

WORKERS OF THE WHOLE WORLD, UNITE!

KIM JONG IL

ON SOME QUESTIONS IN UNDERSTANDING THE JUCHE PHILOSOPHY

Talk to Theoretical Propagandists of the Party

April 2, 1974

Foreign Languages Publishing House
Pyongyang, Korea

A social scientist recently sent me a letter in which he expressed his view on the Juche philosophy.

A perusal of the letter led me to believe that our academic circles still lack a correct understanding of the Juche philosophy.

The Juche philosophy is a new philosophy created by the leader.

It is a philosophy which has been elaborated and systematized, focussing on man. That the Juche philosophy is man-centred does not imply that it treats and explains the human question only. This means that the Juche philosophy raises the fundamental question of philosophy by regarding man as the main factor, and elucidates an outlook on the world, a viewpoint and attitude towards the world, by focussing on man.

But the social scientist who sent the letter considers the Juche philosophy to be something of a human philosophy. Such a view has also been expressed by some other social scientists.

Human philosophy is long standing and has had many schools from the outset, but they all deal purely with the human question. Human philosophy is a philosophy of life which denies the inherent mission of philosophy as a science that gives an outlook on the world and mainly interprets what man and life are.

The Juche philosophy is different. It raises man's position and role in the world as the fundamental question of philosophy and elucidates the philosophical principle that man is the master of everything and decides everything. The fundamental question of Juche philosophy does not purely concern the human question, but the relations between man and the world; the principle of Juche philosophy does not merely represent an outlook on human life, but an outlook on the world. The Juche philosophy expounds a man-centred, Juche-oriented outlook on the world.

The Juche philosophy also considers man from a new angle.

Historically, a great deal has been said about the human question as an object of philosophical study, but no perfect philosophical answer was given. The Marxist classics established the materialistic dialectical view on the human question and thus made long strides in giving a philosophical elucidation of man. They defined the essence

of man as the sum total of social relations, and attached decisive significance to material production and socio-economic relations in human activities. Although they established the materialistic dialectical view on the human question, they did not give a full account of the essential features of man as dominator and transformer of nature and society.

The Juche philosophy made it clear for the first time that independence, creativity and consciousness are the essential features of man, the social being. Thus it gave a perfect conception of man and a correct philosophical answer to his position and role as master who dominates and transforms nature and society.

The Juche philosophy and human philosophy have fundamentally different viewpoints of man. The former regards man as an independent, creative and conscious social being, whereas advocates of the latter deny man's social character and consider him to be a being dominated by his instinct, a powerless being isolated from the world. The bourgeois human philosophy which negates a scientific understanding of the world and revolutionary changes, inspires sorrow, pessimism and ultra-egoism.

We must clearly be conscious of the reactionary nature of the bourgeois human philosophy and correctly understand the originality of the Juche philosophy which raised and resolved the human question from a new angle.

In understanding the Juche philosophy, it is also necessary to grasp correctly the new man-centred outlook on the world.

The Juche philosophy established the outlook on the world by regarding man as the main factor and clarified the viewpoint and attitude towards the world by focussing on man. This is the major characteristic of the Juche philosophy as the revolutionary world outlook of our time. By casting a new light on the outlook of the world, on the viewpoint and attitude towards the world, with man as the main consideration, the Juche philosophy provided the working class and other working masses with a powerful weapon to transform the world and shape their own destiny.

But some people say that the world is centred on man or that all

changes and development in the material world are caused by man; and they think that this is the new outlook of the Juche philosophy which distinguishes it from preceding philosophies.

It has already been established by materialistic dialectic that the world consists of material, not consciousness or ideas, and that it moves, changes and develops in accordance with its own laws, not by any supernatural force. It is an undeniable fact that the world is, in essence, a material entity, a material integrity, and that it moves, changes and develops in accordance with its inherent laws. The Juche philosophy answered a new question—who is the master of the world and what is the motive force for its transformation. It elucidated a new idea of the world that nature and society are dominated and transformed by man, and thus fulfilled brilliantly the philosophical task of our time when the popular masses are masters of their own destiny and history.

As you see, the Juche philosophy made it clear that man is the master and dominator of the world; it does not assert that the material world itself is centred on man. What the Juche philosophy also expounds is that man is the transformer of the world and that the world is reshaped by man, not that all changes in the world are brought about by man. The understanding that the material world is centred on man, or that all changes in the world are caused by him, is due to lack of understanding of the Juche philosophy. Man's position and role must not be misinterpreted in explaining the outlook on the world elucidated by the Juche philosophy.

It is also important to have a correct understanding of independence in grasping the Juche philosophy.

The Juche philosophy made it clear first that man is a social being whose life and soul is independence. This represents a historic change in elucidating the essence of man and his position and role.

But there is a misunderstanding of the question of independence elucidated by the Juche philosophy.

This is the case with the author of the letter and some other people. They understand that man's independence is the development to perfection of a natural attribute of living matter in general, the desire

for existence.

Independence is an attribute of man, the social being; it should not be viewed as the development to perfection of a natural, biological attribute of living matter.

This is, in essence, an evolutionary viewpoint.

Of course, we do not deny evolutionism itself. Science has long established the fact that man is a product of ages of evolution.

Man is a product of evolution, but not his independence.

Independence is a social product. Independence is an attribute given to man by society, not nature; it is not a natural gift, but has been formed and developed socially and historically. Nature gives man natural and biological attributes, whereas society provides him with social attributes. It can be said that man's independence is the requirement and reflection of social life, social practice.

Of course, the question of independence could be studied in comparison with other living matter from the viewpoint of evolutionism, that is, how man alone has acquired independence.

Man's independence is inconceivable without his unique physical organ which has taken shape and developed in the long course of evolution.

Thanks to his sophisticated organism, man has peculiar functions, mental and physical, which no other living matter can acquire, and accordingly he has independence. But it is unreasonable to think that man's independence took shape concurrently with the evolution of his organism. Before the existence of society, independence as man's attribute did not and could not exist even in any embryonic form.

Man's independence is different in quality from the simple instinct of other living matter to maintain their physical existence. It is an attribute to live and develop as a social being. It is illogical to try to explain the independence of man, the social being, on the basis of a biological instinct to protect his existence. Such an approach would only obviate the fundamental differences between a social being and a natural being, between social attributes and biological attributes.

The independence of man as the social being comes indisputably

into a social and historical category. Therefore, it should be viewed and understood from the social and historical point of view.

Denying that man's independence is a natural attribute of living matter, must not be understood as negating the material being of man himself.

Man is indisputably a material being. But he is not a simple material being. Unlike all other living matter which is subordinate to, and made to conform with, the objective world, man dominates and transforms the world in accordance with his will and desire. If independence, an attribute of man, were to be considered as a natural attribute, it would amount to obliterating the fundamental distinction between man, the social being, and other living matter in general, and to lowering his position and role as dominator and transformer of the world to the level of living matter in general.

Independence is the main attribute of man, the social being, but it is not his only social attribute. Along with independence, creativity and consciousness constitute his social attributes. Of course, independence, creativity and consciousness belong to the category of social attributes of man, but they represent different aspects. Independence is an attribute of man who is desirous of living independently as master of the world and his own destiny; creativity is an attribute of man who transforms the world and shapes his own destiny purposefully; and consciousness is an attribute of man who determines all his activities designed to understand and reshape the world and himself. Independence, creativity and consciousness, though distinguishable from one another, are closely integrated. Creativity cannot find full expression separately from independence; and the latter cannot be realized properly without the former. Consciousness is a prerequisite of independence and creativity and guarantees their materialization. A correct understanding of independence, creativity and consciousness in their intertwined relationship, therefore, is important in grasping man's social attributes.

The Juche philosophy newly elucidated the essential features of man and his position and role as dominator and transformer of the

world, and thus raised his dignity and value to the highest level possible. This is the great achievement of the Juche philosophy that no other philosophical thoughts have accomplished.

Today the Juche philosophy is winning more active support and strong sympathy amongst the people worldwide with every passing day.

We must see to it that scientists and theoreticians study profoundly the Juche philosophy and correctly explain and disseminate it so as to add glory to the great Juche idea.

I intend to go into further details of independence, and other problems in understanding the Juche idea at some other time in the future. So, it would be advisable not to publish my talk for the present but make sure that profound studies and researches are made among scientists and theoreticians so that they can have a correct understanding of the Juche idea.