

# A WRONG PHRASE

In *The Communist* (#5) there was an error in the article "Beat Back the Dogmato-Revisionist Attack on Mao Tsetung Thought," which replied to Hoxha's scurrilous new book.

On page 86, the article reads:

"The role of the party itself under socialism is full of contradictions. On the one hand, and principally, the party is the political leadership of the working class, which leads it forward in making revolution and attacking every vestige of the old society. But the party is also, objectively, an administrative apparatus under socialism. Most of the people exercising leadership over particular units are party members, the state planning is done under the leadership of the party, and so forth. Similarly, the party must exercise [all-round dictatorship] in every sphere of society, and it is an instrument of proletarian dictatorship, but at the same time the existence of the party itself is in contradiction to the goal for which the party is fighting—namely the elimination of all class distinctions, and with it the need for any state or party. ...."

The words marked in brackets were supposed to have read "exercise leadership," as was in the author's manuscript. Still, the difference is a political one, and should have been corrected. The difference between the party acting as an "instrument of the proletarian dictatorship" (as the passage correctly states) and the party itself exercising dictatorship is significant.

Stalin, in his struggle against the Trotskyites, criticizes this formulation and shows the dangers in any formulation which could implicitly identify the dictatorship of the proletariat with the dictatorship of the party. And Mao, of course, made great contributions

theoretically and practically to combatting efforts to transform the dictatorship of the proletariat into a dictatorship of party bureaucrats (actually a new capitalist class). Of course it is these contributions of Mao's that most infuriate Enver Hoxha and which lead him to flail at Mao for abandoning the "leading role of the party"!

Of course, anyone familiar with the article (or who reads the passage in question as a whole) would realize that the incorrect formulation contained in it goes against the whole argument being made. Still, it is not surprising that opportunists would seize on this one erroneous phrase to try to avoid a serious response to the argument in the article. A case in point is the July issue of the *Workers' Advocate*, monthly newspaper of COUSML (Central Organization of U.S. Marxist-Leninists), a pathetic sect whose main activity is fighting with the equally pathetic CPUSA(ML) (otherwise known as MLOC) for the "official" right to represent the dogmato-revisionist trend in the U.S. According to the *Workers' Advocate* article, the RCP,USA's "negation of the Marxist-Leninist teachings on the party has led it to the most mechanical, bureaucratic, administrative and bourgeois dictatorial teachings on the leading role of the party." For "evidence" they cite only the wrong formulation in question and refer the reader to Stalin's comments on this question.

Actually, COUSML will find little comfort in that section of Stalin's article "Concerning Questions of Leninism." For while it is true that Stalin correctly criticizes the slogan "dictatorship of the Party," it is in the course of fighting opportunists who used the fact that Lenin had on several occasions himself used the disputed phrase as justification for their own efforts to equate the pro-

letarian dictatorship with the "dictatorship of the Party."

Furthermore, in the entire work, Stalin says that the leading role of the party consists of enabling the proletariat to exercise its dictatorship, and also points out, as does the passage in question, that "not a single important political or organizational question is decided by our Soviet and other mass organizations without guiding directives from the Party. In *this sense* it could be said that the dictatorship of the proletariat is, *in essence*, the 'dictatorship' of its vanguard, the 'dictatorship' of the party, as the main guiding force of the proletariat." (Stalin's emphasis) And it is clear from the context that, even with the error in *The Communist*, what is being said is entirely in keeping with the line of Lenin and Stalin on this point.

Finally, in *Imperialism and the Revolution*, Hoxha himself refers to a situation in which "*We Marxist-Leninists who have come to power* have to establish diplomatic relations with the bourgeois-capitalist states, because these relations are in our interests, and theirs, too." (Page 85, COUSML edition; emphasis added.) Perhaps if COUSML is in a mood to be consistent in its quibbling, it might criticize Hoxha for speaking of "Marxist-Leninists who have come to power." But then, demanding consistency in principle from the likes of COUSML would really be quite silly.

It will be interesting to see if COUSML intends to take up a vigorous defense of Enver Hoxha's revisionism, or if they will rest everything on a wrong phrase. *Unite* (the CPUSA[ML]'s newspaper) has promised a response to our Hoxha article. It could be an interesting and amusing contest as each does somersaults trying to defend a totally indefensible line. ■