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Speeches/Documents

Title: Instruction on the Army's Participation in Production and Construction Work in 1950

Author: Mao Zedong

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Source: *RMRB* (Dec 6, 1949), 1. Other Chinese Texts: *XHYB*, I:3 (Jan. 15, 1950), 669; *Wansui* (1969), pp. 1-4. Available English Translations: *JPRS, Miscellany*, I, pp. 2-5; *NCNA, Weekly Bulletin*, 132 (Dec 13, 1949), 4 (excerpt). **Writing of Mao Zedong, 1949-1976: September 1949-December 1955**
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Description: According to the *RMRB* and "*XHYB*" sources, this document was released in the name of the People's Revolutionary Military Council.

The People's War of Liberation has basically won a nationwide victory. With the exception of [units] on a few fronts which have to devote themselves to pursuing and annihilating the remnant enemy forces so as to achieve a complete triumph, a large number of the troops of the People's Liberation Army have already engaged in, or are soon to begin to engage in, training and consolidation. The Common Program of the People's Political Consultative Conference provides that "the armed forces of the People's Republic of China shall, during peacetime, systematically take part in agricultural and industrial production in order to assist in the work of national construction, provided such work does not interfere with their military duties." ¹ Here, a glorious and formidable task is given to our people's armed forces in addition to the great tasks of securing our national defense, reinforcing public order, and strengthening [their own] training and consolidation. Therefore, the People's Revolutionary Military Council is calling on the entire army, with the exception of those [units] which are still engaged in fighting and logistics service, to shoulder part of the task of production so that our People's Liberation Army will not only be an army for national defense but also an army of production, in order to cooperate with all the people in the country in overcoming the difficulties left behind by long years of war and in accelerating the economic construction of [our] New Democracy.

This production task must and can be realized.

The reason that this production task must be realized is that the long war launched against the Chinese people by reactionaries both inside and outside of our country has caused the people serious hardships and has severely damaged the economy. Today, we want to carry the revolutionary war through to the end and heal the wounds left by the long periods of war; we must undertake the work of construction in all areas of [our] economy, our culture, and [our] national defense. The state's revenue is inadequate, but its expenditure is huge. This is the one major difficulty we are facing today. The way to overcome this kind of difficulty is first to have the entire people, under the leadership of the Central People's Government, restore and develop production step by step; and as for the People's Liberation Army, it must assume the responsibility for a set [share] of the task of production. Only by doing this can it join the people of the entire country in overcoming this difficulty.

The reason that this production task can be realized is that the overwhelming majority of [the personnel in] the People's Liberation Army come from among the laboring people. They have a high degree of political consciousness and all kinds of production skills. Furthermore, during the most difficult years and months of the War of Resistance against Japan, they shouldered the tasks of production and a tradition of labor. The vast numbers of cadres and veteran fighters of the People's Liberation Army all understand that after the troops have participated in production, not only will difficulties be overcome, government expenditures decreased, and army life improved, but also, the political quality of the army will be raised through the tempering of labor, and the relations between officers and soldiers and between the army and the people will be improved. [Another] reason that this production task can be realized is that in areas where fighting has ended, in addition to assuming such tasks as securing national defense, cleaning out bandits, consolidating public order, and strengthening training, the People's Liberation Army now has spare time to take part in production and construction work. All these things are the factors which make it possible for the People's Liberation Army to carry out the task of production. The participation of the People's Liberation Army in production is not a temporary measure; it should proceed from the perspective of long-range construction. The emphasis

is on increasing the nation's wealth through labor. ² Beginning in the spring of 1950, the heads of all military regions must therefore direct their subordinates to put into effect [a program of] participating in production and construction work in order to improve their own livelihood and to save a portion of the state's expenditure. This production and construction work ought to become a kind of movement in order to facilitate its wider adoption. A relatively long-term plan and concrete measures [for implementation] should be formulated for this type of production work. With the approval of the people's government, the categories of [such] production should stay within the confines of agriculture, animal husbandry, fishery, water conservation projects, handicraft industries, and transportation projects which [the army] is capable of undertaking. Commercial undertakings are forbidden. The leading organs of the army [unit] should carry out investigations and studies [for production] based on the conditions of the places where they are stationed and complete the preparation this winter. Based on experience, the army's production movement must strictly prohibit the opening up of shops and engaging in commercial activities. If among the cadres there should be ideas of seeking quick profits by attempting to smuggle, hoard, and speculate, or if such activities are discovered, they must be corrected and stopped quickly, for they not only violate the correct production guidelines and disrupt economic order, but will invariably graft [cause] and corruption to occur and will destroy our own comrades. These activities are not tolerated by law. Moreover, in undertaking agricultural production, we must be careful not to cause floods as a result of reclaiming wasteland or incur the people's dissatisfaction by competing for land. So that the army may carry out its production tasks correctly and develop its production movement, it is hereby stipulated that:

At levels above division, army, and military subregion, representative committees should be formed of representatives from the general headquarters, political departments, and logistic service departments. Their tasks are to take charge of the direction of production, to examine and approve production plans, to supervise the implementation of production plans, and to investigate illegal activities.

Producers' cooperatives are to be established in the army. Organs of leadership for these cooperatives should also be established at every level which, under the supervision and guidance of the army production committees, will control the disposition of all production funds, production activities, and fruits of production. The system of the cooperatives and the army's command system are to be parallel. They will maintain close relations with each other, but they are not to be confused with each other.

Implement [the principle of] taking both public and private [interests] into consideration and distributing on a fair and reasonable [basis] the net income from production. Forty per cent should go to the individual producers; the rest should go to the production units and the state in order to establish the revolutionary way of running the affairs of one's own household as well as those of the public. ³ On the one hand, this will make the army partially self-sufficient, while on the other, it will allow the individual producer to have some income. This individual income may be kept by the individual for private use, or be sent home to the family for its use, or be deposited in the cooperative in reserve [for future use]; [the choice should be] at the discretion of the individual.

In areas where there is a shortage of land, in addition to participating, whenever possible, in all kinds of handicraft industries, water conservation, transportation, and construction projects, heads of army units may talk things over with the local people's governments and, on the condition that the peasants' own willingness is not violated, contribute the army's labor funds, fertilizer, and farm tools to cultivating the land jointly with the peasants in order to increase production and share the fruits equitably. However, it is necessary to make sure that this is not carried out through coercion, and that [the army] does not compete with the people for benefits

The production plans of the units in all military regions must be integrated with the production plans of the people's governments of all the provinces and of all the greater administrative areas. [There should be] coordination in the use of production funds. All the production funds of the army units should be treated as investment, so interest must be computed and dates set for repayment. All the army's production enterprises should pay taxes according to the rules and observe all laws and regulations of the people's governments, and no violations will be permitted

It is hoped that all heads of military regions will pay strict attention to the above items. They must make sure that our People's Liberation Army's production and construction work in 1950 attains

remarkable results. They must, moreover, conduct check-ups all the time and rectify errors and deficiencies that may arise. On their part, the people's governments in all areas have the responsibility of providing guidance and assistance in the production work of the army units in their areas.

Notes

1. Mao is here referring to Article 24 of the Common Program. For the Common Program, see text Sept. 21, 1949, note 3.
2. The Wansui version only has "the nation's wealth."
3. This refers to Article 26 of the Common Program, which stipulates that the "fundamental policy for the development of economic construction of the PRC is to implement the specific policies of giving due consideration to both public and private interests, benefiting both labor and capital, practicing mutual aid between cities and villages, and allowing the interflow of commodities between home and abroad, with the purpose of developing production and promoting economic prosperity."