

WORKERS OF ALL COUNTRIES, UNITE!

GAO GANG

THE

ECONOMIC

RECONSTRUCTION

OF NORTHEAST

CHINA

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Northeast Economic Reconstruction*)

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PREFACE TO THE FRENCH EDITION

This brochure will introduce readers to a report made on March 13, 1950 to the 1st Congress of Delegates of the Northeast Communist Party of China by Gao Gang, one of the vice-presidents of the Central People's Government of the People's Republic of China, president of the People's Government of the Northeast, member of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China and secretary of the Bureau of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Northeast China.

As everyone knows, the Northeast, often known as Manchuria, is a place of paramount importance for China, both strategically and economically. Historically, the Northeast was the prey that the imperialists never tired of fighting over.

The Japanese imperialists, after capturing this part of our territory, planned to have it transformed into a first-rate army barracks in the Asian continent.

In 1945 the Soviet army advanced into the Northeast and helped China expel the Japanese aggressors, and in 1948 the Chinese People's Liberation Army, having swept away the last holdouts of the reactionary KMT regime, liberated all the territory of the Northeast.

Natural resources are abundant in the Northeast and one can read this report as a witness and say without hesitation that "the Northeast possesses

an industry on a relatively large scale.” Moreover, the material conditions necessary for total industrialization are not lacking.

Immediately after the liberation of the Northeast, the People’s Government, under the brilliant leadership of Chairman Mao Zedong, devoted its efforts so “that the construction of the Northeast can serve as a starting point and a solid base for nationwide industrialization. (Gao Gang’s Report).

Indeed, the work of rebuilding the Northeast has already made many promising developments.

This report will hopefully help readers better understand where the work in the Northeast stands at present and the difficulties encountered during the reconstruction. Moreover, it will also allow readers to get a glimpse of the prospects for the industrial reconstruction of all of New China.

— The Editor

Comrades,

Today, the report that I present to you is a report relating to the economic recovery and reconstruction of the Northeast. This constitutes one of the primordial problems of our Party at the present time and also passes for one of the key questions of our congress. We must therefore study this problem thoroughly so that our cadres and members place themselves resolutely and with devotion at the forefront of the population of the Northeast to lead this great work to a new victory.

I — The Importance of the Northeast in the National Economy of the Country

First of all, I would like to talk about the important role that the Northeast plays in the national economy of the country. When it comes to this subject, almost everyone understands it. I would like to talk about it again

here, not for any specific reason, but simply because I want to emphasize that this fact has a close connection with the duty and the task of our Northeastern Party members. It is important to note that the work of our comrades in the Northeast will not only have a direct influence on the population of this region in particular, but also on the whole country.

According to statistics which are not entirely precise, but at least approximate, in 1943, for example: the production of coal in the Northeast represented 49% of the production of the whole country: the production of unwrought iron, 87%; the production of steel, 93% and the production of electrical power, 78%; while the line of the railways in the Northeast make up 42% of the total line of the railways of the whole country. Some branches of heavy industry in the Northeast are of overwhelming size and scale. Apart from industry, certain agricultural productions, for example, soybeans, are mainly produced in the Northeast. According to the figures from 1938, 51% of all worldwide soybean production comes from China.

Comrade Mao Zedong told the second plenary session of the Party's Central Committee last year: "China's modern industry accounts for only about 10% of the national economy." The fact that modern industry, including that of the Northeast, is only 10% of the entire national economy means that the Chinese economy is severely backward. But from the point

of view of the Northeast in particular, the situation is different. Also according to approximate statistics, the industrial production of the Northeast in 1943, for example, made up 56% of the entire production of the national economy. In other words, if one looks at the Northeast in particular, this region has an industry on a relatively large scale.

Comrades! Precisely because of this, the entire people are following our reconstruction work attentively and want us to lend them our assistance. Because of this, Comrade Mao Zedong and the Central Committee of the Party constantly give us instructions and ask us to work well so that the construction of the Northeast can serve as a starting point and a solid base for nationwide industrialization. The hope of the whole people, the directives of Comrade Mao Zedong and those of the Central Committee must be considered as a great glory for the people and all the Party members in the Northeast.

Can our work satisfy the hope of the whole people? Can our work achieve the great task that Comrade Mao Zedong and our Central Committee have entrusted to us? Despite the fact that the Northeast has suffered destruction in a war that has lasted many years and has faced ruthless plunder by the Kuomintang reactionaries, the fact is that our Party is a militant party of the proletarian masses led by Comrade Mao Zedong and that our people in the Northeast are a fighting people under the

leadership of such a party, and we must, without any hesitation and together with the people of the Northeast, take on our backs this heavy burden — the economic reconstruction and development of the Northeast. With no arrogance, and no impatience, let us march forward, with sure steps, to reach our ultimate goal.

II — A Wonderful Start

The Northeast was completely liberated in the winter of 1948 and we began to undertake the economic reconstruction of the entire Northeast in 1949. We set up a recovery plan for 1949 and invested in this plan a monetary equivalent of two million tonnes of grain. The progress of the 1949 recovery can be marked by the reopening of factories and the restoration of work in the mines according to our Department of Industry: at the beginning of our takeover, working factories were very few; in April, 191 factories were reopened, in September this figure increased to 243 and in December the number increased to 307.

The production of the undertakings of our Department of Industry in 1949 represented a monetary equivalent to 7,960,000 tonnes of sorghum (not including the production of the munitions factories), thus exceeding 4.20% of the planned goal. Some branches of heavy industry, such as iron, steel, copper, coal, coke, electric power, machinery, etc. all exceeded the

planned goals. But some branches of light industry (e.g. cotton yarn, cloth, paper) did not reach the figures foreseen by the plan. While the railway transportation plan has been completed well in advance.

Regarding agricultural production, due to the drought in the North and the flood in the South, the net harvest amounted to 14,500,000 tonnes of cereal grain (not including the production from auxiliary occupations roughly equivalent to a value of 2 million tonnes of grain), thus only meeting 90% of the planned quota.

Private industry and commerce also flourished, having had more orders and larger markets as a result of the development achieved in publicly-owned enterprises and in the agricultural sector. For example, in Mukden: between June and December 1949, the total number of private industrial enterprises increased from 9,727 to 12,007, an increase of 23%, and the number of workers employed in private industry rose from 42,590 to 50,413, an 18% increase.

From the point of view of our recovery work already carried out, the production output of publicly-owned industrial enterprises in 1949 reached approximately 29% of that of these same enterprises during the Japanese occupation in 1943 (not including enterprises which proved difficult or impossible to restore due to serious damages). Agricultural production has reached 67% of its 1943 levels.

This acceleration in productive forces is noteworthy. In particular, the rapidity of the recovery of total industrial production has exceeded that of the recovery of industrial equipment. Take the iron smelters as an example: the number of smelters rebuilt only reached 25% of the total in the "Manchukuo" era, but their output reached 42.2% of the maximum output of the "Manchukuo" era. In the textile industry, its equipment is only 66% of what it was in the "Manchukuo" era, while its output has reached 143% of previous peak output. This demonstrates the complete superiority of our state industry under the regime of New Democracy. This also demonstrates the great future of our productive forces which are likely to develop rapidly.

Last year the ratio between industry and agriculture was as follows: industrial production, which in 1943 made up 56% of total combined industrial and agricultural production, fell to about 35%, while agricultural production, which in 1943 was approximately 44% of total industrial and agricultural production, has now risen to approximately 65% of the total. This situation means that our industrial recovery work is still quite far from the goal we have planned to achieve. Since the re-establishment of our industry is directed, above all, towards the re-establishment of the industrial means of production (the total value of the rebuilding of our means of production carried out in 1949 represented 74% of there total

value of industrial production; the total value of production of consumer materials was only about 26%) and, following this correct orientation and with other favourable conditions (for example, assuming that everything runs according to plan and the purchases of equipment industries are realized in time), our industrial sector rebuilding the means of production will become a basis for the reform of the wider economy of the Northeast, and will enable us to provide more means of production for light industry and agriculture with a plan to strengthen the national economy and accelerate the recovery and development of industry, and thereby it will be possible to completely change, in the shortest possible time, the existing proportion between the industry and agriculture. We can be certain that at the same time agricultural production will have made great progress during the future development of the productive forces of society, owing to the large quantity of agricultural implements which industry will be able to produce and supply to the agricultural sector which will cause a great sense of enthusiasm in peasants in production.

Our recovery work and the development of our regional economy has enabled us to not only support our great army in its operations in southern China, but also begin to directly improve the standard of living of our people. In 1949, the number of workers hired by industry, in public enterprises alone, increased by

240,000 people and the workers' real wages increased from 110 points in May 1949 to 140 points in December of the same year, an increase of 27%; in addition, a system of employment insurance was put into place. Apart from salaries, the government paid work insurance premiums, medical expenses, cultural and educational expenses, etc. the total of which represented between 9 to 11% of the total wages paid. The exchange rate between grain and cloth which was in winter 1948: 1 ton of grain against 1 piece and 40 square feet of cloth,¹ was at the end of 1949 as follows: 1 tonne of grain against 2.80 pieces (in the north and centre of Manchuria). In addition, the fabric quality has been improved greatly.

Prices overall have managed to be generally stabilized. In 1948 prices suffered an average increase of 8 times and in 1949 the average increase was only 80%. The burden on the peasants was lightened: in 1948, the total tax burden collected was 23% of total production, and in 1949 they were only 20%.

State trading companies and cooperatives provided consumers with daily necessities worth the equivalent of 3,260,000 tonnes of grain, or 34% of the total value of retail sales overall. These state stores and these cooperatives bought over 1,380,000 tonnes of grains of various kinds and 300,000 tonnes of other lo-

¹ 1 piece equals 38.50 metres and 1 Chinese foot equals 1/5 of a metre.

cally-grown products. Since they play a proportionally large role in commercial activities, they have ensured a stable market and have maintained the standard of living of our population by combatting various harmful activities to the country's well-being, such as speculation and hoarding by commercial entities.

Comrades! These events, which have taken place for a year, prove that our Party is not only capable of mobilizing the masses to carry out mass Agrarian Reform, to wage revolutionary war, to completely overthrow the criminal domination of the Kuomintang reactionaries and to destroy the state apparatus of the KMT which oppresses our people, but is also able to lead the people to build a new state and to revitalize our economy. Although it is a beginning, we have to say that it is a really good start. For us, such work in modern economic construction is completely new and can be challenging. For a year now, the central work of our Party, which was waging war and Agrarian Reform, has shifted focus to economic development.

The Party has raised and sent thousands of cadres to directly assist in the work of economic development. Among these cadres, many have already acquired some knowledge of economic administration and urban management. What they were previously unaware of, they are beginning to understand; what they were unable to do before, they are beginning to know how to do. Just as we learned to carry out

Land Reform and the war before, now we must and can learn to undertake our work of economic development. This fact not only greatly stimulates the enthusiasm and confidence of the entire Party during the work of economic development but also firmly shows those who only see difficulties in our present work and worry about the great task of rebuilding New China that their concerns are unfounded. Moreover, this fact demonstrates to both Chinese and foreign reactionaries that despite their criminal desires, we have not only achieved victory in the great war of national liberation but will also achieve total victory in the work of economic development.

It is clear that the rapid recovery of our economy is due to the following main factors:

1 — Our state is a people's state under the leadership of the working class; the state machinery serving imperialism, bureaucrats, militarists and the bandits of the KMT has been completely destroyed, and our people's government (including the People's Government of the Northeast) is a government that serves the people with dedication and wholeheartedness.

2 — We have overthrown imperialism, the feudal and semi-feudal agrarian system, meaning at last the peasants have been truly liberated. During the time of the "Manchukuo," peasants were forced to pay 8 million tonnes of grain in taxes. In 1949, they only paid 2.3 million tonnes. The burden of taxation has there-

fore been significantly reduced. Moreover, the rent they once had to pay has been completely abolished. Thus, an unprecedented initiative in production has emerged among the peasants, who now have favourable conditions to supply the industry with grain and raw materials.

The taxes that the state does collect has been largely invested in industry and converted into capital for industrial development.

3 — Our people's state has seized various enterprises and properties owned by imperialists and bureaucratic capitalists, and has taken control of major industries that are vital to the entire economy, such as railways, banks and large commercial organizations. The people's government carries out all these economic activities in the service of the interests of the people. From this economic foundation, we will be able to gradually develop state economic plans and implement any necessary regulations, although in the early years, these types of plans can only be done in a manner that is done as a bloc, rather than with specifics in mind.

4 — The great initiative of the working class in production after liberation has been fully demonstrated by the greatly increased productivity of the workers. For example, the average coal production per miner during the time of the "Manchukuo" was 0.36 tonnes per day, while in 1949, the average coal production per miner in our mines, including the large "Pengqi" and "Fushun" mines, was 0.54 tonnes. In other words, current productivity is

150% of that during the time of “Manchukuo.” According to surveys conducted in a portion of our factories and mines by the Department of Industry, overall productivity increased by an average of 23.83% in December 1949 compared to June 1949. In 116 factories and mines, there were 17,232 new production records and a large number of advanced workers who not only led the production work but also enjoyed prestige among the masses. This is a great invaluable force that will be the most precious pillar for the future production in our various factories and mines.

5 — Our Party has twenty years of experience in the construction of base areas and has therefore trained a relatively large number of cadres. Although the experience of these cadres may not be sufficient, their experience at least enables them to acquire the specific ability to work under these new conditions. They play a significant role in the work of reconstruction today.

6 — Another factor of decisive significance is the exact and correct policy of Comrade Mao Zedong and the Central Committee of our Party, as well as all other concrete instructions, which enable us to make great strides along the right path.

7 — We have the assistance of Soviet specialists.

We are convinced that the aforementioned fundamental factors have not only caused our splendid start but will also determine a magnif-

icent future in all aspects of our economic development.

Regarding the shortcomings we have discovered during the beginning of our construction, I will discuss them further in the fourth chapter, where I will cover various issues related to our work.

III — Our Work in 1950

Building on our skilfully planned start in 1949 and in accordance with the determined direction of development, we will resolutely continue our work of economic development.

For 1950, the essential goods produced by state-owned industrial enterprises is planned to be as follows:

Raw Iron	720,000 tonnes in 1950 compared to 172,000 tonnes in 1949
Steel Ingots	540,000 tonnes in 1950 compared to 100,000 tonnes in 1949
Sheet Metal	340,000 tonnes in 1950 compared to 72,000 tonnes in 1949
Electrolytic Copper	4,000 tonnes in 1950 compared to 1,874 tonnes in 1949
Electrolytic Lead	4,000 tonnes in 1950 compared to 2,062 tonnes in 1949
Coal	17 million tonnes in 1950

	compared to 11 million tonnes in 1949
Electrical Output	2 million kWh. in 1950 compared to 1.4 million Kwh. in 1949
Engines	6,800 (a combined total of 100,000 horsepower) in 1950 compared to 1,109 in 1949
Machine Tools	3,300 in 1950 compared to 497 in 1949
Cement	430,000 tonnes in 1950 compared to 218,000 tonnes in 1949
Paper	50,000 tonnes in 1950 compared to 22,800 tonnes in 1949
Fabric	5,700,000 pieces in 1950 compared to 2,450,000 pieces in 1949
Cotton	235,000 bales in 1950 compared to 120,000 bales in 1949

In accordance with this plan, in 1950, the production of our state-owned industrial enterprises is projected to have a total value of 2.3 billion yuan (using the 1943 exchange rate, assuming that 1943 prices remain unchanged). This will represent 193% of the total industrial production in 1949, which had a value of approximately 1.2 billion yuan, and will reach 57% of the level of industrial production under

the puppet regime of “Manchukuo” in 1943. The construction of means of production and heavy industry is projected to account for 79% of industrial production, amounting to 1.8 billion yuan, while the production of consumer goods is projected to account for 21%, equivalent to 490 million yuan. This means that the proportion occupied by means of production and heavy industry in industrial production will be higher compared to that of the year 1949. As we have already mentioned earlier, all of this is beneficial for the entire people, there is no need to dwell on it too much here.

On the other hand, according to this plan, the production of industrial consumer goods will also experience a new increase of 40% compared to 1949 in terms of actual quantity (based on the exchange rate and value of the Yuan in 1943 it is worth 300 million yuan in 1949, and 490 million yuan in 1950). We will have more consumer goods to provide to the people in 1950 than in 1949.

In the agricultural sector: According to the 1950 production plan, 17,200,000 hectares of land will be cultivated, of which 234,000 hectares will be dedicated to cotton and 97,000 hectares to hemp.

The production of cereal grains is projected to reach 18 million tonnes, which is equivalent to 300 million yuan using the 1943 exchange rate or approximately 137% of the agricultural value produced in 1949, which was around 220 million yuan. The agricultural pro-

duction in 1950 will be at 93% of the level of production in 1943 during the period of the "Manchukuo."

In the forestry sector: According to our plan, the projected amount of total lumber harvested for this year is 5,928,000 cubic metres. Last year, 4,600,000 cubic metres were harvested. The harvest was completed, but only 4,100,000 cubic metres were transported and used.

Special attention will be given to reforestation and forest protection.

It is clear that if our plan for this year is fully realized, there will be a preliminary change in the proportion between industry and agriculture. In other words, the total value of industrial production in 1950 will be approximately 43% instead of 35% of the total in 1949, and the value of agricultural production will be approximately 57% instead of approximately 65% in 1949. This will certainly be a great step forward, but it will still depend on the significant efforts we must make throughout this year.

Indeed, in comparison to agriculture, the proportion of production occupied by industry will still be lagging behind and far from regaining the position it held in 1943 in terms of the proportions between industry and agriculture. The growth in industry this year will only reach 57% of the level in 1949. It is evident that we are not satisfied with such a level. Therefore, in 1950, we will invest new capital in industrial

reconstruction:

Our annual revenue for 1950 will be as follows (in tonnes of grain):

Agricultural taxes.....	2,400,000
Customs, tariffs, and other taxes and levies to be collected in cities.....	3,150,000
Revenue of state-owned industries...	6,160,000
The total amounts to.....	11,710,000

Out of this total, we will allocate 6,650,000 tonnes of grain, which accounts for 54% of the expenses in 1950, for investment in economic recovery and development. Of these, 5 million tonnes, or 40% of our annual expenses, will be invested in the industrial sector. Among these 5 million tonnes to be invested in the industrial sector, 85% will be allocated to heavy industry and the means of production, and 15% to the consumer goods industry. Compared to 1949, the amount to be invested in the industry in 1950 will be two and a half times greater. The most significant task this year will be the repair and construction work to restore our industry.

Our government is a government of the people. By examining the planned figures in our annual expenses, it is easy to see where the efforts of our popular government are directed.

Regarding trade: We expect that in 1950, the amount of retail sales from our state stores

and cooperatives will reach 51,970 billion yuan (using the exchange rate of the Northeast at present), which is approximately 50% of the total retail sales of society, compared to 34% in 1949. This calculation is based on the possibilities of industrial and agricultural production in our plan and the materials available to the state.

In order to continue the fight against speculators and to directly sell materials to consumers at reasonable prices, which the state will be able to readily provide, and ultimately to ensure that farmers adequately supply needed food and raw materials to industry, and vice versa, that the industrial sector provides necessary industrial goods and tools to farmers, we are preparing to increase the number of state retail stores from 372 in 1949 to 1,500. The projected amount of retail sales from our state stores is expected to reach 26,200 billion yuan. At the same time, we will develop cooperation, under specific conditions and methods, based on the existing 9,000 cooperatives. The projected amount of total retail sales for the cooperatives is 25,900 billion yuan.

The autumn harvest of 1950 is projected to reap 2 million tonnes of cereal grains. Additionally, we will purchase other local products from farmers, estimated to be worth approximately 17,000 billion yuan using the current exchange rate in the Northeast. Based on the current situation of our state trading companies, we still lack many essential items that can

be exchanged with farmers. Therefore, besides the projected expansion of the light industry according to our plan, it is necessary to encourage local public enterprises specializing in consumer goods and private large industrial enterprises to rapidly develop, and to place orders with companies from other regions of China outside the Northeast. At the same time, private traders should be encouraged in ways that are beneficial to the state economy and the well-being of the people, in order to increase the variety of goods accessible for the people.

Regarding foreign trade: Both imports and exports for 1950 are projected to reach 160 million U.S. dollars each way (which is 100% higher than in 1949). Our principle is to import machine-tools and essential raw materials for our industry while strengthening our exports with surplus materials.

Comrades! This is in broad strokes our economic reconstruction plan for this year. This plan represents a step forward compared to that of 1949. It is evident that the course of outside events could somewhat influence the progress of our plan. However, this plan is still quite reasonable. It is achievable because it is based on real material conditions. Of course, the transition from plans on paper to actual realization will be a tremendous struggle. We must work in a serious and skillful manner, fully appreciating the difficulties that exist and those that may arise. Comrade Mao Zedong has often told us, "In the course of work, we

must always be prepared to confront difficulties and overcome them.” It would be wrong and extremely harmful to think that everything will go smoothly and neglect the need for vigilance that our comrades must have in the face of many difficulties.

IV — Some Issues Regarding Our Work

I intend to outline below some issues regarding our work.

(Section 1) Regarding the Plan

We already had a plan in 1949, and now we have another plan to be implemented this year. As you all know, our economy only develops according to our plans. As we have mentioned before, the nature of our state power and the fact that our state power controls the key organs of the national economy provides us with the basis for such large plans. The experiments we have conducted in economic activities over the past year have proven that our economic plan, once it becomes a unified action closely linked with the masses, will constitute a force capable of greatly advancing productivity. It is clear that directing without a plan would be working blindly.

The experiences of 1949 have also shown us that our plans are in some regards not well formulated and that there are many flaws in them. Naturally, since we do not have enough

experience in economic work (especially in heavy industries), and the documents at our disposal are far from sufficient, it is impossible for us, as we are not geniuses, to come up with efficient and adequate plans all at once. There are still many very important things that we need to search for and discover.

It has been shown, for example, that there is insufficient coordination between different economic sectors. This lack of coordination is evident between the industrial and agricultural sectors, between one industry and another, between one enterprise and another, between industry and agriculture on one hand, and trade on the other hand, and so on. It has also been shown that there is inadequate mutual coordination in economic activities between higher-level government officials and different lower-level local officials, between one region and another, between public enterprises and private enterprises. Until now, we have not been able to systematically and adequately connect different economic activities with different economic sectors, and this is a crucial point for us to undertake economic activities according to plans.

However, our economic activities, particularly over the past year, both in the Northeast and in the rest of the country, have provided us with many valuable experiences in the field of economic development. The most important of these experiences is the contract system: work contracts within enterprises on one hand, and

production and sales contracts as well as order contracts between enterprises on the other hand. Let us take an example: in the Northeast, for work contracts within our public enterprises, we have universally adopted "connected contracts," and in key areas, "collective contracts" and "fixed-price contracts." On the other hand, between state-owned stores and cooperative sales and distribution societies in rural areas, we have already adopted production and sales contracts. There have also been order contracts between industrial sectors and commercial sectors, between national enterprises and regional enterprises, and between public and private enterprises. Through these various types of contracts, we have been able to partially overcome the disconnection between production and sales phenomena, allowing us to effectively organize the implementation of our plans and strengthen the overall nature of our plans. This contract system has the potential to closely link different sectors of our economy, accelerate the development of the productive forces, and strengthen the accountability of different economic sectors and enterprises in their efforts to formulate and execute plans through work contracts, order contracts, sales contracts and distribution contracts. This system is capable not only of organizing public enterprises in a more planned manner but also of incorporating the role of small producers in production through order contracts with cooperative societies within our state plan. Private

capital enterprises can also, to a certain extent, work within our state plan through order contracts. This contract system is the most important method and form of organization for coordinating economic activities across multiple sectors. Therefore, we intend to systematically and gradually expand the use of this system, transforming the existing rudimentary contract system into a well-organized contract system under the planned direction and adjustment of the state.

In order to expand the use of this contract system in an educated way, our comrades must carefully and concretely study the experiences we have already gained. It is necessary to examine the flaws and negative qualities existing in this system, develop what is good in it and strive to overcome its shortcomings. We must avoid repeating the mistakes we made in the past. Our comrades, in their efforts to expand and implement the system, should oppose formalism and strive to acquire new experiences. It is not difficult to understand that until our plans are established in a much more skilled manner and production is back on the right track, long-term contracts will face difficulties. Therefore, in many cases, we should start with short-term contracts. Only after these useful trials can we gain sufficient experience to relentlessly study our plans and the concrete relationships of different aspects of our national economy. This will enable us to make rational and necessary adjustments at any time and in

any place where it is needed. At the same time, it will make us more capable of organizing our economy and developing more precise plans for its growth.

(Section 2) Regarding the Management of Enterprises

The problem of the management of enterprises is nothing other than the practical problem of leadership. To determine if we are capable of leading and advancing our economy, it is not enough that we can draw up broad plans; it is particularly important that we can lead in practice. The practical foundation of good leadership is what ensures the proper management of enterprises.

Here, I intend to discuss the three key points that are found within the “problem of the current management of our enterprises,” namely: the establishment of a system of responsibility, the widespread implementation of democratization in administration and the generalization of the economic calculation system.

(Subsection 2.1) Let Us First Talk About the Establishment of the Responsibility System

Comrades! This is a general theory that is familiar to all of us. Our Communist Party holds itself accountable to the working class, to the people and to our homeland. Yes, it is a theory that is not difficult to understand or explain. However, within our ranks, there are

still individuals who prefer to take abstract and non-concrete responsibility. When it comes to significant matters in the world, they speak with great enthusiasm, flawless reasoning and declare with intense emotion that they will resolutely take responsibility. But when it is their turn to take charge of concrete work, these significant matters become trivial to them, no longer worth their attention. Throughout our revolutionary career, we have encountered many individuals with this character, and there are quite a few of them currently in our enterprises. We need to understand that the most important matters in life are nothing more than accumulations or connections of many small matters, which become even more evident in economic enterprises. We cannot successfully accomplish economic reconstruction without properly attending to the countless small tasks of economic work. And to examine the revolutionary qualities of each communist, it is necessary to understand to what extent they take responsibility for these small matters.

I can give you some examples of irresponsibility in economic work: First, in the mines of Fushun, there was a manager of the inclined shaft repair group who violated safety regulations by opening the "secret partition," resulting in a gas explosion that caused fifteen deaths and twelve injuries, leading to a significant loss. Another example: at the Anshan Steel Plant, during the repair of furnace No. 2, there was an urgent need for oxygen. The area

was filled with oxygen cylinders, but they were all completely empty. According to the furnace workers, the cylinders were already empty when they arrived at the plant. However, the people from the oxygen plant insisted that the Steel Plant, by depleting the contents of those cylinders, was trying to hold them responsible for the accident. Blame was being thrown back and forth, which had a serious impact on production, and no conclusive responsibility could be established. Another example: in the warehouses of the “Chicken and Duck Company” in Harbin, there was meat from 1948 that did not meet export standards, with a value exceeding tens of billions of yuan. This meat could have been sold domestically, but it remained in the warehouses for over six months. The same company was unable to immediately sell a quantity of rousong¹ from pigs slaughtered in 1948. This stockpile of rousong remained in the warehouses until the following spring. There was a loss of ten thousand pounds, valued at three billion. Another example: In recent years, there have been many forest fires. In 1949 alone, there were 270 fires, resulting in a loss of timber approaching 5 million square kilometres, exceeding the amount of wood harvested in an entire year. In each fire, the phenomenon of irresponsibility is evi-

¹ Rousong is a Chinese topping made of shredded dehydrated meat, often referred to as “meat floss” in the west — NEPH.

dent.

Comrades! Many incidents have taught us that neglecting responsibility in any form can often lead to immeasurable loss and constitute a crime against our people. Irresponsibility constitutes a crime and can cause great failures, especially now that our economic interdependence has become so close that neglecting responsibility can have severe repercussions nationwide. For example, think about how the work of a lathe operator can affect the entire workshop? How can the work of the workshop affect the entire factory? How can the work of the factory affect the entire industry, and so on? That is why in different economic sectors and in different enterprises, we must establish, urgently, the system of responsibility in enterprise management. We must also eliminate the phenomenon of "everyone is responsible for something, but no one takes responsibility for it," a phenomenon that exists in many workplaces. Whether it is a machine part or a simple tool, a small issue or a catastrophic error, we must ensure that someone is responsible, and there must be clear rules defining that responsibility. In this way, we can have efficient organizations in our enterprises and, through the responsibility system, guarantee the implementation of our economic plans, foster the spirit of initiative, develop the capabilities of each worker and continuously improve our administrative organization and management system. In light of past losses, the

leaders of mines and factories must take full responsibility for safety measures, and this must be done seriously and with rigour. With this established system of responsibility, we can easily conduct work inspections and distinguish between good and bad workers. We should praise the good ones while punishing the bad ones. Those responsible for the failure of a task must be punished according to the severity of their mistakes. They may simply be dismissed, and in more serious cases, even face legal action.

Comrades! Our revolution has already achieved victory, our homeland has become stable. Based on the interests and needs of the people, our homeland is building a series of systems to continue our great reconstruction. The worker-responsibility system is a fundamental element of our reconstruction, particularly in terms of our economic recovery. We must earnestly establish such a system in all enterprises. All communists must strive to become model workers who never neglect their responsibility.

(Subsection 2.2) Let Us Now Discuss Democratization of the Administration of Enterprises

The democratization of the administration of enterprises is a key method aimed at transforming businesses from their current state of being dominated by imperialists and bureaucratic capitalists into becoming people's enter-

prises. Currently, the focal point of administrative democratization is the proper organization of the factory's administration committee. This committee must include representatives from the workers' union and communist organizations within the respective enterprise. The purpose of this is to oppose bureaucratism, unite the entire mass of workers, technicians and employees through the involvement of progressive and active elements among the employees, technicians and working class. Its objective is also to consolidate the opinions of the masses, address crucial issues in the factories, enhance our awareness and initiative in production and politics, and effectively combat sabotage and the destruction of production.

What we have just stated is by no means in conflict with the system of responsibility; on the contrary, it is closely linked to this system. The system of responsibility in our company must be based on the consciousness and initiative of the masses; otherwise, we will be unable to achieve satisfactory results. The system of responsibility in our enterprises is a system of responsibility based on authentic democracy, and the democratization of enterprise administration is a democracy that must incorporate the system of responsibility. The administration committee of a factory, led by the factory director, is a centralized and democratic organization of management. Some people believe that the system of responsibility is in con-

flict with democratization. This view is completely false.

The factory director is appointed by a higher body managing the national economy and is responsible for implementing national economic plans set by these higher bodies. They are accountable to the higher authorities. However, it is their duty to take into consideration the opinions and proposals submitted by the members of the factory, which they must in turn submit to a higher body to determine the ones that are correct. The factory director must present the production projections of the factory to the factory's administration committee for discussion. The projections for each year, each season, each month must be discussed in meetings with representatives of workers and employees. Anyone who refuses or neglects the work of democratization of administration, who does not want to rely on the masses, the Party and the union, and who acts solely based on their own decisions, is making a grave error.

Among our comrades, there is a particular opinion: these comrades believe that the system of responsibility of the factory director can be replaced by the secretary of the party committee (or cell) within the company. This opinion is obviously false. The party committee or cell is not an administrative body of the factory. It is a leading organization of the vanguard of the working class within the company. Its role is to call on communist members to take the lead in the forefront of production and

to act as role models in fulfilling the production plan. It should monitor and encourage the progress of the factory's production plan and submit necessary proposals at the appropriate time. It cannot replace the factory director, nor can it replace the system of responsibility of the factory director.

The communists in various industrial cells need to know that all national enterprises must operate according to the national economic plan. This economic plan is formulated by state bodies under the direction of the central committee of our Party or the organ representing it. The factory director is accountable to the higher national body, and this accountability is essential not only for the factory itself but also for the centralization of the national economic plan. If we were to make the director accountable not to the higher national body that oversees them or to the higher industrial managerial body but to the party committee or cell within the factory, and if we were to have the production plan of that particular factory formulated not by the higher national governing body or the higher industrial management body but by the party committee or cell within the factory, it would no longer be "centralized management" but rather the fragmentation and destruction of any sort of centralized management. It is important to understand that the organization of the Communist Party should neither replace nor supersede the state apparatus.

There have been cases where the administrative work of the director has been replaced by the work of the trade unions. As you all know, this is again a mistake. The role and responsibility of the trade unions are: to unite and organize the vast mass of workers; to educate the working class, making them understand their position as masters; to strengthen their awareness of work discipline; to stimulate their initiative in production; to encourage the exchange of knowledge and education in directing production. In short, the trade unions work for the interests of the workers. It is evident that if we transform the trade unions into ordinary administrative bodies, it will result in the union and the factory administration being in opposition to each other, and multiple administrative bodies of the same nature will co-exist, hindering the establishment of the system of responsibility.

It is also a mistake to have too many meetings among employees and workers of the factories and mines. An excessive number of meetings leads to waste and loss of energy for employees and workers, thus causing disruption to production. The factory's administration committee must know how to save the time and energy of workers and employees. It should make appropriate adjustments regarding the necessary meetings in the factory and eliminate excessive and unnecessary meetings that can harm production.

At present, we already have divergences re-

garding the issue of mutual relations between trade unions, party committees and the administration within enterprises. That's why I am discussing these issues extensively. Regarding the matter of democratization in enterprise management, we have already formulated a proposal that I kindly ask you to study and make corrections to.

(Subsection 2.3) Below, I Will Discuss the System of Economic Calculation

The system of economic calculation is a very important issue when it comes to the administration of our enterprises. We raised this problem some time ago, and it drew the attention of the entire Party, yielding some incomplete answers. Now, I want to raise this issue once again because it is a subject for which we have not yet found a complete solution.

We all know that we have gone through a fairly long period in which we lived under the regime of "taking everything we can get." Even now, many of our comrades still live under this regime. It is a regime where we take whatever we can get, with a total or partial lack of calculations regarding expenses and revenues. There is a certain distinction in how workers are paid based on seniority, qualifications and age. However, how they are paid has no relation to the work results. Even the lazy ones can still have enough to eat. "Whether you work or not, you can always have a pound and a half." That is one aspect of the issue. Another part of

this issue is that in the past, we carried out economic work and established factories as well. But strictly speaking, there was no proper calculation, especially since most of these factories were working for the needs of the liberation war. As long as it was related to war requirements, we didn't consider the importance of production costs at all. This greatly influenced our comrades involved in economic work, as the concept of production cost was not present for a long time. For them, the focus was on producing the things we needed without considering the production cost

There is no doubt that our regime of "taking everything we can get" has played a positive role in our prolonged revolutionary journey and has produced very fortunate outcomes. Even now, for a limited period, this regime is very useful in certain organizations, and it remains highly necessary for the Army. Similarly, it is beyond question that our production of war materials in the past, without considering the magnitude of production costs in order to support the liberation war, brought great advantages to our struggle for the people.

The problem today is caused by the significant changes that have already occurred. Specifically, in the management of the entire national economy, particularly the management of the new modernized economy, if there is no calculation of revenues and expenses, if there is no graduated scale of wages and an examination of work results, in other words, if the

cost of production is not considered and if a serious system of economic calculation is not adopted, then we will not be able to have proper industrial operation. We will not be able to understand the current state of the industry, nor will we be able to evaluate its future. For us, this endeavour will be a heap of confusion, and we will not have the means to develop a plan for reconstruction and greater production. In these circumstances, the question of having a rigorous economic plan is no longer a matter of debate.

Alongside the system of responsibility in the enterprise and the democratization of administration, we can adopt the system of economic calculation. Where there is no system of responsibility, there cannot be a system of calculation. Similarly, where there is no democratization of administration to foster the initiative of the masses in production and to ensure mass supervision, but only a system of bureaucratic administration, there also cannot be a system of calculation.

Now the central issue of the economic calculation system is to establish such a system. This means that based on the level of our industrial technical equipment, our efforts to overcome waste, the mass initiative in production, and the results achieved in the movement for new records, we can set a feasible and rational production quota in order to apply, as a first attempt in a more or less correct way, manage the system of production costs. In

other words, we can apply the economic calculation system as a preliminary trial and then proceed with an improvement in administration, an elevation of techniques, encouragement of mass participation in production, a gradual increase in the production quota and a gradual decrease in production costs.

Fighting for the system of economic calculation is fighting for the economy, for the expansion of our productive capacity.

(Section 3) Regarding the New Records

After liberation, in the Northeast, like what happened in the rest of the country, a new enthusiasm and a new attitude towards work emerged among the workers, resulting in greatly increased productivity. I have already mentioned this in the concluding part of my discussion on the experiences of 1949.

In the Northeast, the movement for new records was deliberately launched in 1949. Ample evidence demonstrates the significant importance of this movement.

This movement clearly demonstrated that the productive power of state-owned enterprises, characterized by socialism in our New Democratic state, is far superior to the productive power of feudal and semi-feudal society and bureaucratic capitalist enterprises. It showed that our productive capacity has immense potential for future development.

The movement for new records has transformed the face of our factories and mines. It

has not only educated our cadres but also the working class itself.

During the movement, certain factories and mines were able to find, either fully or partially, their ideal production quotas. It can be said that the experiences gained during this movement will be extremely useful for future planned production, the transition to a new wage system, the implementation of a quota-based administration, the vigorous execution of the economic calculation system and the improvement of various administrative systems in the people's enterprises.

The achievement of new records results from the following two conditions:

One of the conditions is the change in the attitude of the workers, who voluntarily abandoned the practice of "lagging behind in work" and instead increased their work intensity. As a result, the workforce has been reasonably increased, reaching a level of production that can be achieved under current technical conditions.

The other condition is the partial creation of new work methods, resulting in some changes to the old techniques.

Regarding the first condition mentioned above, we must state that it is absolutely necessary and mandatory. However, it is essential to understand that the increase in work intensity is still limited by the physical conditions of human beings. Exceeding these limits would not be appropriate. In other words, during the

movement for new records, we only expect the work intensity to reach a level that is reasonably achievable based on human physical conditions and within the limits of current technology. Apart from that, our main focus should be on guiding and encouraging our workers and technicians to develop their own creative force and improve work methods and technical conditions. In this way, not only a small number of workers may achieve new records within a specific time frame, but workers in general may achieve records at any time. Furthermore, one record may lead to another, creating a continuous cycle of improvement and achievement.

During the movement for new records in recent months, some defects or deviations have emerged. One of the most common deviations is prioritizing quantity over quality. This approach can even disrupt the normal flow of work and result in losses. For example, at the 3rd Mechanical Factory, each produced item had to be returned back to the factory for finishing work before it could be used, despite the impressive results achieved in the record-breaking movement. Another defect is blind adherence to the movement itself. In many cases, the focus is solely on breaking records for the sake of breaking records. While numerous new records are achieved, the overall plan is not fulfilled. The movement tends to dwell on relatively minor issues and lacks direction in addressing the timely resolution of quota-re-

lated matters. Additionally, another defect is the uneven development of the movement across different enterprises and factories. Technicians rarely work to improve or discover techniques that align with the record-breaking movement led by workers.

Indeed, the defects and deviations we have discussed are inevitable at the beginning of any movement. However, we must learn from these experiences for the future.

Comrades! Developing the movement for new records systematically and simultaneously opposing formalism is an important step in the development of production and the achievement of the production plan. This movement is inseparable from a series of issues, including establishing a rational organization of work in production, implementing a rational management system, enforcing the economic calculation system, and implementing a rational system of hierarchical wages and rewards for overproduction. These aspects are crucial for driving productivity and ensuring efficient and effective production processes.

We must skilfully lead this great movement and guide the working class in the struggle to create a completely new productive force.

(Section 4) Regarding the Development of Agricultural Production

I have already discussed various issues concerning our industry. Let us now turn our attention to the development of agricultural

production.

Currently, the agricultural economy in the Northeast region primarily takes the following four forms:

1) The individualistic economy;

2) Mutual aid organizations and cooperatives for sales and distribution in rural areas, based on the individualistic economy of peasants (on the private properties of peasants);

3) The economy of the newly affluent peasants is still relatively small, but it does exist. Moreover, it is in a phase of development;

4) Public farms. Apart from state farms, each province and xian¹ has at least one public farm, and in some cases, several. Certain districts also have public farms, although on a smaller scale.

Apart from the aforementioned four forms, of course, there is still a small number of elderly widows and widowers, and unsupported elderly individuals, who make a living from renting out their land. There are also capitalists who operate farms and vegetable gardens by leasing state-owned land and employing workers. However, since they are not numerous, they do not yet play a significant role in the overall agricultural economy.

The fundamental starting point of the Party's general policy is to develop agricultural productive forces everywhere, increase cereal harvests, produce more raw materials for in-

¹ District (Chinese in the original).

dustry and ultimately raise the living standards of the peasant masses.

Undoubtedly, we must protect and encourage the spirit of initiative in the individualistic economy among the peasants, freed from the shackles of imperialism and feudalism. We must encourage them to acquire new means of production, horses and other livestock, intensify the use of fertilizers, increase the cultivated land area, and repair and construct houses, among other things. Neglecting or undermining this spirit of initiative in the individualistic economy, especially harming the initiative of the average peasants, would be a very serious and unacceptable mistake. This is something that everyone must be aware of.

However, at the same time, we must engage in developing and organizing cooperation, particularly labour exchange. The question at hand is that the absolute majority of peasants (poor peasants and a portion of the average peasants at the time of the Agrarian Reform) would not be able to fully or easily cultivate their land if labour exchange were not implemented. Moreover, it is absolutely impossible to expect the development and prosperity of the peasant economy without the development and upliftment of the poor peasants, small and average peasants, who represent the majority of the rural population. Comrade Mao Zedong has said, "The organization of cooperation such as labour exchange teams was an expression of the miserable life of peas-

ants in the past. But now, in our liberated areas, it has undergone a change both in form and content and has become an expression by which the peasant masses strive for a prosperous life by developing their own productive forces.” The reality is evident.

The Party and the people’s government must make a great effort, through material means and other methods, to assist peasants in organizing cooperation of this kind: mutual aid and labour exchange.

However, it is necessary to protect freedom of choice: every peasant has full liberty to participate in the mutual aid group or to refrain from participation and work independently. The masses always make decisions based on their practical interests and experiences.

The two principles stated by Comrade Mao Zedong regarding mutual aid, namely free consent and exchange based on equal value, are very accurate. It is not permissible to violate them. Therefore, we oppose any impatience and any subjective ways of thinking and working, as this is a matter related to raising the consciousness of the masses and our attitude towards the average peasants.

If we were to behave in a harsh and imperative manner towards the middle peasants on this issue, it would be an unacceptable mistake. Our way of working allows us to assess whether our “organizational work” has been done well or not. What is essential is not just a simple increase in the number of organiza-

tions, but rather the quantity of agricultural products produced by the peasants after they have been established. If our work in developing mutual aid is done well, and as a result, production becomes much more abundant, then the number of participants will automatically increase. Conversely, if the production does not increase, the number of participants will decrease.

However, we must still understand that even if our work on mutual aid is done well and the harvest becomes more abundant as a result, every peasant still has the full freedom to choose not to participate. In such cases, we cannot in any way force them. At the same time, we must not despise, attack, or push away any peasant who wishes to work individually. We must not label them or refuse to help them solve their difficulties, nor should we refrain from trying to unite with them. Acting in such a way would be a serious mistake because every peasant working individually is still a worker. Instead, we should be patient and seek to unite with these peasants, help them, and educate them. Show them through practical experience that mutual aid will bring them greater productivity and enable them to become wealthy more quickly than individual work. Only by doing so gradually can we encourage peasants to participate in mutual aid groups based on their own awakening and free consent.

As for the policy to be adopted towards the

newly wealthy peasants, it is not a matter of attacking or restricting them at present, as their existence and growth are permitted. They are allowed to hire workers, borrow money, mortgage, buy, sell and lease land under sharecropping conditions, etc., as long as they abide by the conditions set by the government.

At the state farms, in the past, surplus personnel from government agencies were mobilized to increase cereal production and address credit-related difficulties. This system has yielded good results. However, we have not put enough effort into seed selection, propagating the use of improved agricultural tools and popularizing agricultural sciences. These efforts would enable our state farms to lead and influence mass production. From now on, we must work more in these areas. First and foremost, we need to establish closer relationships with mutual aid teams and the nearest peasants, so that public farms can better fulfil their role in agricultural economic development. We are preparing, under feasible conditions, to organize more farms equipped with tractors and machinery. These farms will serve as demonstration models for the peasants.

What we have just discussed are our fundamental policies towards the four forms of peasant economy.

The Party must educate its organizations and encourage its rural members to actively participate in labour exchange and mutual aid groups, as well as in sale and distribution co-

operatives, with the aim of playing a vanguard role and acting as a bridge in the economic development of the broader masses. In doing so, they can simultaneously develop their own economy.

However, if there are Party members who are peasant farmers and wish to work individually and refuse to participate in mutual aid groups and cooperatives, we should consider these circumstances as an issue of education and, at the same time, an assessment of whether we have dedicated sufficient effort to the work of mutual aid and cooperation. There is therefore no need to try to resolve this matter through force or authority.

When Party members become wealthy peasants, through their work and production as a result of the Agrarian Reform, and voluntarily express their desire to withdraw from the Party, the Party will grant them approval and consent. For members whose attitude becomes passive towards the Party, they must, in accordance with the Party's statutes, suspend their membership. However, we hope that they remain politically upright citizens. We guarantee that there will be no interference in their economic work. As for members who do not themselves request to withdraw from the Party but still adopt a different, passive attitude, the Party will handle their case according to the regulations set by the Central Committee's Organization Department and based on the concrete conditions. This means that for those

who still adhere to the Party's resolutions, observe the policies and decrees of the people's government, and have not had a negative influence among the masses, their membership should be maintained. However, for those who are politically and ideologically compromised and have truly lost the minimum conditions for being a communist, it is only natural, according to the Party's statutes, to exclude them from the Party in order to maintain its purity.

V — All Comrades, Let Us Unite and Put Ourselves at the Forefront of Economic Reconstruction

Comrades! In my current report, I have already discussed, in a general manner, the various issues we have encountered on the front of our current economic reconstruction that we need to address immediately. Of course, there are still other important matters to consider. For example, we intend to prioritize the training of a large number of technicians, and so on. We will achieve these objectives through our concrete work. Therefore, we will not delve further into these matters at this moment.

Comrades! All our major lines have been determined. Now, we call upon all our comrades to unite closely and stand at the forefront of the economic reconstruction front. Let us work side by side with the working class, peasants, technicians, intellectuals and the people. At the same time, we must actively absorb

more advanced elements within our Party. Under the great banner of our Party's leader, the leader of our people — Comrade Mao Zedong — let us centralize our efforts steadily, attentively, diligently and with care for public goods. Let us mobilize all our human, material and financial resources available for implementation in the reconstruction process. In our work, let us fight against bureaucracy and formalism, always consult the masses on every matter, make extensive use of criticism and self-criticism, push our work further, guard against the sabotages and attacks of counter-revolutionaries, overcome all difficulties, learn from the experiences of socialist construction in the Soviet Union, and finally accomplish the new historical task entrusted to us by the Party.

It is true that our knowledge in the economic and cultural fields is not sufficient, and our theoretical level of Marxism-Leninism falls short of our needs. This is our main weakness. Recognizing this weakness is beneficial. However, these points of inadequacy should not be feared. What we should fear is our unwillingness to learn seriously. Comrade Mao Zedong has told us: "The essential thing is to know how to learn." It is only if we have the desire to learn that we can overcome any fortress of difficulties. There is a Chinese proverb that goes: "There is no difficulty for a person

with a firm will.”¹ We, as communists, are people with a firm will. It is because we wanted to make the revolution and learned how to do it that it ultimately became victorious. Now, as we strive for reconstruction, we will undoubtedly acquire the ability to rebuild, and the work of reconstruction will surely lead to a victorious success.

In order for our cadres to fulfil their assigned functions effectively, it is necessary to encourage all Party cadres to deeply learn what they are designated to do, so that they become highly skilled in their respective roles and become true specialists. In other words, it is necessary to have all Party cadres specialize in their areas of expertise.

We must understand that our reconstruction work is a long-term endeavour, and therefore, each cadre must strive to excel in a specific field in order to fulfil their role more effectively. In the past, such opportunities may not have existed, but today, the necessary conditions are in place. It is not only possible to pursue specialization but also imperative that we do so.

Learning a skilled profession and studying the doctrines of Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin and Mao Zedong Thought are two interconnected things. Studying the doctrines of Marx,

¹ This could be interpreted as the French saying «Vouloir, c'est pouvoir» (To want is to be able) or the English saying “If there is a will there is a way.”

Engels, Lenin, Stalin and Mao Zedong Thought has allowed us to have a broader perspective which enhances our intelligence, strengthens our convictions and helps carry out our work in a more perfect manner.

All Party cadres, especially the leading cadres, must do their best to dedicate a portion of their time to organizing the study of the 12 works that cadres are obligated to study, works specifically designated by Comrade Mao Zedong. At the same time, they must also diligently study the works of Comrade Mao himself and the numerous documents of the Party's Central Committee.

Comrades! I will not further expatiate on the various problems of the Party. Let me, before closing, repeat again:

All cadres, let us unite and put ourselves at the forefront of economic reconstruction, under the great banner of Mao Zedong!



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