

# Chinese Communist Party Calls for Free Debate

IN SCIENCE, art and literature the Chinese Communist Party has declared its policy to be freedom for independent thinking and freedom of debate.

This policy, summed up in the phrase "let diverse schools of thought contend," was put recently to a meeting of China's leading scientists, writers and artists in Peking by Lu Ting-yi, the head of the propaganda department of the Chinese Communist Party.

Liu is the Communist leader who wrote an article in 1949 taking sharp issue with those who said that war was imminent or inevitable. He stressed the strength of the peace forces which he said were winning over the war forces.

He said the Chinese Communist Party "advocates freedom of independent thinking in the work of literature and art and in the work of scientific research, freedom of debate, freedom of creative work and freedom to criticise."

It is also believed in "freedom to express one's opinion, freedom to maintain one's opinion and to reserve one's opinion."

"The history of our country has proved that if there were no encouragement for independent thinking and if there were no free discussion, then academic development would stagnate," he said.

"The Communist Party of China stands for the blossoming of all flowers in literature and art and for all diverse schools of thought in scientific work vying

with each other."

LU POINTED out that a strict distinction must be made between ideological struggle and the struggle against counter-revolutionaries.

He said there must, for example, be freedom for both those who propagated materialism and those who propagated idealism. Both were at liberty to debate.

Attempts to solve ideological problems by means of administrative orders could not produce any effect. "Only through open debates can materialist thinking gradually overcome idealist thinking," he said.

Because the enemy within the country had been greatly weakened and the people's unity strengthened, the Chinese Communist Party was now emphatically putting forward the policy of "Let flowers of all seasons blossom together and let diverse schools of thought contend."

This policy, he said, was aimed at mobilising all active elements to give their best to enrich China's literature and art and to enable China's scientific work to catch up with advanced world levels.

IN THE PAST the Chinese Communist Party had waged several struggles against sectarianism, and he summarised the experience of these struggles as:

"Natural sciences, including medicine, have no class character. They have their own laws of development.

"Their relation with social systems is only that under bad social systems these sciences develop slowly and under better social systems they can develop quickly.

"Therefore it is erroneous to put on class labels such as 'feudal,' 'capitalist,' 'socialist,' 'proletarian,' or 'bourgeois' to certain medical theories, or theories of biology or other natural sciences."

It was wrong, he said, to say that "Chinese traditional medicine is feudal, Western medicine is capitalist, Pavlov's theory is Socialist, Michurin's theory is Socialist, or the theory of heredity of Mendel-Morgan is capitalist."

In philosophy and the social sciences the danger of sectarianism was also great.

"Some Party members do not listen to critical opinions and always regard themselves as teachers.

"If this continues they will face dangerous pitfalls as individuals and there will be stagnation and lack of vitality in philosophy and the social sciences," he warned.

Warning against doctrinaire attitudes he said they ran counter to the realistic attitude of Marxism-Leninism and had "nearly lost our revolution during the period of the democratic revolutions in China."

The only demand the Party made in the field of literature and art was that it should serve the people.

Socialist realism was the best method of creation "but it is by no means the only one."