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Speeches/Documents

Title: cast away illusions, prepare for struggle

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Description: [This article and the four that follow -- "Farewell, Leighton Stuart!", "Why It Is Necessary to Discuss the White Paper", "'Friendship' or Aggression?" and "The Bankruptcy of the Idealist Conception of History" -- were commentaries written by Comrade Mao Tse-tung for the Hsinhua News Agency on the U.S. State Department's White Paper and Dean Acheson's Letter of Transmittal. They exposed the imperialist nature of United States policy towards China, criticized the illusions about U.S. imperialism harboured by some of the bourgeois intellectuals in China and gave a theoretical explanation of the reasons for the rise of the Chinese revolution and for its victory.]

It is no accident that the U.S. State Department's White Paper on China-U.S. Relations and Secretary of State Acheson's Letter of Transmittal to President Truman [1] have been released at this time. The publication of these documents reflects the victory of the Chinese people and the defeat of imperialism, it reflects the decline of the entire world system of imperialism. The imperialist system is riddled with insuperable internal contradictions, and therefore the imperialists are plunged into deep gloom.

Imperialism has prepared the conditions for its own doom. These conditions are the awakening of the great masses of the people in the colonies and semi-colonies and in the imperialist countries themselves. Imperialism has pushed the great masses of the people throughout the world into the historical epoch of the great struggle to abolish imperialism.

Imperialism has prepared the material as well as the moral conditions for the struggle of the great masses of the people.

The material conditions are factories, railways, firearms, artillery, and the like. Most of the powerful equipment of the Chinese People's Liberation Army comes from U.S. imperialism, some comes from Japanese imperialism and some is of our own manufacture.

The British aggression against China in 1840 [2] was followed by the wars of aggression against China by the Anglo-French allied forces, [3] by France, [4] by Japan, [5] and by the allied forces of the eight powers (Britain, France, Japan, tsarist Russia, Germany, the United States, Italy and Austria); [6] by the war between Japan and tsarist Russia on Chinese territory; [7] by Japan's war of aggression against China in China's Northeast, which began in 1931; by Japan's war of aggression against all China, which began in 1937 and lasted eight long years; and, finally, by the latest war of aggression against the Chinese people, which has

gone on for three years, waged to all appearances by Chiang Kai-shek but in reality by the United States. As stated in Acheson's Letter, the United States in this last war has given the Kuomintang government material aid to the value of "more than 50 percent" of the latter's "monetary expenditures" and "furnished the Chinese armies" (meaning the Kuomintang armies) with "military supplies". It is a war in which the United States supplies the money and guns and Chiang Kai-shek supplies the men to fight for the United States and slaughter the Chinese people. All these wars of aggression, together with political, economic and cultural aggression and oppression, have caused the Chinese to hate imperialism, made them stop and think, "What is all this about?" and compelled them to bring their revolutionary spirit into full play and become united through struggle. They fought, failed, fought again, failed again and fought again and accumulated long years of experience, accumulated the experience of hundreds of struggles, great and small, military and political, economic and cultural, with bloodshed and without bloodshed -- and only then won today's basic victory. These are the moral conditions without which the revolution could not be victorious.

To serve the needs of its aggression, imperialism created the comprador system and bureaucrat-capital in China. Imperialist aggression stimulated China's social economy, brought about changes in it and created the opposites of imperialism -- the national industry and national bourgeoisie of China, and especially the Chinese proletariat working in enterprises run directly by the imperialists, those run by bureaucrat-capital and those run by the national bourgeoisie. To serve the needs of its aggression, imperialism ruined the Chinese peasants by exploiting them through the exchange of unequal values and thereby created great masses of poor peasants, numbering hundreds of millions and comprising 70 per cent of China's rural population. To serve the needs of its aggression, imperialism created for China millions of big and small intellectuals of a new type, differing from the old type of *litteratus* or scholar-bureaucrat. But imperialism and its running dogs, the reactionary governments of China, could control only a part of these intellectuals and finally only a handful, such as Hu Shih, Fu Sze-nien and Chien Mu;^[8] all the rest got out of control and turned against them. Students, teachers, professors, technicians, engineers, doctors, scientists, writers, artists and government employees, all are revolting against or parting company with the Kuomintang. The Communist Party is the party of the poor and is described in the Kuomintang's widespread, all-pervasive propaganda as a band of people who commit murder and arson, who rape and loot, who reject history and culture, renounce the motherland, have no filial piety or respect for teachers and are impervious to all reason, who practice community of property and of women and employ the military tactics of the "human sea" -- in short, a horde of fiendish monsters who perpetrate every conceivable crime and are unpardonably wicked. But strangely enough, it is this very horde that has won the support of several hundred million people, including the majority of the intellectuals, and especially the student youth.

Part of the intellectuals still want to wait and see. They think: the Kuomintang is no good and the Communist Party is not necessarily good either, so we had better wait and see. Some

support the Communist Party in words, but in their hearts they are waiting to see. They are the very people who have illusions about the United States. They are unwilling to draw a distinction between the U.S. imperialists, who are in power, and the American people, who are not. They are easily duped by the honeyed words of the U.S. imperialists, as though these imperialists would deal with People's China on the basis of equality and mutual benefit without a stern, long struggle. They still have many reactionary, that is to say, anti-popular, ideas in their heads, but they are not Kuomintang reactionaries. They are the middle-of-the-roaders or the right-wingers in People's China. They are the supporters of what Acheson calls "democratic individualism". The deceptive manoeuvres of the Achesons still have a flimsy social base in China.

Acheson's White Paper admits that the U.S. imperialists are at a complete loss as to what to do about the present situation in China. The Kuomintang is so impotent that no amount of help can save it from inevitable doom; the U.S. imperialists are losing grip over things and feel helpless. Acheson says in his Letter of Transmittal:

The unfortunate but inescapable fact is that the ominous result of the civil war in China was beyond the control of the government of the United States. Nothing that this country did or could have done within the reasonable limits of its capabilities could have changed that result; nothing that was left undone by this country has contributed to it. It was the product of internal Chinese forces, forces which this country tried to influence but could not.

According to logic, Acheson's conclusion should be, as some muddle-headed Chinese intellectuals think or say, to act like "the butcher who lays down his knife and at once becomes a Buddha" or "the robber who has a change of heart and becomes a virtuous man", that is, he should treat People's China on the basis of equality and mutual benefit and stop making trouble. But no, says Acheson, troublemaking will continue, and definitely so. Will there be any result? There will, says he. On what group of people will he rely? On the supporters of "democratic individualism". Says Acheson:

. . . ultimately the profound civilization and the democratic individualism of China will reassert themselves and she will throw off the foreign yoke. I consider that we should encourage all developments in China which now and in the future work toward this end.

How different is the logic of the imperialists from that of the people! Make trouble, fail, make trouble again, fail again . . . till their doom; that is the logic of the imperialists and all reactionaries the world over in dealing with the people's cause, and they will never go against this logic. This is a Marxist law. When we say "imperialism is ferocious", we mean that its nature will never change, that the imperialists will never lay down their butcher knives, that they will never become Buddhas, till their doom.

Fight, fail, fight again, fail again, fight again . . . till their victory; that is the logic of the people, and they too will never go against this logic. This is another Marxist law. The Russian people's revolution followed this law, and so has the Chinese people's revolution.

Classes struggle, some classes triumph, others are eliminated. Such is history, such is the history of civilization for thousands of years. To interpret history from this viewpoint is historical materialism; standing in opposition to this viewpoint is historical idealism.

The method of self-criticism can be applied only within the ranks of the people; it is impossible to persuade the imperialists and the Chinese reactionaries to show kindness of heart and turn from their evil ways. The only course is to organize forces and struggle against them, as in our People's War of Liberation and the agrarian revolution, to expose the imperialists, "irritate"^[9] them, overthrow them, punish them for offences against the law and "allow them only to behave themselves and not to be unruly in word or deed". Only then will there be any hope of dealing with imperialist foreign countries on the basis of equality and mutual benefit. Only then will there be any hope that those landlords, bureaucrat-capitalists, members of the reactionary Kuomintang clique and their accomplices, who have laid down their arms and surrendered, can be given education for transforming the bad into the good and be transformed, as far as possible, into good people. Many Chinese liberals -- the old-type democratic elements, i.e., the supporters of "democratic individualism", whom Truman, Marshall, Acheson, Leighton Stuart and the like count on and have been trying to win over -- often find themselves in a passive position and are often wrong in their judgements on the U.S. rulers, on the Kuomintang, on the Soviet Union and also on the Communist Party of China. The reason is precisely that they do not look at, or disapprove of looking at, problems from the standpoint of historical materialism.

It is the duty of progressives -- the Communists, members of the democratic parties, politically conscious workers, the student youth and progressive intellectuals -- to unite with the intermediate strata, middle-of-the-roaders and backward elements of various strata, with all those in People's China who are still wavering and hesitating (these people will waver for a long time to come and, even after they have once become steady, will waver again as soon as they meet difficulties), give them sincere help, criticize their wavering character, educate them, win them over to the side of the masses, prevent the imperialists from pulling them over and tell them to cast away illusions and prepare for struggle. Let no one think that there is no more work to do now that victory is won. We still have to work, to do a great deal of patient work, before we can truly win these people over. When they are won over, imperialism will be entirely isolated, and Acheson will no longer be able to play any of his tricks.

The slogan, "Prepare for struggle", is addressed to those who still cherish certain illusions about the relations between China and the imperialist countries, especially between China and the United States. With regard to this question, they are still passive, their minds are still

not made up, they are still not determined to wage a long struggle against U.S. (and British) imperialism because they still have illusions about the United States. There is still a very wide, or fairly wide, gap between these people and ourselves on this question.

The publication of the U.S. White Paper and Acheson's Letter of Transmittal is worthy of celebration, because it is a bucket of cold water and a loss of face for those who have ideas of the old type of democracy or democratic individualism, who do not approve of, or do not quite approve of, or are dissatisfied with, or are somewhat dissatisfied with, or even resent, people's democracy, or democratic collectivism, or democratic centralism, or collective heroism, or patriotism based on internationalism -- but who still have patriotic feelings and are not Kuomintang reactionaries. It is a bucket of cold water particularly for those who believe that everything American is good and hope that China will model herself on the United States.

Acheson openly declares that the Chinese democratic individualists will be "encouraged" to throw off the so-called "foreign yoke". That is to say, he calls for the overthrow of Marxism-Leninism and the people's democratic dictatorship led by the Communist Party of China. For this "ism" and this system, it is alleged, are "foreign", with no roots in China, imposed on the Chinese by the German, Karl Marx (who died sixty-six years ago), and the Russians, Lenin (who died twenty-five years ago) and Stalin (who is still alive); this "ism" and this system, moreover, are downright bad, because they advocate the class struggle, the overthrow of imperialism, etc.; hence they must be got rid of. In this connection, it is alleged, "the democratic individualism of China will reassert itself" with the "encouragement" of President Truman, the backstage Commander-in-Chief Marshall, Secretary of State Acheson (the charming foreign mandarin responsible for the publication of the White Paper) and Ambassador Leighton Stuart who has scampered off. Acheson and his like think they are giving "encouragement", but those Chinese democratic individualists who still have patriotic feelings, even though they believe in the United States, may quite possibly feel this is a bucket of cold water thrown on them and a loss of face; for instead of dealing with the authorities of the Chinese people's democratic dictatorship in the proper way, Acheson and his like are doing this filthy work and, what is more, they have openly published it. What a loss of face! What a loss of face! To those who are patriotic, Acheson's statement is no "encouragement" but an insult.

China is in the midst of a great revolution. All China is seething with enthusiasm. The conditions are favourable for winning over and uniting with all those who do not have a bitter and deep-seated hatred for the cause of the people's revolution, even though they have mistaken ideas. Progressives should use the White Paper to persuade all these persons.

NOTES

1. The U.S. White Paper, *United States Relations with China*, was published by the U.S. State Department on August 5, 1949. Acheson's Letter of Transmittal to Truman was dated

July 30, 1949. The main body of the White Paper, divided into eight chapters, deals with Sino-U.S. relations in the period from 1844, when the United States forced China to sign the "Treaty of Wanghia", to 1949, when victory was basically won throughout the country in the Chinese people's revolution. The White Paper goes into particular detail about how, in the five years from the last part of the War of Resistance Against Japan to 1949, the United States pursued a policy of support for Chiang Kai-shek and of anti-communism, opposed the Chinese people by every possible means and finally met with defeat. The White Paper and Acheson's Letter of Transmittal are full of distortions, omissions and fabrications, and also of venomous slanders and deep hatred against the Chinese people. In the quarrel within the U.S. reactionary camp over its policy towards China, imperialists like Truman and Acheson were compelled to reveal publicly through the White Paper some of the truth about their counter-revolutionary activities in an attempt to convince their opponents. Thus, in its objective effect, the White Paper became a confession by U.S. imperialism of its crimes of aggression against China.

2. See "On the People's Democratic Dictatorship", Note 3, p. 42, of this volume.

3. From 1856 to 1860 Britain and France jointly carried on a war of aggression against China, with the United States and tsarist Russia supporting them from the side-lines. The government of the Ching Dynasty was then devoting all its energy to suppressing the peasant revolution of the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom and adopted a policy of passive resistance towards the foreign aggressors. The Anglo-French allied forces occupied such major cities as Canton, Tientsin and Peking, plundered and burned down Yuan Ming Yuan Palace in Peking and forced the Ching government to conclude the "Treaty of Tientsin" and the "Treaty of Peking". The main provisions of these treaties included the opening as treaty ports of Tientsin, Newchwang, Tengchow, Taiwan, Tanshui, Chaochow, Chiungchow, Nanking, Chinkiang, Kiukiang and Hankow and the granting to foreigners of the special privileges of travel and missionary activities in China's interior and of inland navigation. From then on foreign forces of aggression extended over all China's coastal provinces and penetrated deep into the hinterland.

4. In 1884-85 the French aggressors invaded Vietnam and the Chinese provinces of Kwangsi, Fukien, Taiwan and Chekiang. Chinese troops resisted vigorously and won a series of victories. Notwithstanding the victories in the war, the corrupt Ching government signed the humiliating "Treaty of Tientsin", which recognized the occupation of Vietnam by the French and permitted their forces of aggression to penetrate southern China.

5. The Sino-Japanese War of 1894. The war broke out as a result of Japan's aggression against Korea and her provocations to the Chinese land and naval forces. In this war the Chinese forces put up a heroic fight, but China suffered defeat owing to the corruption of the Ching government and its lack of preparation for resistance. As a result, the Ching government concluded the shameful "Treaty of Shimonoseki" with Japan, under which it ceded Taiwan and the Penghu Islands, paid war reparations of 200 million taels of silver, permitted the Japanese to set up factories in China, opened Shasi, Chungking, Soochow and Hangchow as treaty ports and recognized Japan's domination over Korea.

6. In 1900 eight imperialist powers, Britain, France, Japan, tsarist Russia, Germany, the United States, Italy and Austria, sent a joint force to attack China in an attempt to suppress the Yi Ho Tuan Uprising of the Chinese people against aggression. The Chinese people

resisted heroically. The allied forces of the eight powers captured Taku and occupied Tientsin and Peking. In 1901 the Ching government concluded a treaty with the eight imperialist countries; its main provisions were that China had to pay those countries the enormous sum of 450 million taels of silver as war reparations and grant them the special privilege of stationing troops in Peking and in the area from Peking to Tientsin to Shanhaikuan.

7. This was the imperialist war fought between Japan and tsarist Russia in 1904-05 to grab China's Northeast and Korea. As the war was fought mainly in the area of Fengtien (now Shenyang) and Liaoyang and around the port of Lushun in China's Northeast, it caused enormous losses to the Chinese people. As a result of the war tsarist Russia was defeated and supplanted by Japanese imperialism in the dominant role in China's Northeast. Under the peace treaty (the Treaty of Portsmouth) concluded at the end of this war tsarist Russia also recognized Japan's exclusive control over Korea.

8. Hu Shih, who was formerly a university professor, university president and ambassador of the Kuomintang government to the United States, is a well-known apologist for U.S. imperialism among Chinese bourgeois intellectuals. Fu Sze-nien and Chien Mu, also university professors, were scholars serving the reactionary Kuomintang government.

9. See "On the People's Democratic Dictatorship", pp. 415-16 of this volume.