

## San-min Doctrine

1921

Comrades,...

To-day, at the opening of our Executive session, the question involuntarily arises before me: what does our organisation represent? This in brief is its history, and the principles which guide it.

Our Party was formed after the overthrow of the Tsing (Manchu) dynasty and the establishment of a republican form of Government. It has to play a tremendous part in the future of our country. From the time this Party was dissolved, China has been constantly in a state of disorder. It is, of course, natural that the reason for the disturbances and sufferings of the Chinese people was the dissolution of our Party. For many years we have fought, and are still fighting, against the traitors to the people who live to this day in the northern provinces of China, where the influence of our Party is very small: nevertheless, sooner or later the northerners will join us. In the south of China, in the sphere of influence of the Party, there is only the single province of Kwantung.

Our Party is revolutionary. In the second year after the establishment of the republican order, many of its members went abroad, where they worked energetically for the development of the revolutionary movement in China. Hence the name of the Party. While it was working in Tokyo, the Party was known as the "National League": the difference of names, of course, does not alter the character and essence of the aims it pursues. Our Republic is already ten years old, but we still cannot look upon it as a fully perfected type, or consider that our aim has been achieved. Our work is not yet completed: we must continue the struggle.

Our Party is radically different from all the other parties of China, Thus, there was a Party which strove for the overthrow of the Tsing dynasty and the establishment of another dynasty, Ming. Of course, the principles of this party were opposed to ours. When in the last years of the Tsing dynasty, we were forced to establish ourselves in Tokyo, we determined the following as the fundamental principles of our Party: nationalism, democracy and Socialism.

At that time, power in China was still in the hands of the Manchus, and the Revolution had only arrived at its first stage, nationalism, passing over the other two principles. "The Fivefold Constitution" has great importance for our country in the sense of establishing a firm and just form of government; but, before the overthrow of the Tsing dynasty, many thought that the overthrow of that dynasty was the ultimate aim of our Party, and that thereafter China would proceed along the road of universal development and success. But has that proved to be the case? It is now clear that the reason for all that has happened is that our comrades despised—in the name of nationalism—the other two principles of democracy and Socialism. This once again proves that our work did not conclude with the overthrow of the Tsing dynasty. We must firmly know and remember that, so

long as all three principles have not been carried into real life (even if one of them had been completely realised), there can be no stable conditions of existence.

Furthermore, in fact, our nationalism has not yet been completely realised. The principles of President Lincoln completely coincide with mine. He said: "A government of the people, elected by the people and for the people." These principles have served as the maximum of achievement for Europeans as well as Americans. Words which have the same sense can be found in China: I have translated them: "nationalism, democracy and Socialism." Of course, there can be other interpretations. The wealth and power of the United States are a striking example of the results of great men's teachings in that country. I am glad to observe that my principles, too, are shared by the greatest political minds abroad and are not in contradiction to all the world's democratic schools of thought.

I now wish to speak of nationalism.

### **(1) Nationalism**

What meaning do we impart to the word "nationalism"? With the establishment of the Manchu dynasty in China, the people remained under an incredible yoke for over two hundred years. Now that dynasty has been overthrown, and the people, it would seem, ought to enjoy complete freedom. But does the Chinese people enjoy all the blessings of liberty? No. Then what is the reason? Why, that our Party has as yet far from fulfilled its appointed tasks, and has carried out only the negative part of its work, without doing anything of its positive work.

Since the end of the great European War, the world position has sharply changed: the eyes of the whole world are now turned to the Far East, particularly to China. Strictly speaking, amongst all the nations of the Far East only Siam and Japan are completely independent. China, vast territorially and exceeding dozens of times in population the independent countries, is yet in effect only semi-independent. What is the reason?

After the overthrow of the monarchy and the establishment of the republican system in the territory populated by the five nationalities (Chinese, Manchus, Mongols, Tartars and Tibetans), a vast number of reactionary and religious elements appeared. And here lies the root of the evil. Numerically, these nationalities stand as follows: there are several million Tibetans, less than a million Mongols, about ten million Tartars, and the most insignificant number of Manchus. Politically their distribution is as follows: Manchuria is in the sphere of Japanese influence, Mongolia, according to recent reports, is under the influence of Russia, and Tibet is the booty of Great Britain. These races have not sufficient strength for self-defence but they might unite with the Chinese to form single State.

There are 400 million Chinese: if they cannot organise a single nation, a united State, this is their disgrace, and moreover a proof that we have not given complete effect even to the first principle, and that we must fight for a long while yet to carry out our tasks to the full. We shall establish an united Chinese Republic in order that all the peoples—Manchus, Mongols, Tibetans, Tartars and Chinese—should constitute a single powerful nation. As an example of what I have described, I can

refer to the people of the United States of America, constituting one great and terrible whole, but in reality consisting of many separate nationalities: Germans, Dutch, English, French, etc. The United States are an example of a united nation. Such a nationalism is possible, and we must pursue it.

The name “Republic of Five Nationalities” exists only because there exists a certain racial distinction which distorts the meaning of a single Republic. We must facilitate the dying out of all names of individual people inhabiting China, i.e. Manchus, Tibetans, etc. In this respect we must follow the example of the United States of America, i.e. satisfy the demands and requirements of all races and unite them in a single cultural and political whole, to constitute a single nation with such a name, for example, as “Chunhua” (China—in the widest application of the name). Organise the nation, the State.

Or take another case of a nation of mingled races—Switzerland. It is situated in the heart of Europe: on one side it borders on France, on another on Germany, on a third, Italy. Not all the parts of this State have a common tongue, yet they constitute one nation. And only the wise cultural and political life of Switzerland makes its people of many races united and strong. All this is the consequence of the citizens of this Republic enjoying equal and direct electoral rights. Regarding this country from the aspect of international policy, we see that it was the first to establish equal and direct electoral rights for all the population. This is an example of “nationalism.”

But let us imagine that the work of uniting all the tribes who inhabit China has been completed, and one nation, “Chunhua,” has been formed. Still the object has not been achieved. There are still many peoples suffering from unjust treatment: the Chinese people must assume the mission of setting free these people from their yoke, in the sense of direct aid for them or uniting them under the banner of a single Chinese nation. This would give them the opportunity to enjoy the feeling of equality of man and man, and of a just international attitude, i.e. that which was expressed in the declaration of the American President Wilson by the words “self-determination of nations.” Up to the moment of reaching this political stage, our work cannot be considered as finished. Everyone who wishes to join China must be considered Chinese. This is the meaning of nationalism—but “positive” nationalism, and to this we must give special attention.

## **(2) Democracy**

I have already said that in Switzerland democracy has reached its highest point of development: but at the same time the system of representation prevailing there does not constitute real democracy, and only the direct right of the citizen fully answers to the requirements of democracy. Although revolutions took place at various times in France, America and England, and resulted in the establishment of the existing representative system, nevertheless that system does not mean direct and equal rights for all citizens, such as we are fighting for to-day. The most essential of such rights are: the franchise for all citizens: the right of recall (the officials elected by the people can be dismissed by them at will): the right of referendum (if the legislative body passes a law contrary to the wishes of the citizens, the latter may reject the law): the right of initiative (the citizens may propose draft laws, to be carried and adopted by the legislative body).

These four fundamental clauses constitute the basis of what I call “direct electoral right.”

### (3) Socialism

The theory of Socialism has become known in China comparatively recently. Its chief advocates usually limit their knowledge of this tendency to a few empty words, without having any definite programme. By long study I have formed a concrete view of this question. The essence of Socialism amounts to solving the problem of land and capital.

Above I have set forth the general main idea of the “three principles.” The efforts of the whole world, including the Chinese people, are directed to this aim, and I say that our Party must immediately set about carrying these principles into effect.

Summing up the above, I want also to make a few additional observations.

(1) Nationalism.—Since the overthrow of the Tsing dynasty, we have carried out only one part of our obligations: we have fulfilled only our passive duty, but have done nothing in the realm of positive work. We must raise the prestige of the Chinese people, and unite all the races inhabiting China to form one Chinese people in eastern Asia, a Chinese National State.

(2) Democracy.—To bring about this ideal we must first of all adopt all the four points of direct electoral rights: universal suffrage, the referendum, the initiative and the right of recall.

(3). Socialism.—Here I have my plan.

The first task of my plan is to bring about the proportional distribution of the land. During my stay at Nanking (as Provisional President), I tried to carry out this proposal, but my desire was not fulfilled, as I was not understood. Social questions arise from the inequality between rich and poor. What do we understand by inequality? In ancient times, although there was a distinction between rich and poor, it was not so sharp as to-day. Today the rich own all the land, while the poor have not even a little plot. The reason for this inequality is the difference in productive power. For example, in ancient times timber-cutters used axes, knives, etc., for their work, whereas to-day industry is greatly developed, machines have replaced human labour, and the result is that a much greater quantity of products is secured at the expense of much less human energy.

Take another example, from the sphere of agriculture. In ancient times only human labour was employed in this sphere; but with the introduction of ploughing with horses and oxen, the process of tilling became more speedy and greatly reduced human effort. In Europe and America electrical energy is now used to till the soil, which affords the opportunity of ploughing in the best possible way more than a thousand acres a day, thus eliminating the use of horses and oxen. This has created a truly amazing difference, expressed by the ratio of a thousand to one. If we take the means of communication, however, we see that the introduction of steamships and railways has made communications more than a thousand times more rapid in comparison with human energy.

Those who discuss the question of the brotherhood of peoples in America and Europe have in view only two problems—labours and capital; but European conditions are very different from our own. The thing is that in Europe and America all their misfortunes arise from an extremely unfair distribution of products, whereas in China there is general poverty, since there are no large capitalists. But this, of course, should not serve as a reason for not advocating Socialism: this would

be a great mistake. If we see mistakes in Europe and America, we are bound to correct them: disproportion in the distribution of products, both in America and in Europe, are a bad example for us. Therefore I agitate for Socialism—the socialisation of land and capital.

First we shall speak of the socialisation of land. The land systems of Europe and America are very different. In England up to this day the feudal system of land-holding has survived, whereas in the United States all the land is private property. But my social theory advocates the proportionalisation of the land, as a means of providing against future evils. We can see the latter beginning even at the present day. Take what is going on under our very eyes since the reorganisation of the Canton municipality: communications have improved, and in consequence the price of land along the embankment and in other most thickly populated districts has begun to increase daily, some estates selling for tens of thousands of dollars per mu. And all this belongs to private persons, living by the labour of others.

The old Chinese land system partially conforms to the principle of proportionalisation of land. In the event of this principle being applied, the two following conditions must be observed: taxation according to the value of the land, and compensation according to declared value. In China up to this day the so-called three-grade system of collection of land taxes has been preserved, but, owing to the weak development of transport and industry, land values were not so high in the past as they are to-day. Well developed means of communication and developing industry have led, owing to the maintenance of the old system, to an extremely unequal rise in the value of the land. There are, for example, lands worth 2,000 dollars per mu, while there are also lands worth 20,000 dollars per mu, while between these two extremes of values there are a large number of the most varying values. But if taxes continue to be collected on the old system, both the tax collectors and taxpayers will be put in such a position that dishonest collectors and landowners can make easy profits thereby.

Therefore if we want to abolish this evil and introduce the graduation of taxes, we must adopt the following method: to collect one per cent of the value of the land. For example, if a given piece of land is worth 2,000 dollars its owner pays 20 dollars. The collection of further taxes will depend on an increase in the value of the land. The process of State purchase of the land must begin with the establishment of its definite value. In England, at one time, special offices for collection of land tax and purchase of land were set up, which fixed definite assessments: these methods are not suitable for introduction in China. In my opinion, it is much more profitable and certain to leave it to the landowner himself to determine and fix the value and the tax, and to inform accordingly the Government department in charge of these matters.

The question arises: will not the landowner communicate a smaller value for his land, and thus pay a smaller tax? But if we adopt the system of compensation for lands according to their value, all illegal activities must disappear of themselves. For example, there is a piece of land of one mu, worth 1,000 dollars, for which the owner must pay 10 dollars yearly in to the tax office. He may declare that the value of his land is only 100 dollars, and thus pay only one dollar; but the application of the principle whereby the Government can compulsorily purchase his land at its declared value obliges the owner to declare its real value, as otherwise he runs the risk of being left without his land. If these two methods are applied, the proportionalisation of land will achieve itself; we can leave other processes on one side for the time being.

Thus I have discussed the land question. There still remains the issue of how to settle the problem of capital.

Last year I published a book entitled: *The International Development of China*. In this book I discussed the question of utilising foreign capital for the purpose of developing Chinese industry and commerce. Look at the Pekin-Hankow and Pekin-Mukden railways, and also at the Tientsin-Pukow line, built by foreign capital and yielding enormous profits. At the present time the total length of the Chinese railways is 5000–6000 miles, and their profits amount to 70–80 millions—more even than the land tax. But if the total length is increased to 50 or 60 thousand miles, the profits will also increase considerably. My opinion about the application of foreign capital to our industry is the following: all branches of our industry, for example mining, which represent, with any management worth its salt, profitable undertakings, are awaiting foreign capital.

When I speak of a loan in this connection, I mean the procuring of various machines and other necessary appliances for our industry. For example, after the construction of the Pekin-Hankow railway, the profits of which were enormous, the foreigners would have given us the chance to acquire it, with its future profit-making possibilities. These were so great that we could have completed the Pekin-Kalgan line, which now reaches Sunyang. In brief, we can easily incur debt to foreign capital, but the question is—how shall we utilise it, productively or otherwise?

There are also other questions of which I must speak. The British and American diplomats are undoubtedly a skilful race, but still the spectre of social revolution is extremely menacing in these countries. Why? Because the principles of Socialism have not been fully realised there.

We must admit that the degree of sacrifice required for the social revolution will be higher than for the political. The Revolution of 1911 and the overthrow of the Manchus only partially realised the principle of nationalism, while neither the theory of democracy nor the theory of Socialism left any impression. But we must strive our utmost not only to secure the triumph of our first Party principle, but, in accordance with modern world ideas, to develop if possible the principles of democracy, which are also old principles of our Party. Although both England and America are politically developed, political authority there still remains in the hands, not of the people as a whole, but of a political party.

I remember that, on my return to Kwantung, a well-known Hong Kong paper stated the meaning of our return to be that Kwantung was governed, not by the people of the province, but by a “Party.” There was a certain point in this declaration. At all events, I was pleased to hear a confirmation that it was governed by a “Party,” as the same was true of England and America. If we succeed in achieving our Party ends, this will undoubtedly be a great achievement for the people of Kwantung. We must energetically set about organising, explaining our principles, spreading them far and wide. If we want to awaken others, we must first of all wake up ourselves.

Now there is a committee of the Kuomintang at Canton, where propaganda will be concentrated. In this respect there will be no limitations. We shall soon find that the province of Kwantung will not only be the soil on which our principles will grow into reality, but will be the birthplace of the idea of democracy and its practical realisation. From here these principles and their realisation will spread all over China. The people of the Yangtse and Yellow River valleys will follow our example. The haste of our action is explained by the fact that the people which has been actually living in the

Republic set up by itself over ten years ago is quite ignorant of what the word means: the explanation of the significance of the Republic must be our task.

During the great European War, President Wilson put forward the watchword: “self-determination of peoples.” This corresponds to our Party principle of “nationalism.” After the Peace Conference at Versailles, a number of small but independent republics were formed, living without any common tie. This must clearly show you the principal tendency in the modern life of nations. Now the time is approaching to carry into effect our great principles of nationalism, democracy and Socialism. Only by the transformation of all three principles into reality can our people live and develop freely. But the explanation and application of these principles depends very largely on the display of your forces and the degree of energy shown in your propaganda.

We now have a favourable occasion for the propaganda of our ideas: the whole Kwantung Province, with its population of 30 millions, is in our hands. We must immediately tackle the work of explaining in detail to all citizens the essential principles of our Party programme.

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