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Speeches/Documents

Title: Speech to Cadres of the Chinese People's Volunteers

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Description:

I. The U.S. imperialists are employing seven divisions and the lackey troops of Syngman Rhee in unbridled aggression against the Korean revolutionary government and people. Having crossed the 38th parallel, the enemy is continuing to advance northward with all his might. The current war situation in Korea is very serious. What attitude should we adopt when a fraternal party and the laboring people of a neighboring nation are suffering aggression and in a very difficult situation?

After repeated discussions and careful consideration, the central leadership holds that we "cannot ignore it." That is to say, we will actively support the North Korean people to oppose the aggressors and help them strive for independence, freedom, and liberation. I think it extremely necessary and very correct for the central leadership to have made such a decision. However, there were differences of opinion within the Party about this problem. All comrades here are Party members. If you have different opinions, you may put them forward for discussion. Currently there are two opinions.

One opinion is against or wants to postpone the dispatch of troops to Korea for the following reasons: (1) we have not healed the wounds of war; (2) we have not completed the work of land reform; (3) we have not rooted out all domestic bandits and special agents; (4) the preparation of military equipment and training has not been completed; and (5) some soldiers and civilians are war weary. In brief, [people with these opinions] do not favor sending troops for the time being because of inadequate preparations.

The other opinion advocates dispatching troops immediately, based on the following considerations. Although we have not made adequate preparations, the enemy is not fully prepared either; the U.S. imperialists especially have not made adequate preparations. As the Central Military Commission has pointed out in a study, the US. army has 21 divisions in total. Seventeen [of these] divisions have combat capability. There are all together 1,460,000 people in the [U.S.] army, navy, and air force; [that is.] including the recently mobilized, there are one and a half million in all. By next June, an additional half million men will be conscripted. The total will be some two million. Thus, there will be 834,000 men in the army, 579,000 in the navy, 150,000 in the marine corps, and 584,000 in the air force. The British and French armed forces are even shorter of men. France has suffered many defeats in Vietnam. The Vietnamese recently liberated [the provincial capital] Cao Bang [in northern Vietnam] and other strongpoints and linked up the Sino-Vietnamese border. The French imperialists then became very nervous. Britain has even more difficulties. Why does the imperialist bloc want to go into battle if it is not fully prepared? By waging war, the imperialists are attempting to consolidate their internal control, extend their influence, and win over some wavering countries. These are the true reasons for their adoption of a policy of war. The US imperialists are making an empty show of strength in order to frighten those people who suffer from the fear- of-the-United-States illness. The relatively heavy blows the Korean People's Army inflicted [on the US aggressors] in the initial stages [of the war] have greatly undermined their prestige. Therefore, they pieced together their forces in the Pacific to launch a desperate offensive. Having landed at Inchon and occupied Seoul, they are once again throwing their weight around. If we do not strike timely blows against them, a considerable number of wavering countries and strata will move toward US. imperialism. In reality, the active offensive of US imperialism merely mirrors its worry about exposing its weak points. Why has the belated economic crisis of the US imperialists not broken out? They have temporarily relieved their economic crisis by giving [their economy] an injection of heart medicine. But a serious crisis still exists. One means adopted by the

imperialists to avert economic crises is to raise the salaries of the masses slightly and put commodity prices under control. The other means to find a way out is to wage war. War is advantageous to a handful of big U.S. capitalists and disadvantageous to other classes and strata. If we do not dispatch troops to actively support the Korean revolutionary government and people, the reactionaries at home and abroad will be swollen with arrogance and the pro-American people will be more active. We will be put under direct threat if US imperialism should occupy all of Korea. Our country will be thrown into passivity, and our national defense and frontier defense will be placed in a disadvantageous position should U.S. imperialism transfer its forces to Vietnam and Burma and do mischief there. The impact on foreign affairs will also be bad because some countries will move closer to U.S. imperialism. Would it be better for us to relax for a while and fight a war [against US imperialism] three to five years from now? That surely would be better. However, we would still have to fight such a war three to five years from now. Such a war would destroy our small industry, whose construction will have taken us three to five years. At that time, it would be more difficult for us to check such an invasion because U.S. imperialism will have armed Japan, and Japan will be able to dispatch a relatively large number of troops. By that time, U. imperialism will probably also have armed West Germany. We should not neglect the huge output of iron and steel of West Germany. By that time, also, the revolution in other West European countries will probably have been suppressed, and the revolutionary forces weakened. After careful calculation, it is perhaps more advantageous for us to fight such a war now. Accordingly, we are not afraid of fighting a war right now. But we hope that it will not be a big war and do not want to declare war against the United States. We shall merely support the Korean revolutionary war in the name of People's Volunteers. If we want to strive for peace, we will have to experience arduous and serious struggles. The worldwide revolutionary forces have gained the upper hand since the victory of our country's revolution. How pathetic for the world revolution [it would be] if we stood by with folded arms and did not actively help a neighboring nation struggle against aggression. On the other hand, it is impossible for us to strengthen our national defense and build [our] heavy industry [to the necessary extent] within a period of three to five years. We should not place excessive hopes [in achieving such a goal] within five years. Within such a short period as three to five years, it would be impossible for us to improve greatly the equipment of our army and air force, let alone the equipment of our navy. Therefore, it is better for us to fight an early war rather than a later one.

2. According to the available information, our enemies in Korea consist of seven US divisions, each made up of 12,000 men whose morale is not high; seven puppet divisions that have some combat capability; one British brigade; and a few troops from other vassal countries. The US troops are mainly deployed at Pusan, Taegu, and Seoul; the puppet troops are mainly deployed on the eastern coast. Three divisions have already occupied Wonsan. On October 1, both US troops and the puppet troops crossed the 38th parallel. The enemy troops on the west are attacking Kumchon, about 100 li [50 km] from Pyongyang. If they continue launching offensives, the enemy forces will be dispersed. In addition, they will need to hold back some forces to deal with guerrilla forces. The enemy can release [only] three US divisions and three puppet divisions for the northward advance. We can resist such forces.

Although the US air force has not used many [planes] in Korea, it still dominates the air. But the air force cannot decide the outcome of the war. The air force has its own difficulties. In addition, the air force is not as fearsome as people think. The enemy's armored forces and artillery temporarily also hold a dominant position. In this regard, the enemy is stronger than we are. But so long as we can construct good defense works and camouflage and conceal the movement [of our forces], we will be able to check the enemy's offensives and win victories. From the standpoint of tactical operations, we are better than the enemy. Our resolute and brave tactical operations consist in having the courage to fight close combat using dynamite, fighting the enemy with bayonets, and throwing hand grenades. The enemy is afraid of such operations. Our troops are of much higher political quality than the enemy's. The enemy's difficulties are increasing, and his superiority will not last long. The US imperialists crossed vast oceans to fight a war. They have difficulties in the supply and transport [of weapons and equipment]. It takes them 38 days to complete the roundtrip [to and from the United States]. They fight a war for imperialism. [Their] people oppose war, and [their] soldiers are war weary;

we receive the sympathy and assistance of the people of the world because we are fighting a just war for the liberation of oppressed people. These are the basic factors that will decide the outcome of the war. [As for] our strength, the tentative operational plan calls for deploying four corps and three artillery divisions, totaling 250,000 men, on the first line; 150,000 men on the second line; and 200,000 men on the third line. The forces will total 600,000 in all. We will have eight air regiments by next month and 16 air regiments by the month after that. We will be able to equip 30 [infantry] divisions within six months. We do not have a problem in the supply of artillery pieces and shells. Because of the enemy's situation and the topographical conditions of Korea, the mobile warfare of marching and retreating in big strides that we adopted in the civil war is not necessarily suited to the battlefield in Korea. Owing to the narrowness of Korea and some of the enemy's advantages, we must combine mobile warfare with positional warfare. We will resist the enemy and hold him in check when he launches an offensive; we will launch counterattacks, penetrate the enemy's rear area, and resolutely wipe out the enemy as soon as we discover his weak points. It is surely our task to defend territory, but it is more important for us to annihilate the enemy's effective strength. We will resolutely and thoroughly wipe out even [as little as] one battalion or one regiment whenever we have the opportunity to do so. Our tactical operations are flexible. We will not defend a certain position to the last; however, we will hold fast to our positions if need be. We will not devote ourselves to pure defense. We will consolidate our positions and defend territory only after we have seized the opportunity and annihilated a large number of the enemy. It will be best if we can wipe out the enemy as well as defend land. All of us should make specific adjustments to the situation as it develops on the battlefield. As for positional warfare, we should adopt [the tactics of] defense in depth. Each squad should be divided into three or four teams. So as to ensure mutual support through cross-fire, these teams should be deployed in plum blossom-shaped pillboxes 20-30 meters apart. By constructing such defense works, we can reduce casualties from the enemy's bombing and shelling. We should deliberately build some camouflaged works to attract the enemy's fire and consume his shells. To deal with the enemy's tanks, our soldiers should conceal themselves in covered positions. When the tanks approach, our soldiers can launch surprise attacks and destroy them with explosives in close combat. Our artillery should also conceal itself by constructing covered positions and not expose itself. It takes time and labor to construct such pillboxes as the Nationalists used to build. It is easy for those pillboxes to be discovered and destroyed. They are inappropriate for us.

3. We are Communist Party members and internationalists. It is our duty to dispatch troops in support of the Korean people and a fraternal Party. The occupation of Korea by imperialism is a direct threat to our country's security. To aid Korea is to consolidate our victory, consolidate our national defense, and defend the industry in Northeast China. Therefore, we must under no circumstances be arrogant or take on the air of big-nation support troops. Do [take care to] respect the Korean Party, the People's Government, the People's Army, the [Korean] mass organizations, and the [Korean] broad masses. The Korean Party is still young. We should study its merits in all modesty, such as being very active and brave and not flinching from the difficulty of struggling resolutely against the enemy. It is inappropriate for us to criticize its shortcomings carelessly and still more so, to deliberately look for its shortcomings. As to seeking shortcomings, we have shortcomings ourselves. There is no need for us to have come [such] a long way for that purpose. I think that only by paying attention to others' merits and our own shortcomings can we make continuous progress. We can modestly pass on our merits to them and sincerely help them correct their shortcomings. Only when we become more modest and sincere can we unite with them and learn their merits. After we enter Korea, we should carry forward the glorious tradition of our Party. Every cadre should leave a good impression on the [Koreans] by his own exemplary behavior. I hope that the comrades will educate all officers and men to keep this in mind. The question of discipline is more important when we fight a war in a foreign country. The Three Main Rules of Discipline and the Eight Points for the Attention of the Chinese People's Liberation Army have drawn the praise and support of the people of the whole country." After we enter Korea, we must observe discipline in all earnest and not violate the interests of the masses. We must pay attention to the Korean people's customs and social conventions. Only by building good relations between the masses and ourselves and by obtaining help from the masses can we win victory in the war. Generally

speaking, discipline might easily be violated under the following three conditions: (1) if we have just won a victory; (2) if we have just suffered defeat; or (3) if we have met difficulties and hardships. We should pay special attention [to maintaining discipline] under those three conditions. We must not act proud after winning victories, lose heart after suffering setbacks, and complain when meeting difficulties. Under all circumstances, we must be modest and prudent, unite as one, overcome difficulties, and adopt a forward-looking attitude. Thus, we can vanquish all enemies. Our mission is an arduous but glorious one. We should make long-term plans, do careful research on the concrete situation, and devise more new methods. So long as we bring into full play the forces of the masses, we will successfully accomplish our mission.

Remark

Mao Zedong set down the Three Rules of Discipline in 1928. He later expanded the list of Points for Attention that he set down at about the same time' the revised list was issued on Oct. 10, 1947. The Three Main Rules: (1) obey orders in all your actions; (2) do not take a single needle or piece of thread from the masses; (3) turn in everything capture? The Eight Points: (1) speak politely; (2) pay fairly for what you buy; (3) return everything you borrow; (4) pay for anything you damage; (5) do not hit or swear at people; (6) do not damage crops; (7) do not take liberties with women; and (8) do not ill-treat captives. (Mao [31], pp. 341-42.)-