

1953

Speeches/Documents

**Title: Instruction on Leadership Work of Health Departments of Military Commissions**

**Author: Mao Zedong**

**Date: April 3, 1953**

**Source:** the writing of Mao Zedong pp 339-340 & Kim Taylor Chinese Medicine in Early Communist China, 1945-63: A Medicine of Revolution pp 41-42

**Description:**

We have no Chinese text of this instruction; the *SCMM* translation is presented here as it originally appeared. The amendments in brackets and the annotation are our own.

The disclosure by Comrade Pai X X [Bai X X] <sup>1</sup> made me think of whether there is any major difference between the leadership work of the government health departments and that of the army's health departments. I suspect that the leadership work of the government health departments is in the same mess as that of the army's health departments. We can see neither the political leadership nor any serious professional or technical leadership. But because of the fact that there is no one else but Pai X X [Bai X X] who makes such a well-grounded disclosure, we still do not know much about this....

Then the fact exists that there is no leadership, no politics, and no serious administration of the business departments. The people who run these departments are bureaucrats who just eat without working. Such a condition exists not only in the health departments of military committees but also in other departments. I ask you, in the present struggle against bureaucratism, to unmask these people and set up new organs which really do the work to replace the old ones.

#### Note

1 Bai Xueguang 白学光(1912- ), Ministerie van Gezondheid van de Militaire Commissie, begin '53 doorheen het land trok om de gezondheidstoestand in de verschillende provincies te inspecteren. Zijn rapport dat hij op 27 maart 1953 aan het Centraal Comité van de CCP overhandigde, bevatte scherpe kritieken op de bureaucratische manier van handelen van het Ministerie van Gezondheid. "The hygiene work of the entire army and the vocational work of the subordinate work units are lacking in leadership, to the point where there is simply no leadership... Leadership is not centralized, there exists a number of unresolved treatment issues as well as tremendous wastage of resources.

There's confusion among the many sub-departments, and many cadres are discontent within the ranks of the Ministry of Health."

The result was a three-month investigation of the nationwide health care situation. This work was entrusted to Xi Zhongxun (1903-2002), Qian Junrui (1908-85) and Fan Changjiang (1909-70). Xi Zhongxun was the top official in north-west China at that time. He was a member of the Central People's Government Council, of the People's Revolutionary Military Council and of the Executive Board of the Sino-Soviet Friendship Association. Qian Junrui was secretary-general to the Central Committee of Cultural and Educational Affairs, based in Shanghai. Fan Changjiang was at this time working under Qian Junrui and was by profession a journalist.

Reportedly, these three then submitted a report to the Central Committee entitled 'On the Topic of a Survey into Health Work over the past Four Years and a Report on the Future Guiding Principles and Specific Tasks'. Almost immediately after this report was submitted

in October 1953, Mao criticized for the second time that year the Ministry of Health. This time it was a 'Criticism of the Ministry of Public Health', addressed to a meeting of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee.