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Speeches/Documents

Title: Address at the Establishment of the Institute of Military Engineering and the Inauguration of Its First Term

Author: Mao Zedong

Date: August 26, 1953

Source: The writings of Mao Zedong pg 378

Description: Information on the sources of this document, all of which are Red Guard publications, is scanty and incomplete. The date of August 26, 1953, is given by the Wansui (n. d.) source, which we have adopted as our original source. The other sources cited above give the date of June 26, 1953, instead.

President Chen, professors, teaching assistants, students and staff of the Institute of Military Engineering, Comrades:

At this moment of the beginning of a new term for you, I extend to you my warmest and most enthusiastic congratulations.

I take this opportunity also to express our heartfelt thanks to the government of the Soviet Union and the Soviet experts who have so enthusiastically aided us in planning and creating this institute.

The establishment of the Institute of Military Engineering of the Chinese People's Liberation Army has an extremely great significance for our country's national defence enterprise; in order to build a modernized national defence [system], our army, air force, and navy must all possess fully mechanized equipment and armaments, and none of this can be achieved without complex specialized technology. What we direly need today is a large number of people who are capable of managing and steering the direction of technological [advancement] and to see to it that our technology may improve and make progress uninterruptedly. The purpose for the creation of the Institute of Military Engineering is precisely to resolve this urgent and yet glorious task.

Learning from the Soviet Union's experts has been a fine tradition that we have followed throughout the history of the construction of our armed forces. No matter at what time or in whichever department of our work, we should [continue to] do so. This is something that has all the greater significance for this Institute of yours. You must learn from the Soviet Union's advanced scientific and technological knowledge, learn from the Soviet Union's rich experience in the construction of military science, and emulate the learning mentality and working attitude of our comrades, the Soviet Union's experts, and their highly developed spirit of patriotism and internationalism. In learning one must be modest and earnest; one must not become self-satisfied and arrogant as soon as one has learned a little bit.

There is something that you in this Institute, and everybody in the armed forces, must fully understand and never, not even for a single moment, forget, and that is: Maintain and develop the glorious tradition of the Chinese People's Liberation Army, and particularly the heroic spirit of dedicating oneself wholeheartedly to serve the people and of self-sacrifice!

I hope that you will unite, and be of one mind, building and running this Institute well, respecting the experts, dedicating yourselves to diligent study, and strive for the

accomplishment of the glorious task that the People's Military Commission has placed on your shoulders.