



Mao Tse-tung

**THE ROLE OF
THE CHINESE COMMUNIST PARTY
IN THE NATIONAL WAR**

From the
Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung,
Foreign Languages Press
Peking 1967

First Edition 1965
Second Printing 1967

Vol. II, pp. 195-211.

Prepared © for the Internet by David J. Romagnolo, djr@marx2mao.org (October 1999)

Republish by:

Communist (Maoist) Party of Afghanistan (CMPA)

<https://cmpa.af>

<u>THE ROLE OF THE CHINESE COMMUNIST PARTY IN THE NATION-AL WAR</u>	195
Patriotism and Internationalism	<u>196</u>
Communists Should Set an Example in the National War	<u>197</u>
Unite the Whole Nation and Combat Enemy Agents in Its Midst	<u>199</u>
Expand the Communist Party and Prevent Infiltration by Enemy Agents	<u>199</u>
Maintain Both the United Front and the Independence of the Party	<u>200</u>
Consider the Situation as a Whole, Think in Terms of the Majority, and Work Together with Our Allies	<u>201</u>
Cadres Policy	<u>201</u>
Party Discipline	<u>203</u>
Party Democracy	<u>204</u>
Our Party Has Consolidated Itself and Grown Strong Through the Struggle on Two Fronts	<u>205</u>
The Present Struggle on Two Fronts	<u>207</u>
Study	<u>208</u>
Unity and Victory	<u>210</u>
<u>NOTES</u>	210

THE ROLE OF THE CHINESE COMMUNIST PARTY IN THE NATIONAL WAR^[*]

October 1938

Comrades, the prospects ahead of us are bright. Not only is it necessary for us to defeat Japanese imperialism and build a new China, but we are certainly capable of achieving these aims. However, there is a difficult road ahead between the present and the bright future. In the struggle for a new China, the Chinese Communist Party and the whole people must fight the Japanese aggressors in a planned way and can defeat them only through a long war. We have already said a good deal about the various problems relating to the war. We have summed up the experience gained since its outbreak and appraised the present situation, defined the urgent tasks confronting the whole nation and explained the reasons for sustaining a long war by means of a long-term national united front against Japan and the methods for doing so, and we have analysed the international situation. What problems then remain? Comrades, there is one more problem, namely, what role the Chinese Communist Party should play in the national war, or how Communists should understand their own role, strengthen themselves and close their ranks in order to be able to lead this war to victory and not to defeat.

* This report was made by Comrade Mao Tse-tung to the Sixth Plenary Session of the Sixth Central Committee of the Party. The session endorsed the line of the Political Bureau headed by Comrade Mao Tse-tung and was a very important one. In discussing the question of the role of the Chinese Communist Party in the national war he helped all comrades clearly to understand and conscientiously to shoulder the Party's great and historic responsibility of leading the War of Resistance Against Japan. The plenary session decided on the line of persisting in the anti-Japanese united front, but at the same time pointed out that there had to be struggle as well as unity within the united front and that the proposition, "Everything through the united front", did not suit Chinese conditions. Thus the error of accommoda- [cont. onto p. 196. – DJR] tionism in regard to the united front was criticized; this problem was dealt with by Comrade Mao Tse-tung in "[The Question of Independence and Initiative Within the United Front](#)", which was part of his concluding speech at the same session. Affirming that it was extremely important for the whole Party to devote itself to organizing the people's armed struggle against Japan, the session decided that the war zones and the enemy's rear should be the Party's main fields of work and repudiated the erroneous ideas of those who pinned their hopes of victory on the Kuomintang armies and who would have entrusted the fate of the people to legal struggles under the reactionary Kuomintang rule. This problem was dealt with by Comrade Mao Tse-tung in "[Problems of War and Strategy](#)", which was also part of his concluding speech at the session.

PATRIOTISM AND INTERNATIONALISM

Can a Communist, who is an internationalist, at the same time be a patriot? We hold that he not only can be but must be. The specific content of patriotism is determined by historical conditions. There is the "patriotism" of the Japanese aggressors and of Hitler, and there is our patriotism. Communists must resolutely oppose the "patriotism" of the Japanese aggressors and of Hitler. The Communists of Japan and Germany are defeatists with regard to the wars being waged by their countries. To bring about the defeat of the Japanese aggressors and of Hitler by every possible means is in the interests of the Japanese and the German people, and the more complete the defeat the better. This is what the Japanese and German Communists should be doing and what they are doing. For the wars launched by the Japanese aggressors and Hitler are harming their own people as well as the people of the world. China's case is different, because she is the victim of aggression. Chinese Communists must therefore combine patriotism with internationalism. We are at once internationalists and patriots, and our slogan is, "Fight to defend the motherland against the aggressors." For us defeatism is a crime and to strive for victory in the War of Resistance is an inescapable duty. For only by fighting in defence of the motherland can we defeat the aggressors and achieve national liberation. And only by achieving national liberation will it be possible for the proletariat and other working people to achieve their own emancipation. The victory of China and the defeat of the invading imperialists will help the people of other countries. Thus in wars of national liberation patriotism is applied internationalism. For this reason Communists must use their initiative to the full, march bravely and resolutely to the battle front

page 197

of the war of national liberation and train their guns on the Japanese aggressors. For this reason, immediately after the Incident of September 18, 1931, our Party issued its call to resist the Japanese aggressors by a war of national defence, and later proposed a national united front against Japan, ordered the Red Army to reorganize as part of the anti-Japanese National Revolutionary Army and to march to the front, and instructed Party members to take their place in the forefront of the war and defend the motherland to the last drop of their blood. These are good patriotic actions and, far from running counter to internationalism, are its application in China. Only those who are politically muddle-headed or have ulterior motives talk nonsense about our having made a mistake and abandoned internationalism.

COMMUNISTS SHOULD SET AN EXAMPLE IN THE NATIONAL WAR

For the above reasons Communists should show a high degree of initiative in the national war, and show it concretely, that is, they should play an exemplary vanguard role in every sphere. Our war is being waged under adverse circumstances. National consciousness, national self-respect and national self-confidence are not sufficiently

developed among the broad masses, the majority of the people are unorganized, China's military power is weak, the economy is backward, the political system is undemocratic, corruption and pessimism exist, and a lack of unity and solidarity is to be found within the united front; these are among the adverse circumstances. Therefore, Communists must consciously shoulder the great responsibility of uniting the entire nation so as to put an end to all such undesirable phenomena. Here the exemplary vanguard role of the Communists is of vital importance. Communists in the Eighth Route and New Fourth Armies should set an example in fighting bravely, carrying out orders, observing discipline, doing political work and fostering internal unity and solidarity. In their relations with friendly parties and armies, Communists should take a firm stand of unity for resistance to Japan, uphold the programme of the united front and set an example in carrying out the tasks of resistance; they should be true in word and

page 198

resolute in deed, free from arrogance and sincere in consulting and co-operating with the friendly parties and armies, and they should be models in inter-party relations within the united front. Every Communist engaged in government work should set an example of absolute integrity, of freedom from favouritism in making appointments and of hard work for little remuneration. Every Communist working among the masses should be their friend and not a boss over them, an indefatigable teacher and not a bureaucratic politician. At no time and in no circumstances should a Communist place his personal interests first; he should subordinate them to the interests of the nation and of the masses. Hence, selfishness, slacking, corruption, seeking the limelight, and so on, are most contemptible, while selflessness, working with all one's energy, whole-hearted devotion to public duty, and quiet hard work will command respect. Communists should work in harmony with all progressives outside the Party and endeavour to unite the entire people to do away with whatever is undesirable. It must be realized that Communists form only a small section of the nation, and that there are large numbers of progressives and activists outside the Party with whom we must work. It is entirely wrong to think that we alone are good and no one else is any good. As for people who are politically backward, Communists should not slight or despise them, but should befriend them, unite with them, convince them and encourage them to go forward. The attitude of Communists towards any person who has made mistakes in his work should be one of persuasion in order to help him change and start afresh and not one of exclusion, unless he is incorrigible. Communists should set an example in being practical as well as far-sighted. For only by being practical can they fulfil the appointed tasks, and only far-sightedness can prevent them from losing their bearings in the march forward. Communists should therefore set an example in study; at all times they should learn from the masses as well as teach them. Only by learning from the people, from actual circumstances and from the friendly parties and armies, and by knowing them well, can we be practical in our work and far-sighted as to the future. In a long war and in adverse circumstances, the dynamic energy of the whole nation can be mobilized in the struggle to overcome difficulties, defeat the enemy and build a new China only if the Communists play an exemplary vanguard role to the best of their ability together with all the advanced elements among the friendly parties and armies and among the masses.

page 199

UNITE THE WHOLE NATION AND COMBAT ENEMY AGENTS IN ITS MIDST

The one and only policy for overcoming difficulties, defeating the enemy and building a new China is to consolidate and expand the Anti-Japanese National United Front and mobilize the dynamic energy of the whole nation. However, there are already enemy agents playing a disruptive role within our national united front, namely, the traitors, Trotskyites and pro-Japanese elements. Communists must always be on the look-out for them, expose their criminal activities with factual evidence and warn the people not to be duped by them. Communists must sharpen their political vigilance towards these enemy agents. They must understand that the expansion and consolidation of the national united front is inseparable from the exposure and weeding out of enemy agents. It is entirely wrong to pay attention only to the one side and forget the other.

EXPAND THE COMMUNIST PARTY AND PREVENT INFILTRATION BY ENEMY AGENTS

To overcome the difficulties, defeat the enemy and build a new China, the Communist Party must expand its organization and become a great mass party by opening its doors to the masses of workers, peasants and young activists who are truly devoted to the revolution, who believe in the Party's principles, support its policies and are willing to observe its discipline and work hard. Here no tendency towards closed-doorism should be tolerated. But at the same time, there must be no slackening of vigilance against infiltration by enemy agents. The Japanese imperialist secret services are ceaselessly trying to disrupt our Party and to smuggle undercover traitors, Trotskyites, pro-Japanese elements, degenerates and careerists into its ranks in the guise of activists. Not for a moment must we relax our vigilance and our strict precautions against such persons. We must not close our doors for fear of enemy agents, our set policy being boldly to expand our Party. But while boldly enlarging our membership, we must not relax our vigilance against enemy agents and careerists who will avail themselves of this opportunity to sneak in. We shall make mistakes if we only pay attention to the one side and forget the other.

page 200

The only correct policy is: "Expand the Party boldly but do not let a single undesirable in."

MAINTAIN BOTH THE UNITED FRONT AND THE INDEPENDENCE OF THE PARTY

It is only by firmly maintaining the national united front that the difficulties can be overcome, the enemy defeated and a new China built. This is beyond all doubt. At the same time, every party and group in the united front must preserve its ideological, political and organizational independence this holds good for the Kuomintang, the Communist Party or any other party or group. In inter-party relations, the Principle of Democracy in the Three People's Principles permits both the union of all parties and groups and the independent existence of each. To speak of unity alone while denying independence is to abandon the Principle of Democracy, and to this neither the Communist Party nor any other party would agree. There is no doubt that independence within the united front is relative and not absolute, and that to regard it as absolute would undermine the general policy of unity against the enemy. But this relative independence must not be denied; ideologically, politically and organizationally, each party must have its relative independence, that is, relative freedom. Also, the general policy of unity against the enemy would be undermined if this relative freedom were denied or voluntarily abandoned. This should be clearly understood by all members of the Communist Party as well as of the friendly parties.

The same is true of the relationship between the class struggle and the national struggle. It is an established principle that in the War of Resistance everything must be subordinated to the interests of resistance. Therefore, the interests of the class struggle must be subordinated to, and must not conflict with, the interests of the War of Resistance. But classes and the class struggle are facts, and those people who deny the fact of class struggle are wrong. The theory which attempts to deny this fact is utterly wrong. We do not deny the class struggle, we adjust it. The policy of mutual help and mutual concessions which we advocate is applicable not only to party relations but also to class relations. Unity against Japan requires an appropriate policy of adjustment in class relations, a policy which does not leave

page 201

the labouring people without political and material safeguards but also gives consideration to the interests of the rich, thereby meeting the demands of solidarity against the enemy. It is bad for the War of Resistance to pay attention only to the one side and neglect the other.

**CONSIDER THE SITUATION AS A WHOLE,
THINK IN TERMS OF THE MAJORITY,
AND WORK TOGETHER WITH OUR ALLIES**

In leading the masses in struggle against the enemy, Communists must consider the situation as a whole, think in terms of the majority of the people and work together with their allies. They must grasp the principle of subordinating the needs of the part to the needs of the whole. If a proposal appears feasible for a partial situation but not for the situation as a whole, then the part must give way to the whole. Conversely, if the proposal is not feasible for the part but is feasible in the light of the situation as a whole, again the part must give way to the whole. This is what is meant by considering the situation as a whole. Communists must never separate themselves from the majority of the people or neglect them by leading only a few progressive contingents in an isolated and rash advance, but must forge close links between the progressive elements and the broad masses. This is what is meant by thinking in terms of the majority. Wherever there are democratic parties or individuals willing to co-operate with us, the proper attitude for Communists is to talk things over with them and work together with them. It is wrong to indulge in arbitrary decisions and peremptory actions and to ignore our allies. A good Communist must be good at considering the situation as a whole, good at thinking in terms of the majority and good at working with his allies. We have had serious shortcomings in this respect, and we must still give the matter attention.

CADRES POLICY

The Chinese Communist Party is a party leading a great revolutionary struggle in a nation several hundred million strong, and it cannot fulfil its historic task without a large number of leading cadres

page 202

who combine ability with political integrity. In the last seventeen years our Party has trained a good many competent leaders, so that we have a framework of cadres in military, political, cultural, Party and mass work; all honour is due to the Party and to the nation for this achievement. But the present framework is not yet strong enough to support the vast edifice of our struggle, and it is still necessary to train capable people on a large scale. Many activists have come forward, and are continuing to come forward, in the great struggle of the Chinese people. We have the responsibility for organizing and training them and for taking good care and making proper use of them. Cadres are a decisive factor, once the political line is determined.^[1] Therefore, it is our fighting task to train large numbers of new cadres in a planned way.

Our concern should extend to non-Party cadres as well as to Party cadres. There are many capable people outside the Party whom we must not ignore. The duty of every Communist is to rid himself of aloofness and arrogance and to work well with non-Party

cadres, give them sincere help, have a warm, comradely attitude towards them and enlist their initiative in the great cause of resisting Japan and reconstructing the nation.

We must know how to judge cadres. We must not confine our judgement to a short period or a single incident in a cadre's life, but should consider his life and work as a whole. This is the principal method of judging cadres.

We must know how to use cadres well. In the final analysis, leadership involves two main responsibilities: to work out ideas, and to use cadres well. Such things as drawing up plans, making decisions, and giving orders and directives, are all in the category of "working out ideas". To put the ideas into practice, we must weld the cadres together and encourage them to go into action; this comes into the category of "using the cadres well". Throughout our national history there have been two sharply contrasting lines on the subject of the use of cadres, one being to "appoint people on their merit", and the other to "appoint people by favouritism". The former is the honest and the latter the dishonest way. The criterion the Communist Party should apply in its cadres policy is whether or not a cadre is resolute in carrying out the Party line, keeps to Party discipline, has close ties with the masses, has the ability to find his bearings independently, and is active, hard-working and unselfish. This is what "appointing people on their merit" means. The cadres policy of Chang Kuo-tao was the exact opposite. Following the line of "appointing people by

page 203

favouritism", he gathered personal favourites round himself to form a small clique, and in the end he turned traitor to the Party and decamped. This is an important lesson for us. Taking warning from it and from similar historical lessons, the Central Committee and the leaders at all levels must make it their major responsibility to adhere to the honest and fair way in cadres policy and reject the dishonest and unfair way, and so consolidate the unity of the Party.

We must know how to take good care of cadres. There are several ways of doing so.

First, give them guidance. This means allowing them a free hand in their work so that they have the courage to assume responsibility and, at the same time, giving them timely instructions so that, guided by the Party's political line, they are able to make full use of their initiative.

Second, raise their level. This means educating them by giving them the opportunity to study so that they can enhance their theoretical understanding and their working ability.

Third, check up on their work, and help them sum up their experience, carry forward their achievements and correct their mistakes. To assign work without checking up and to take notice only when serious mistakes are made -- that is not the way to take care of cadres.

Fourth, in general, use the method of persuasion with cadres who have made mistakes, and help them correct their mistakes. The method of struggle should be confined to those who make serious mistakes and nevertheless refuse to accept

guidance. Here patience is essential. It is wrong lightly to label people "opportunists" or lightly to begin "waging struggles" against them.

Fifth, help them with their difficulties. When cadres are in difficulty as a result of illness, straitened means or domestic or other troubles, we must be sure to give them as much care as possible.

This is how to take good care of cadres.

PARTY DISCIPLINE

In view of Chang Kuo-tao's serious violations of discipline, we must affirm anew the discipline of the Party, namely:

page 204

- (1) the individual is subordinate to the organization;
- (2) the minority is subordinate to the majority;
- (3) the lower level is subordinate to the higher level; and
- (4) the entire membership is subordinate to the Central Committee.

Whoever violates these articles of discipline disrupts Party unity. Experience proves that some people violate Party discipline through not knowing what it is, while others, like Chang Kuo-tao, violate it knowingly and take advantage of many Party members' ignorance to achieve their treacherous purposes. Hence it is necessary to educate members in Party discipline so that the rank and file will not only observe discipline themselves, but will exercise supervision over the leaders so that they, too, observe it, thus preventing the recurrence of cases like Chang Kuo-tao's. If we are to ensure the development of inner-Party relations along the right lines, besides the four most important articles of discipline mentioned above we must work out a set of fairly detailed Party rules which will serve to unify the actions of the leading bodies at all levels.

PARTY DEMOCRACY

In the present great struggle, the Chinese Communist Party demands that all its leading bodies and all its members and cadres should give the fullest expression to their initiative, which alone can ensure victory. This initiative must be demonstrated concretely in the ability of the leading bodies, the cadres and the Party rank and file to work creatively, in their readiness to assume responsibility, in the exuberant vigour they show in their work, in their courage and ability to raise questions, voice opinions and criticize defects, and in the comradely supervision that is maintained over the leading bodies and the leading cadres. Otherwise, "initiative" will be an empty thing. But the exercise of such initiative depends on the spread of democracy in Party life. It cannot be brought into play if there is

not enough democracy in Party life. Only in an atmosphere of democracy can large numbers of able people be brought forward. Ours is a country in which small-scale production and the patriarchal system prevail, and taking the country as a whole there is as yet no democratic life;

page 205

consequently, this state of affairs is reflected in our Party by insufficient democracy in Party life. This phenomenon hinders the entire Party from exercising its initiative to the full. Similarly, it has led to insufficient democracy in the united front and in the mass movements. For these reasons, education in democracy must be carried on within the Party so that members can understand the meaning of democratic life, the meaning of the relationship between democracy and centralism, and the way in which democratic centralism should be put into practice. Only in this way can we really extend democracy within the Party and at the same time avoid ultra-democracy and the *laissez-faire* which destroys discipline.

It is also essential to extend democracy in our Party organizations in the army to the degree necessary to stimulate the initiative of the Party members and increase the combat effectiveness of the troops. However, there cannot be as much democracy in the Party organizations in the army as in the local Party organizations. Both in the army and in the local organizations, inner-Party democracy is meant to strengthen discipline and increase combat effectiveness, not to weaken them.

The extension of democracy in the Party should be seen as an essential step in its consolidation and development, and as an important weapon enabling it to be most active in the great struggle, to prove equal to its tasks, create fresh strength and surmount the difficulties of the war.

OUR PARTY HAS CONSOLIDATED ITSELF AND GROWN STRONG THROUGH THE STRUGGLE ON TWO FRONTS

Broadly speaking, in the last seventeen years our Party has learned to use the Marxist-Leninist weapon of ideological struggle against incorrect ideas within the Party on two fronts -- against Right opportunism and against "Left" opportunism.

Before the Fifth Plenary Session of the Sixth Central Committee,^[2] our Party fought Chen Tu-hsiu's Right opportunism and Comrade Li Li-san's "Left" opportunism. It made great progress thanks to the victories achieved in these two inner-Party struggles. After the Fifth Plenary Session there were two further historic inner-Party struggles,

page 206

namely, the struggles at the Tsunyi Meeting and in connection with the expulsion of Chang Kuo-tao.

The Tsunyi Meeting corrected serious errors of a "Left" opportunist character -- errors of principle committed in the fight against the enemy's fifth "encirclement and suppression" campaign -- and united the Party and the Red Army; it enabled the Central Committee of the Party and the main forces of the Red Army to bring the Long March to a triumphant conclusion, to advance to a forward position in the resistance to Japan and to carry out the new policy of the Anti-Japanese National United Front. By combating Chang Kuo-tao's Right opportunism, the Pasi and Yen-an Meetings (the fight against the Chang Kuo-tao line began at the Pasi Meeting^[3] and ended at the Yen-an Meeting^[4]) succeeded in bringing all the Red forces together and in strengthening the unity of the whole Party for the heroic struggle against Japan. Both kinds of opportunist mistakes arose during the revolutionary civil war, and their characteristic was that they were errors related to the war.

What are the lessons which have been derived from these two inner-Party struggles? They are:

(1) The tendency to "Left" impetuosity, which disregards both the subjective and the objective factors, is extremely harmful to revolutionary war and, for that matter, to any revolutionary movement -- it was among the serious errors of principle which were manifested in the struggle against the enemy's fifth "encirclement and suppression" campaign, and which arose from ignorance of the characteristics of China's revolutionary war.

(2) The opportunism of Chang Kuo-tao, however, was Right opportunism in the revolutionary war and was a combination of retreatist line, warlordism and anti-Party activity. It was only with the overcoming of this brand of opportunism that large number of cadres and Party members in the Fourth Front Army of the Red Army, men of intrinsically fine quality and with a long record of heroic struggle, were able to free themselves from its toils and return to the correct line of the Central Committee.

(3) Striking results were achieved in the great organizational work of the ten years of the Agrarian Revolutionary War -- in army building, government work, mass work and Party building. Had it not been for the support rendered by such organizational work to the heroic fighting at the front, we could not have kept

page 207

up the bitter struggle against Chiang Kai-shek. However, in the latter part of that period serious errors of principle were made in the Party's policy concerning cadres and organization, errors which showed themselves in the tendency towards sectarianism, in punitiveness and in the policy of ideological struggle carried to excess. They were due both to our failure to eliminate the vestiges of the former Li Li-san line and to the political mistakes in matters of principle committed at the time. These errors, too, were corrected at the Tsunyi Meeting, and the Party was thus able to make the turn to a correct cadres policy and to correct organizational principles. As for Chang Kuo-tao's organizational line, it violated all Party principles, disrupted Party discipline and carried factional activity to the point of opposition to the Party, the Central Committee and the Communist International. The Central Committee did everything possible to overcome Chang Kuo-tao's iniquitous and erroneous line and to frustrate his anti-Party activity, and also tried to save Chang Kuo-tao himself. But as he stubbornly refused to correct his

mistakes and resorted to double-dealing, and subsequently even betrayed the Party and threw himself into the arms of the Kuomintang, the Party had to take firm measures and expel him. This disciplinary action won the support not only of all Party members but of all people loyal to the cause of national liberation. The Communist International also endorsed the decision and denounced Chang Kuo-tao as a deserter and renegade.

These lessons, these achievements, have furnished us with the prerequisites for uniting the whole Party, for strengthening its ideological, political and organizational unity, and for successfully waging the War of Resistance. Our Party has consolidated itself and grown strong through the struggle on the two fronts.

THE PRESENT STRUGGLE ON TWO FRONTS

From now on, it is of paramount importance to wage a political struggle against Rightist pessimism in the War of Resistance, although it is still necessary to keep an eye on "Left" impetuosity. On questions of the united front and of Party and mass organization, we must

page 208

continue the fight against the "Left" tendency towards closed-doorism if we are to achieve co-operation with the various other anti-Japanese parties and groups, expand the Communist Party and broaden the mass movement. At the same time, we must take care to combat the Right opportunist tendency towards co-operation and expansion which are unconditional in character, or otherwise they will both be hindered and be turned into capitulationist co-operation and unprincipled expansion.

Ideological struggle on the two fronts must suit the concrete circumstances of each case, and we must never approach a problem subjectively or permit the bad old habit of "sticking labels" on people to continue.

In the struggle against deviations, we must give serious attention to opposing double-faced behaviour. As Chang Kuo-tao's career shows, the greatest danger of such behaviour is that it may develop into factional activity. To comply in public but oppose in private, to say yes and mean no, to say nice things to a person's face but play tricks behind his back - these are all forms of double-dealing. Only by sharpening the vigilance of cadres and Party members against such behaviour can we strengthen Party discipline.

STUDY

Generally speaking, all Communist Party members who can do so should study the theory of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin, study our national history and study current movements and trends; moreover, they should help to educate members with less schooling. The cadres in particular should study these subjects carefully, while members of the Central Committee and senior cadres should give them even more attention. No political party can possibly lead a great revolutionary movement to victory unless it possesses revolutionary theory and a knowledge of history and has a profound grasp of the practical movement.

The theory of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin is universally applicable. We should regard it not as a dogma, but as a guide to action. Studying it is not merely a matter of learning terms and phrases but of learning Marxism-Leninism as the science of revolution. It is not just a matter of understanding the general laws derived by Marx,

page 209

Engels, Lenin and Stalin from their extensive study of real life and revolutionary experience, but of studying their standpoint and method in examining and solving problems. Our Party's mastery of Marxism-Leninism is now rather better than it used to be, but is still far from being extensive or deep. Ours is the task of leading a great nation of several hundred million in a great and unprecedented struggle. For us, therefore, the spreading and deepening of the study of Marxism-Leninism present a big problem demanding an early solution which is possible only through concentrated effort. Following on this plenary session of the Central Committee, I hope to see an all-Party emulation in study which will show who has really learned something, and who has learned more and learned better. So far as shouldering the main responsibility of leadership is concerned, our Party's fighting capacity will be much greater and our task of defeating Japanese imperialism will be more quickly accomplished if there are one or two hundred comrades with a grasp of Marxism-Leninism which is systematic and not fragmentary, genuine and not hollow.

Another of our tasks is to study our historical heritage and use the Marxist method to sum it up critically. Our national history goes back several thousand years and has its own characteristics and innumerable treasures. But in these matters we are mere schoolboys. Contemporary China has grown out of the China of the past; we are Marxist in our historical approach and must not lop off our history. We should sum up our history from Confucius to Sun Yat-sen and take over this valuable legacy. This is important for guiding the great movement of today. Being Marxists, Communists are internationalists, but we can put Marxism into practice only when it is integrated with the specific characteristics of our country and acquires a definite national form. The great strength of Marxism-Leninism lies precisely in its integration with the concrete revolutionary practice of all countries. For the Chinese Communist Party, it is a matter of learning to apply the theory of Marxism-Leninism to the specific circumstances of China. For the Chinese Communists who are part of the great Chinese nation, flesh of its flesh and blood of its blood, any talk about Marxism in isolation from China's characteristics is merely Marxism in the abstract, Marxism in a vacuum. Hence to apply Marxism concretely in China so that its every manifestation has an indubitably Chinese character, *i.e.*, to apply Marxism in the light of China's specific characteristics, becomes a problem which it is

urgent for the whole Party to understand and solve. Foreign stereotypes must be abolished, there must be less singing

page 210

of empty, abstract tunes, and dogmatism must be laid to rest; they must be replaced by the fresh, lively Chinese style and spirit which the common people of China love. To separate internationalist content from national form is the practice of those who do not understand the first thing about internationalism. We, on the contrary, must link the two closely. In this matter there are serious errors in our ranks which should be conscientiously overcome.

What are the characteristics of the present movement? What are its laws? How is it to be directed? These are all practical questions. To this day we do not yet understand everything about Japanese imperialism, or about China. The movement is developing, new things have yet to emerge, and they are emerging in an endless stream. To study this movement in its entirety and in its development is a great task claiming our constant attention. Whoever refuses to study these problems seriously and carefully is no Marxist.

Complacency is the enemy of study. We cannot really learn anything until we rid ourselves of complacency. Our attitude towards ourselves should be "to be insatiable in learning" and towards others "to be tireless in teaching".

UNITY AND VICTORY

Unity within the Chinese Communist Party is the fundamental prerequisite for uniting the whole nation to win the War of Resistance and build a new China. Seventeen years of tempering have taught the Chinese Communist Party many ways of attaining internal unity, and ours is now a much more seasoned Party. Thus we are able to form a powerful nucleus for the whole people in the struggle to win victory in the War of Resistance and to build a new China. Comrades, so long as we are united, we can certainly reach this goal.

NOTES

[1] In his report to the 17th Congress of the C.P.S.U.(B.) in January 1934, Stalin said: ". . . after the correct political line has been laid down, organizational work decides everything, including the fate of the political line itself, its success or failure."

page 211

(See *Problems of Leninism*, Eng. ed., FLPH, Moscow, 1954, p. 644. [Transcriber's Note: See Stalin's "[Report to the Seventeenth Party Congress on the Work of the Central Committee of the C.P.S.U.\(B.\)](#)". -- DJR]) He also dealt with the question of "proper selection of personnel". In his address in May 1935 delivered in the Kremlin Palace to the graduates from the Red Army Academies. Stalin put forward and explained the slogan: "Cadres decide everything." (*Ibid.*, pp. 661-62. [Transcriber's Note: See Stalin's "[Address Delivered in the Kremlin Palace to the Graduates from the Red Army Academies](#)". -- DJR]) In his report to the 18th Congress of the C.P.S.U.(B.) in March 1939, Stalin said: "After a correct political line has been worked out and tested in practice, the Party cadres become the decisive force in the leadership

exercised by the Party and the state." (*Ibid.*, p. 784. [*Transcriber's Note*: See Stalin's "[Report to the Eighteenth Congress of the C.P.S.U.\(B.\) on the Work of the Central Committee](#)". -- DJR]) [p. 202]

[2] The period referred to was that from the emergency meeting of the Political Bureau of the Fifth Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party in August to the Fifth Plenary Session of the Sixth Central Committee in January 1914. [p. 205]

[3] The Pasi Meeting was called by the Political Bureau of the Central Committee in August 1935 at Pasi, northwest of the county town of Sungpan, on the borders of northwestern Szechuan and southeastern Kansu. Chang Kuo-tao, leading a section of the Red Army, had broken away from the Central Committee, and was challenging its orders and attempting to undermine it. At this meeting the Central Committee decided to leave the danger zone for northern Shensi with those forces of the Red Army which obeyed its orders. However, Chang Kuo-tao led the Red Army units he had deceived southward to the area of Tienchuan, Lushan, the Big and Small Chinchuan and Apha, where he established a bogus central committee and came out publicly against the Party. [p. 206]

[4] The Yen-an Meeting was the enlarged meeting of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the Party held in Yen-an in April 1937. Prior to this meeting large numbers of cadres and soldiers in the Red Army units under Chang Kuo-tao who had already become aware of his deception marched northward towards the Shensi-Kansu border area. On their way, however, some units acted on mistaken orders and switched westward to the area of Kanchow, Liangchow and Suchow, all in Kansu Province. Most of these were wiped out by the enemy and the rest made their way to Sinkiang and only later returned to the Shensi-Kansu border area. The other units had long since reached the Shensi-Kansu border area and joined forces with the Central Red Army. Chang Kuo-tao himself also turned up in northern Shensi and attended the Yen-an Meeting. The meeting systematically and conclusively condemned his opportunism and rebellion against the Party. He feigned acquiescence but actually made preparations for his final betrayal of the Party. [p. 206]
