

The Triple Logic of General Secretary Xi Jinping's Important Thoughts on the Party's Self-Revolution

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ABSTRACT

Self-revolution is the most distinctive political characteristic of the Communist Party of China (CPC) and its greatest strength. General Secretary Xi Jinping's important thoughts on the Party's self-revolution clearly propose the practical requirements of advancing self-revolution with "nine approaches." These thoughts are the theoretical crystallization and essence of the era in Party building in the new era and serve as an important guide for advancing comprehensive and strict governance of the Party, Party conduct and integrity construction, and anti-corruption efforts. To understand General Secretary Xi Jinping's important thoughts on the Party's self-revolution, one must deeply grasp the historical logic, theoretical logic, and practical logic embedded within them, continually enhancing political consciousness, ideological awareness, and action consciousness in advancing self-revolution.

KEYWORDS

Self-Revolution; Theoretical Logic; Historical Logic; Practical Logic.

1. INTRODUCTION

In May 2015, General Secretary Xi Jinping first introduced the concept of "self-revolution" during the 12th meeting of the Central Leading Group for Comprehensively Deepening Reform. In July 2016, at the celebration of the 95th anniversary of the founding of the Communist Party of China, he formally integrated self-revolution into the domain of Party building. By January 2024, the Third Plenary Session of the 20th Central Commission for Discipline Inspection officially articulated "General Secretary Xi Jinping's Important Thoughts on the Party's Self-Revolution." Clarifying the theoretical, historical, and practical logic of General Secretary Xi Jinping's important thoughts on the Party's self-revolution is of significant importance for advancing comprehensive and strict governance of the Party and promoting the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation through Chinese-style modernization.

2. THEORETICAL LOGIC: THE INHERENT GENE AND POLITICAL CHARACTER OF A MARXIST POLITICAL PARTY

Revolution is the driving force and inevitable product of social development. Revolutionary nature and revolutionary spirit are the essence of the proletariat and its party. Marx and Engels argued that social revolutions are based on the contradictions between productive forces and relations of production. They stated, "The contradiction between the productive forces and the forms of social

relations... inevitably leads to revolution every time.” “All historical conflicts are rooted in the contradiction between productive forces and forms of social relations.” [1]

2.1. Marx and Engels’ Theory of Self-Denial and Self-Criticism

Marx and Engels placed great importance on the significance of self-denial and self-criticism, believing that during the revolutionary process, “dialectical negation” was necessary to continually transform oneself. They emphasized the use of critical weapons to strengthen the construction of the proletarian party, advocating for the “ruthless criticism of everything existing” [1]. They argued that as the revolutionary movement progressed, the proletarian party must make timely self-adjustments. “What is necessary for revolution is not only that there is no other way to overthrow the ruling class but also that the class that overthrows the ruling class can only abandon all its old and dirty elements through revolution, thus qualifying to take on and rebuild social work” [2]. They advocated for “criticism” and “self-criticism” as tools to promote unity and enhance strength, stating that “unity does not exclude mutual criticism; without such criticism, unity is impossible,” and that “this ruthless self-criticism shocked the enemies greatly and made them feel: how much internal strength must a party have to do such a thing!” [2].

2.2. Lenin’s Theory of the Revolutionary and Critical Nature of the Proletarian Party

Lenin believed that “the socialist revolution is not a single action, not a battle on one front, but an entire era filled with intense class conflict, occurring on all fronts” [3]. It is long-term, complex, and comprehensive, and the proletariat and its party must persist in struggle and continual revolution in all areas. Lenin pointed out that “self-criticism is absolutely necessary for any energetic and vibrant party” [3]. A proletarian party “is only truly reliable when it dares to face the mistakes it has made,” and he regarded self-criticism as an important criterion for judging whether a party is mature. “Publicly acknowledging mistakes, exposing the causes of mistakes, analyzing the environment in which the mistakes arose, and carefully discussing ways to correct them-this is a serious hallmark of a party” [4]. He actively advocated for criticism and self-criticism within the party, encouraging the shedding of flaws and the courage for self-reform. Through continuous self-revolution, the proletarian party cures its ills, clears its internal corruption, refines itself, and leads and completes the social revolution, all while maintaining the party’s advancement and purity.

3. HISTORICAL LOGIC: THE EXPERIENCE, LESSONS, AND WISDOM GAINED FROM THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF CHINA’S CENTURY-LONG STRUGGLE

3.1. The Period of the New Democratic Revolution

During the New Democratic Revolution, Communists led by Mao Zedong focused on revolutionary struggle and party construction, bravely adhering to truth, and waging a resolute struggle against erroneous thoughts, lines, and actions within the party. In 1927, the Party held the “Eight-Seven Meeting” to criticize the right-wing opportunism represented by Chen Duxiu and determined the general policy of land revolution and armed struggle. In 1929, the Party convened the Gutian Conference, where it proposed “educating party members to politicize and scientifically guide both their thoughts and internal party life” [5], focusing on correcting erroneous thoughts in the army. In 1935, the Party held the Zunyi Conference, criticizing the military errors of Bo Gu and Li De, ending the dominance of “leftist” dogmatism and adventurism in the Party’s leadership, and beginning to establish Mao Zedong’s leadership position within the Party and the Red Army. In 1938, the Sixth Plenary Session of the Sixth Central Committee largely overcame Wang Ming’s right-wing capitulationist errors and unified the Party’s thoughts. In 1941, the Party launched the Rectification

Movement across the Party, calling for opposition to subjectivism to rectify academic style, opposition to sectarianism to rectify Party style, and opposition to formalism to rectify literary style. In 1945, the Sixth Plenary Session of the Seventh Central Committee discussed and passed the “Resolution on Certain Historical Issues of the Party,” which provided detailed conclusions on various historical issues within the Party, particularly addressing the “leftist” errors represented by Wang Ming, which were characterized by dogmatism.

3.2. The Period of Socialist Revolution and Construction

During the period of socialist revolution and construction, the Party focused on strengthening its own construction and consolidating leadership through ideological, organizational, and style improvements. In 1950, the central government issued the “Instructions for the Rectification Movement in the Party and Army,” which aimed to target and correct issues of bureaucratism and formalism at various levels of government. From 1951 to 1954, the Party carried out a widespread rectification of grassroots organizations, clearing out impure and passive elements from the Party membership. At the same time, it launched a vigorous campaign against corruption, waste, and bureaucratism to prevent the degeneration and distortion of Party leadership. The 1957 Rectification Movement addressed the issues of bureaucratism, sectarianism, and subjectivism within the Party. It adopted mass mobilization and criticism and self-criticism to handle internal contradictions and strengthen the Party’s purity. This movement helped purify the social atmosphere and created a favorable environment for the socialist revolution and construction.

3.3. The Period of Reform and Opening-Up and Socialist Modernization Construction

During the period of reform and opening-up and socialist modernization construction, the Party placed anti-corruption and promoting clean governance as a key component of its self-revolution. In 1980, the Fifth Plenary Session of the 11th Central Committee promulgated the “Code of Conduct for Intraparty Political Life,” further promoting the Party’s fine traditions and style while improving the democratic life within the Party. In 1982, the 12th Party Congress revised the Party Constitution to better meet the needs of the new era. In 1983, the Second Plenary Session of the 12th Central Committee issued the “Decision on Rectifying the Party,” launching a comprehensive rectification of the Party. In 1992, the 14th Party Congress became the first to incorporate “strict governance of the Party” into the Party Constitution. In 1994, the Fourth Plenary Session of the 14th Central Committee passed the “Decision on Several Major Issues Concerning Strengthening Party Building,” proposing anti-corruption policies such as “strengthening and improving intra-Party supervision and strictly enforcing Party discipline.” In 1997, the Central Committee introduced the “Several Guidelines on Clean Governance for Communist Party Members and Leaders (Trial),” promoting clean governance for Party members and leaders. In the 21st century, the Central Committee issued a series of documents, including the “Decision on Strengthening and Improving Party Construction,” the “Regulations on Disciplinary Actions for Communist Party Members,” the “Decision on Enhancing the Party’s Governance Capacity,” and the “Codes of Conduct for Clean Governance for Communist Party Members and Leaders,” continuously enhancing the Party’s leadership and governance abilities, its ability to resist corruption, and its capacity to withstand risks.

3.4. The New Era of Socialism with Chinese Characteristics

Since entering the new era, the Party, with Comrade Xi Jinping at its core, has placed great importance on the Party’s self-revolution, emphasizing the need to “address prominent issues within the Party with the political courage of self-revolution” [6]. The Central Committee has proposed the overall requirements for Party building in the new era, insisting that the Party’s political building lead the new great project of Party construction, placing discipline and rules at the forefront, focusing on

political discipline and political regulations, strengthening disciplinary constraints, and using iron discipline to safeguard the Party's unity and cohesion. It has also insisted on closely integrating and advancing political, ideological, organizational, stylistic, disciplinary, and institutional work in one direction, continuously strengthening the Party's long-term governance capacity, its advanced nature, and purity. Furthermore, it has deepened the fight against corruption, unwaveringly promoting clean governance, and taking decisive action against corruption and malpractice. It has also pursued the policy of not allowing corruption, preventing it, and fostering a culture where corruption is not even considered. The Party has implemented the Central Eight Regulations and persistently worked to correct the "Four Winds." Seven major internal education campaigns have been carried out, and through self-revolution leading social revolution, the Party has become stronger, opening a new chapter in the self-revolution of a century-old Party.

4. PRACTICAL LOGIC: THE URGENT NEED AND INEVITABLE REQUIREMENT FOR THE PARTY TO ADDRESS VARIOUS RISKS AND CHALLENGES, AND SOLVE THE UNIQUE PROBLEMS OF A LARGE PARTY

4.1. Achievements in Comprehensive and Strict Party Governance Since the 18th Party Congress

Since the 18th Party Congress, facing a series of prominent contradictions and issues within the Party, the Central Committee, with Comrade Xi Jinping at its core, has incorporated comprehensive and strict governance of the Party into the "Four Comprehensives" strategic layout. It has promoted self-revolution with a cutting-edge approach, addressing many major issues within the Party. The report of the 20th Party Congress highlighted the deepening of comprehensive and strict governance, implementing the overall requirements for Party building in the new era, leading Party construction with political construction, forming a relatively complete system of internal Party regulations, and promoting the entire Party to strengthen its ideals and beliefs, improve its organizational system, and reinforce discipline and rules. The Party has consistently strengthened its integrity and discipline, stopping some long-standing negative trends and rectifying stubborn problems that had remained unresolved for years. It has also launched an unprecedented anti-corruption campaign, advancing the fight against corruption with a unified approach of not daring to corrupt, being unable to corrupt, and not wanting to corrupt. After unremitting efforts, the Party has found its second answer to breaking the historical cycle of disorder and decline: self-purification, self-improvement, self-renewal, and self-enhancement. The Party's capacity for governance and discipline has been significantly strengthened, fundamentally reversing the lax and ineffective situation in Party management, and a healthy political ecosystem within the Party is continuously taking shape and developing.

4.2. Challenges, Tests, and Dangers Faced by the Party

At the same time, as the largest Marxist ruling party in the world, the Communist Party of China faces the unique problems of large parties, such as the "six hows" and the "four great tests" and "four types of dangers," which will persist for the long term. The situation in the anti-corruption fight remains severe and complex. To continue to win the support of the people and consolidate its long-term ruling position, the Party must always remain clear-headed and determined in solving the unique problems of a large party. It must consistently uphold the spirit of self-revolution, manage the Party with a reform mindset and strict standards, implement the overall requirements for Party building in the new era, and perfect the system of comprehensive and strict governance of the Party. Through self-purification to remove internal toxic elements, self-improvement to enhance the overall image, self-revolution to foster creativity, and self-enhancement to strengthen responsibility and capabilities, the Party will ensure that it remains the strong core of leadership for the cause of socialism with Chinese

characteristics, and continue to push forward the stable and lasting development of Chinese-style modernization.

5. CONCLUSION

Self-revolution is the most distinctive political characteristic of the Communist Party of China (CPC) and its greatest strength. General Secretary Xi Jinping's important thoughts on the Party's self-revolution are the theoretical crystallization and essence of the era in Party building in the new era and serve as an important guide for advancing comprehensive and strict governance of the Party, Party conduct and integrity construction, and anti-corruption efforts. The theoretical logic is the inherent gene and political character of Marxist political parties, The historical logic is the experience, lessons, and wisdom gained from the communist party of china's century-long struggle, The practical logic the urgent need and inevitable requirement for the party to address various risks and challenges, and solve the unique problems of a large party. In the practice of Party building in the new era, it is necessary to accurately grasp the practical requirements of the "nine approaches" and resolutely carry out the Party's self revolution to the end.

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