny that production relations must be adapted to the level of productivity, and to attempt to directly transition to the production and distribution of communism. It regards all non-publicly owned economies as hostile forces that are irreconcilable with the public economy, and in particular regards the vast majority of small farmers as the deep foundation for the spontaneous emergence of capitalism. It therefore concludes that class struggle will continue to exist for a long time during the socialist period, and sometimes it will be very fierce. It directs the spearhead of class struggle at all non-publicly owned economies and the social strata and party comrades who support the moderate development of these non-publicly owned economies. Practice has increasingly clearly proved that blindly pursuing the continuous expansion and improvement of the degree of public ownership of the means of production and doing everything possible to prevent and suppress the development of commodities and markets has not only failed to promote the advancement of the socialist cause, but has seriously deviated from the reality of people's material and spiritual production activities, dampened people's enthusiasm for production, intensified social contradictions, and even caused social unrest, bringing the national economy to the brink of collapse.  Fundamentally speaking, the public ownership economy we have established is not the same as the social ownership economy that Marx talked about. Originally, we divided public ownership into public ownership and collective ownership. Later, public ownership was renamed state ownership. However, both state ownership and collective ownership are actually difficult to avoid being restricted by hierarchical power. Mao Zedong was particularly worried that cadres would be separated from the masses and become a bureaucratic class and a capitalist ruling group because he discovered that under the control of hierarchical power, public ownership does not necessarily have a socialist nature.  It is based on the profound historical summary of the lessons learned from the Soviet socialist model and the successes and setbacks of Chinese socialism that the Communist Party of China and the Chinese people embarked on the path of reform and opening up.  **V. The Concept of Basic Socialist Economic System**  China's reform in 1980s began with the abolition of the single public ownership system, and the start was the implementation of the household contract responsibility system in rural areas. Farmers can independently operate the land they contract, flexibly choose to grow crops and livestock, and independently determine the sales method and price. Practice has proved that the vast number of working peasants are not only reliable allies of the proletariat during the New Democratic Revolution, but also the main force in opening up rural revolutionary bases, surrounding cities with rural areas, and finally seizing cities. In socialist construction, they are also very reliable allies and main forces. The implementation of the household contract responsibility system has enabled the vast majority of farmers to independently control their business income, and has given them more motivation to work hard to improve production and quality, increase income, and rapidly improve the living standards of farmers, promote the progress and innovation of agricultural technology, improve the efficiency and quality of agricultural production, and promote the rapid development of the rural economy. At the same time, it has given the vast majority of farmers the freedom to move from rural areas to cities and from agriculture to industry and commerce. Hundreds of millions of "migrant workers" have transformed into a new industrial arChina full of vitality to support the rapid development of the manufacturing industry, pushing China to become a "world factory" in a very short period of time, and the industrial revolution is striding forward.  The reaffirmation of the non-public economy is because the vast majority of non-public economic practitioners are not selfish and profit-seeking. They also bear social responsibilities, eager for China's modernization to make great strides, eager for the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation, yearning for common prosperity for all people, and committed to the transformation of Chinese civilization into modern civilization. Moreover, many modern non-public economies adopt the shareholding system and have a considerable degree of sociality. The private economy, which once disappeared, has been revived and has gradually grown into a new force for China's rapid economic development, contributing more than 50% of the country's tax revenues, more than 60% of the gross domestic product, more than 70% of technological innovation achievements, more than 80% of urban employment, and more than 90% of the number of enterprises. Facts have proved that in socialist construction, they are an indispensable and important part of the united front led by the Communist Party of China, just like during the New Democratic Revolution.  While reaffirming the non-public economy, the original state-owned and collectively owned economies also introduced modern enterprise management systems and carried out in-depth reforms to overcome the influence of hierarchical power. In particular, the shift from a single planned economy to the recognition of the positive significance of the market economy and even the recognition of the decisive role of the market in resource allocation has brought about a decisive transformation in the traditional public economy. The effective rectification of the phenomenon of power absence, power overstepping, and power rent-seeking in the public economy has maintained the socialist nature of public ownership. At the same time, the distribution system has also been reformed, with distribution according to work as the main method, while allowing multiple distribution methods to coexist. Practice has proved that these fundamental and major reforms of China's economic system are extremely conducive to mobilizing the enthusiasm of all parties, achieving the organic unity of efficiency and fairness, and enabling the social nature of production to play its due role at all levels, and promoting the comprehensive, rapid and healthy development of China's socialist modernization.  Another major breakthrough of reform and opening up is to confirm that the vast majority of intellectuals are an important pillar of China's socialist construction. They are no longer part of the bourgeoisie, but workers who actively participate in material and spiritual production activities, and are important representatives of advanced social productivity and advanced science and technology. This series of successful practices of original systems, institutions, and decisions since reform and opening up have promoted the continuous deepening of our understanding of socialism. In 1987, the 13th National Congress of the Communist Party of China proposed the theory that China is in the primary stage of socialism. In 1992, the 14th National Congress of the Communist Party of China declared: The goal of China economic system reform is to establish a socialist market economic system.  From the theory of the primary stage, the theory of Chinese characteristics, to the theory of the basic economic system of socialism, from "a basic economic system in the primary stage of socialism" to "socialist system with Chinese characteristics", and then to "basic economic system of socialism", it reflects that our understanding of the essential characteristics of socialism is deepening step by step, and our confidence is increasing step by step. The theory of the primary stage and the theory of Chinese characteristics always have a certain standard and a certain model in mind. Today, we openly declare the two "unwavering" principles, which are not only applicable to the "primary stage of socialism" or "Chinese characteristics", but the "basic economic system" that should be "upheld and improved" throughout the socialist period, indicating that socialism is no longer a short transitional stage that only lasts for decades as people usually know, but a new social economic form and social form that will last for a considerable historical period, as Deng Xiaoping said, it will last for several generations, dozens of generations, and dozens of generations. This is a brand-new scientific definition of what socialism is, and it is a major historical breakthrough and creative development of Marxist scientific socialism.  It can be seen from this that the existence and development of the private economy and the market economy are not stopgap measures or temporary partial concessions, but are an indispensable and important part of the socialist economic form and an indispensable and important participant in the construction of socialist material civilization, political civilization, spiritual civilization, social civilization, and ecological civilization. The vast majority of workers, farmers, intellectuals, private economic practitioners, and all members of the Chinese nation are indispensable and important participants in the construction of socialist material civilization, political civilization, spiritual civilization, social civilization, and ecological civilization. The rock-solid foundation of the united front in the new era lies in socialism, a social economic form and social form.  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