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Description:

THE PRESENT SITUATION AND OUR TASKS

[This report was made by Comrade Mao Tse-tung to a meeting of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China held on December 25-28 1947, at Yangchiakou, Michih County, northern Shensi. In addition to those members and alternate members of the Central Committee able to attend, responsible comrades of the Shensi-Kansu-Ningsia Border Region and the Shansi-Suiyuan Border Region were present. The meeting discussed and adopted this report and also another document written by Comrade Mao Tse-tung, "Some Points in Appraisal of the Present International Situation" (see pp. 87-88 of this volume). Concerning Comrade Mao Tse-tung's report, the decision adopted at the meeting stated, "This report is a programmatic document in the political, military and economic fields for the entire period of the overthrow of the reactionary Chiang Kai-shek ruling clique and of the founding of a new-democratic China. The whole Party and the whole army should carry on intensive education around, and strictly apply in practice, this document and, in connection with it, the documents published on October 10, 1947 [namely, 'Manifesto of the Chinese People's Liberation Army', 'Slogans of the Chinese People's Liberation Army', 'Instruction on the Reissue of the Three Main Rules of Discipline and the Eight Points for Attention', 'Outline Land Law of China' and 'Resolution of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China on the Promulgation of the Outline Land Law of China']. In carrying out policies in different places any departure from the principles laid down in the report should be rectified at once." Other important decisions taken at the meeting were:

(1) That every effort should be made to carry the Chinese people's revolutionary war forward uninterruptedly to complete victory, and that the enemy should not be allowed to use stalling tactics (peace negotiations) to gain time for rest and reorganization for a fresh attack on the people.

(2) That the time was not yet ripe for the formation of a revolutionary central government, which was to be considered only when our army had won greater victories, and that the promulgation of a constitution was even more a question for the future.

The meeting also discussed in detail current tendencies in the Party and certain specific policies in the land reform and the mass movements. The results of these discussions were subsequently set forth by Comrade Mao Tse-tung in the article "On Some Important Problems of the Party's Present Policy" (see pp. 181-89 of this volume). All the articles in this book starting with this report and ending with "A Circular on the Situation", dated March 20, 1948 (pp. 219-26), were written at Yangchiakou, Michih County, northern Shensi.]

The Chinese people's revolutionary war has now reached a turning point. That is, the Chinese People's Liberation Army has beaten back the offensive of several million reactionary troops of Chiang Kai-shek, the running dog of the United States of America, and gone over to the offensive. Already in the first year of the present war, from July 1946 to June 1947, the People's Liberation Army beat back Chiang Kai-shek's offensive on several fronts and forced him onto the defensive. And beginning with the first quarter of the second year of the war, July-September 1947, the People's Liberation Army went over to the offensive on a national scale and wrecked Chiang Kai-shek's counter-revolutionary plan of continuing to carry the war into the Liberated Areas in order to destroy them completely. Now the war is no longer being fought chiefly in the Liberated Areas but in the Kuomintang areas; the main forces of the People's Liberation Army have carried the fight into the Kuomintang areas.[1] In this land of China, the People's Liberation Army has turned back the wheel of counterrevolution -- of U.S. imperialism and its lackey, the Chiang Kai-shek bandit gang -- and sent it down the road to destruction and has pushed the wheel of revolution forward along the road to victory. This is a turning point in history. It is the turning point from growth to extinction for Chiang Kai-shek's twenty-year counter-revolutionary rule. It is the turning point from growth to extinction for imperialist rule in China, now over a hundred years old. This is a momentous event. It is momentous because it is occurring in a country with a population of 475 million and, having occurred, it will certainly culminate in victory throughout the country. Furthermore, it is momentous because it is occurring in the East, where over 1,000 million people -- half of mankind -- suffer under imperialist oppression. The turn of the Chinese People's War of Liberation from the defensive to the offensive cannot but gladden and inspire these oppressed nations. It is also of assistance to the oppressed people now struggling in many countries in Europe and the Americas.

II

From the day Chiang Kai-shek started his counter-revolutionary war we said that we not only must defeat him but can defeat him. We must defeat him because the war he started is a counter-revolutionary war directed by U.S. imperialism against the independence of the Chinese nation and the liberation of the Chinese people. After the conclusion of World War II and the overthrow of Japanese imperialism, the task of the Chinese people was to complete the new-democratic transformation politically, economically and culturally, to achieve national unification and independence and to change China from an agricultural into an industrial country. But at that time, after the victorious conclusion of the anti-fascist Second World War, U.S. imperialism and its lackeys in various countries stepped into the shoes of German and Japanese imperialism and their lackeys and formed a reactionary camp against the Soviet Union, against the People's Democracies in Europe, against the workers' movements in the capitalist countries, against the national movements in the colonies and semi-colonies and against the liberation of the Chinese people. At such a time the Chinese reactionaries headed by Chiang Kai-shek acted as the running dog for U.S. imperialism, just as Wang Ching-wei had done for Japanese imperialism, sold out China to the United States and unleashed a war against the Chinese people to check the advance of their liberation. At such a time, if we had shown weakness or given ground and had not dared to rise resolutely to oppose counterrevolutionary war with revolutionary war, China would have become a world of darkness and the future of our nation would have been forfeited. The Communist Party of China has led the Chinese People's Liberation Army in firmly waging a patriotic, just and revolutionary war against Chiang Kai-shek's offensive. The Communist Party of China, having made a clear-headed appraisal of the international and domestic situation on the basis of the science of Marxism-Leninism, recognized

that all attacks by the reactionaries at home and abroad not only had to be defeated but could be defeated. When dark clouds appeared in the sky, we pointed out that this was only temporary, that the darkness would soon pass and the sun break through. When the Chiang Kai-shek bandit gang launched the country-wide counter-revolutionary war in July 1946, they thought it would take them only three to six months to defeat the People's Liberation Army. They reckoned that they had a regular army of two million, more than a million irregulars and another million or more men in the military establishments and armed units in the rear, making a total military strength of more than four million; that they had taken time to complete their preparations for the offensive; that they had regained control of the big cities; that they had a population of more than 300 million; that they had taken over all the equipment of a million Japanese invading troops; and that they had received huge military and financial aid from the U.S. government. They also reckoned that the People's Liberation Army was tired after fighting for eight years in the War of Resistance Against Japan and was far inferior to the Kuomintang army in numbers and equipment; that the population of the Liberated Areas was only a little more than 100 million; and that in most of these areas the reactionary feudal forces had not yet been cleaned up and the land reform had not yet been universally and thoroughly carried out, namely, that the rear area of the People's Liberation Army had not yet been consolidated. Proceeding from this appraisal, the Chiang Kai-shek bandit gang ignored the Chinese people's desire for peace, finally tore up the truce agreement signed by the Kuomintang and the Communist Party in January 1946 as well as the resolutions adopted by the Political Consultative Conference of all parties and launched an adventurist war. We said then that Chiang Kai-shek's superiority in military forces was only transient, a factor which could play only a temporary role, that U.S. imperialist aid was likewise a factor which could play only a temporary role, while the anti-popular character of Chiang Kai-shek's war and the feelings of the people were factors that would play a constant role, and that in this respect the People's Liberation Army was in a superior position. Patriotic, just and revolutionary in character, the war waged by the People's Liberation Army was bound to win the support of the people of the whole country. That was the political foundation for victory over Chiang Kai-shek. The experience of eighteen months of war has fully confirmed our judgement.

III

In seventeen months of fighting (from July 1946 to November 1947; December figures are not yet available), we killed, wounded and captured 1,690,000 of Chiang Kai-shek's regular and irregular troops -- 640,000 killed and wounded and 1,050,000 captured. Thus we were able to beat back Chiang Kai-shek's offensive, preserve the main territories of the Liberated Areas and go over to the offensive. Speaking from the military aspect, we were able to do this because we employed the correct strategy. Our principles of operation are:

1. Attack dispersed, isolated enemy forces first; attack concentrated, strong enemy forces later.
2. Take small and medium cities and extensive rural areas first; take big cities later.
3. Make wiping out the enemy's effective strength our main objective; do not make holding or seizing a city or place our main objective. Holding or seizing a city or place is the outcome of wiping out the enemy's effective strength, and often a city or place can be held or seized for good only after it has changed hands a number of times.
4. In every battle, concentrate an absolutely superior force (two, three, four and sometimes even five or six times the enemy's strength), encircle the enemy forces completely, strive to wipe them out thoroughly and do not let any escape from the net. In special circumstances, use the method of dealing crushing blows to the enemy, that is, concentrate all our strength to make a frontal attack

and also to attack one or both of his flanks, with the aim of wiping out one part and routing another so that our army can swiftly move its troops to smash other enemy forces. Strive to avoid battles of attrition in which we lose more than we gain or only break even. In this way, although we are inferior as a whole (in terms of numbers), we are absolutely superior in every part and every specific campaign, and this ensures victory in the campaign. As time goes on, we shall become superior as a whole and eventually wipe out all the enemy.

5. Fight no battle unprepared, fight no battle you are not sure of winning; make every effort to be well prepared for each battle, make every effort to ensure victory in the given set of conditions as between the enemy and ourselves.

6. Give full play to our style of fighting -- courage in battle, no fear of sacrifice, no fear of fatigue, and continuous fighting (that is, fighting successive battles in a short time without rest).

7. Strive to wipe out the enemy through mobile warfare. At the same time, pay attention to the tactics of positional attack and capture enemy fortified points and cities.

8. With regard to attacking cities, resolutely seize all enemy fortified points and cities which are weakly defended. Seize at opportune moments all enemy fortified points and cities defended with moderate strength, provided circumstances permit. As for strongly defended enemy fortified points and cities, wait till conditions are ripe and then take them.

9. Replenish our strength with all the arms and most of the personnel captured from the enemy. Our army's main sources of manpower and materiel are at the front.

10. Make good use of the intervals between campaigns to rest, train and consolidate our troops. Periods of rest, training and consolidation should in general not be very long, and the enemy should so far as possible be permitted no breathing space.

These are the main methods the People's Liberation Army has employed in defeating Chiang Kai-shek. They are the result of the tempering of the People's Liberation Army in long years of fighting against domestic and foreign enemies and are completely suited to our present situation. The Chiang Kai-shek bandit gang and the U.S. imperialist military personnel in China are very well acquainted with these military methods of ours. Seeking ways to counter them, Chiang Kai-shek has often assembled his generals and field officers for training and distributed for their study our military literature and the documents captured in the war. The U.S. military personnel have recommended to Chiang Kai-shek one kind of strategy and tactics after another for destroying the People's Liberation Army; they have trained Chiang Kai-shek's troops and supplied them with military equipment. But none of these efforts can save the Chiang Kai-shek bandit gang from defeat. The reason is that our strategy and tactics are based on a people's war; no army opposed to the people can use our strategy and tactics. On the basis of a people's war and of the principles of unity between army and people, of unity between commanders and fighters and of disintegrating the enemy troops, the People's Liberation Army has developed its vigorous revolutionary political work, which is an important factor in winning victory over the enemy. When we abandoned many cities on our own initiative in order to evade fatal blows from superior enemy forces and shift our forces to destroy the enemy in mobile warfare, our enemies were jubilant. They took this to be their victory and our defeat. They became dizzy with this momentary "victory". On the afternoon of the day he seized Changchiakou, Chiang Kai-shek ordered the convening of his reactionary National Assembly, as though his reactionary regime had from that moment become as stable as Mount Taishan. The U.S.

imperialists, too, danced with joy, as though their wild scheme for converting China into a U.S. colony could now be realized without obstruction. But with the lapse of time, Chiang Kai-shek and his U.S. masters began to change their tune. Now all our enemies, domestic and foreign, are gripped by pessimism. They heave great sighs, wail about a crisis and no longer show any sign of joy. In the past eighteen months, most of Chiang Kai-shek's high-ranking field commanders have been replaced for losing battles. Among them are Liu Chih (Chengchow), Hsueh Yueh (Hsuchow), Wu Chi-wei (northern Kiangsu), Tang En-po (southern Shantung), Wang Chung-lien (northern Honan), Tu Yu-ming and Hsiung Shih-hui (Shenyang) and Sun Lien-chung (Peiping). Chen Cheng, too, was relieved of his post as Chiang Kai-shek's chief of staff in over-all command of operations and demoted to command a single front in the Northeast.[2] However, it was in the very period when Chiang Kai-shek himself assumed overall command in Chen Cheng's place that the situation changed and that his armies shifted from the offensive to the defensive, while the People's Liberation Army went over from the defensive to the offensive. By now the reactionary Chiang Kai-shek clique and its U.S. masters should have realized their mistake. They had regarded as signs of cowardice and weakness all the efforts for peace and against civil war which the Communist Party of China, representing the wishes of the Chinese people, had made over a long period after the surrender of Japan. They had overestimated their own strength, underestimated the strength of the revolution and rashly unleashed the war and so were caught in their own trap. Our enemy's strategic calculations failed completely.

IV

The rear areas of the People's Liberation Army are much more consolidated now than eighteen months ago. The reason is that our Party, standing resolutely on the side of the peasants, has carried out the land reform. During the War of Resistance Against Japan, our Party, on its own initiative and for the sake of forming an anti-Japanese united front with the Kuomintang and uniting with those who could still oppose Japanese imperialism, changed its pre-war policy of confiscating the land of the landlords and distributing it among the peasants to the policy of reducing rent and interest. This was entirely necessary. After the Japanese surrender, the peasants urgently demanded land, and we made a timely decision to change our land policy from reducing rent and interest to confiscating the land of the landlord class for distribution among the peasants. The directive issued by the Central Committee of our Party on May 4, 1946,[3] marked this change. In September 1947 our Party called the National Land Conference and drew up the Outline Land Law of China,[4] which was promptly carried out in all areas. This measure not only reaffirmed the policy set forth in last year's "May 4th Directive" but also explicitly corrected a certain lack of thoroughness in that directive. The Outline Land Law provides for equal distribution of land per head,[5] based on the principle of abolishing the land system of feudal and semi-feudal exploitation and putting into effect the system of land to the tillers. This is a method which most thoroughly abolishes the feudal system and fully meets the demands of the broad masses of China's peasants. To carry out the land reform resolutely and thoroughly, it is necessary to organize in the villages, as lawful bodies for carrying out the reform, not only peasant associations on the broadest mass basis, including farm labourers, poor peasants and middle peasants and their elected committees, but first of all poor peasant leagues composed of poor peasants and farm labourers and their elected committees; and these poor peasant leagues should be the backbone of leadership in all rural struggles. Our policy is to rely on the poor peasants and unite solidly with the middle peasants to abolish the feudal and semi-feudal system of exploitation by the landlord class and by the old-type rich peasants. Landlords or rich peasants must not be allotted more land and property than the peasant masses. But there should be no repetition of the wrong ultra-Left policy, which was carried out in 1931-34, of "allotting no land to the landlords

and poor land to the rich peasants". Although the proportion of landlords and rich peasants in the rural population varies from place to place, it is generally only about 8 per cent (in terms of households), while their holdings usually amount to 70 to 80 per cent of all the land. Therefore the targets of our land reform are very few, while the people in the villages who can and should take part in the united front for land reform are many -- more than 90 per cent (in terms of households). Here two fundamental principles must be observed. First, the demands of the poor peasants and farm labourers must be satisfied; this is the most fundamental task in the land reform. Second, there must be firm unity with the middle peasants, and their interests must not be damaged. As long as we grasp these two basic principles, we can certainly carry out our tasks in the land reform successfully. The reason why, under the principle of equal distribution, the surplus land and part of the property of the old-type rich peasants should be handed over for distribution is that the rich peasants in China generally and to a great degree have the character of feudal and semi-feudal exploiters; most of them also rent out land and practice usury and they hire labour on semi-feudal terms.[6] Furthermore, as the rich peasants have more and better land,[7] the demands of the poor peasants and farm labourers cannot be satisfied unless this land is distributed. However, in accordance with the Outline Land Law, rich peasants should generally be treated differently from landlords. In the land reform, the middle peasants show approval of equal distribution because it does no harm to their interests. Under equal distribution, the land of one section of the middle peasants remains unchanged and that of another is increased; only the section of well-to-do middle peasants has a little surplus land, and they are willing to hand it over for equal distribution because their burden of land tax will then be lightened. Nevertheless, in carrying out equal distribution of land in different places, it is necessary to listen to the opinions of the middle peasants and make concessions to them if they object. During the confiscation and distribution of the land and property of the feudal class, the needs of certain middle peasants should receive attention. In determining class status care must be taken to avoid the mistake of classifying middle peasants as rich peasants. The active middle peasants must be drawn into the work of the peasant association committees and the government. With respect to the burdens of the land tax and of supporting the war, the principle of being fair and reasonable must be observed. These are the specific policies our Party must follow in carrying out its strategic task of uniting solidly with the middle peasants. The whole Party must understand that thoroughgoing reform of the land system is a basic task of the Chinese revolution in its present stage. If we can solve the land problem universally and completely, we shall have obtained the most fundamental condition for the defeat of all our enemies.

V

To carry out the land reform resolutely and thoroughly and to consolidate the rear areas of the People's Liberation Army, it is necessary to educate and reorganize the ranks of our Party. On the whole, the rectification movement[8] inside the Party during the War of Resistance Against Japan was successful. Its main success was that our leading bodies and large numbers of cadres and Party members obtained a firmer grasp of our basic orientation, which is to unite the universal truth of Marxism-Leninism with the concrete practice of the Chinese revolution. In this respect our Party has taken a big stride forward as compared with all the historical stages before the War of Resistance. However, in the Party's local organizations, especially the organizations at the primary level in the countryside, the problem of impurities in the class composition of our ranks and in our style of work is still unsolved. During the eleven years 1937-47 the membership of our Party has grown from several tens of thousands to 2,700,000, and this is a very big leap forward. This has made our Party a more powerful party than any in Chinese history. It has enabled us to defeat Japanese imperialism, beat back Chiang Kai-shek's offensives, lead the Liberated Areas with a population of more than 100 million and lead a People's Liberation Army two million strong. But shortcomings have also cropped

up. Many landlords, rich peasants and riffraff have seized the opportunity to sneak into our Party. In the rural areas they control a number of Party, government and people's organizations, tyrannically abuse their power, ride roughshod over the people, distort the Party's policies and thus alienate these organizations from the masses and prevent the land reform from being thorough. This grave situation sets us the task of educating and reorganizing the ranks of our Party. We cannot make headway in the countryside unless we perform this task. The Party's National Land Conference discussed this problem thoroughly and laid down the proper measures and methods. These are now being resolutely applied everywhere, together with the decision on the equal distribution of land. First and foremost comes the unfolding of criticism and self-criticism within the Party and the thorough exposure of mistaken ideas and serious situations in the local organizations, which are departures from the Party line. All Party members must realize that a decisive link in the solution of the land problem and for the support of the long-drawn-out war is the removal of impurities from Party organizations and the education and reorganization of the Party's ranks, so that the Party and the broadest masses of working people can all march in the same direction and the Party can lead the masses forward.

VI

Confiscate the land of the feudal class and turn it over to the peasants. Confiscate monopoly capital, headed by Chiang Kai-shek, T. V. Soong, H. H. Kung and Chen Li-fu, and turn it over to the new-democratic state. Protect the industry and commerce of the national bourgeoisie. These are the three major economic policies of the new-democratic revolution. During their twenty-year rule, the four big families, Chiang, Soong, Kung and Chen, have piled up enormous fortunes valued at ten to twenty thousand million U.S. dollars and monopolized the economic lifelines of the whole country. This monopoly capital, combined with state power, has become state-monopoly capitalism. This monopoly capitalism, closely tied up with foreign imperialism, the domestic landlord class and the old-type rich peasants, has become comprador, feudal, state-monopoly capitalism. Such is the economic base of Chiang Kai-shek's reactionary regime. This state-monopoly capitalism oppresses not only the workers and peasants but also the urban petty bourgeoisie, and it injures the middle bourgeoisie. This state-monopoly capitalism reached the peak of its development during the War of Resistance and after the Japanese surrender; it has prepared ample material conditions for the new-democratic revolution. This capital is popularly known in China as bureaucrat-capital. This capitalist class, known as the bureaucrat-capitalist class, is the big bourgeoisie of China. Besides doing away with the special privileges of imperialism in China, the task of the new-democratic revolution at home is to abolish exploitation and oppression by the landlord class and by the bureaucrat-capitalist class (the big bourgeoisie), change the comprador, feudal relations of production and unfetter the productive forces. The upper petty bourgeoisie and middle bourgeoisie, oppressed and injured by the landlords and big bourgeoisie and their state power, may take part in the new-democratic revolution or stay neutral, though they are themselves bourgeois. They have no ties, or comparatively few, with imperialism and are the genuine national bourgeoisie. Wherever the state power of New Democracy extends, it must firmly and unhesitatingly protect them. In Chiang Kai-shek's areas, there are a small number of people among the upper petty bourgeoisie and the middle bourgeoisie, the right wing of these classes, who have reactionary political tendencies, spread illusions about U.S. imperialism and the reactionary Chiang Kai-shek clique and oppose the people's democratic revolution. As long as their reactionary tendencies can affect the masses, we should unmask them before the people under their political influence, attack this influence and liberate the masses from it. But political attack and economic annihilation are two different matters, and we shall make mistakes if we confuse the two. The new-democratic revolution aims at wiping out only feudalism and monopoly capitalism, only the landlord class and the bureaucrat-capitalist class (the

big bourgeoisie), and not at wiping out capitalism in general, the upper petty bourgeoisie or the middle bourgeoisie. In view of China's economic backwardness, even after the country-wide victory of the revolution, it will still be necessary to permit the existence for a long time of a capitalist sector of the economy represented by the extensive upper petty bourgeoisie and middle bourgeoisie. In accordance with the division of labour in the national economy, a certain development of all parts of this capitalist sector which are beneficial to the national economy will still be needed. This capitalist sector will still be an indispensable part of the whole national economy. The upper petty bourgeoisie referred to here are small industrialists and merchants employing workers or assistants. In addition, there are also great numbers of small independent craftsmen and traders who employ no workers or assistants and, needless to say, they should be firmly protected. After the victory of the revolution all over the country, the new-democratic state will possess huge state enterprises taken over from the bureaucrat-capitalist class and controlling the economic lifelines of the country, and there will be an agricultural economy liberated from feudalism which, though it will remain basically scattered and individual for a fairly long time, can later be led to develop, step by step, in the direction of co-operatives. In these circumstances the existence and development of these small and middle capitalist sectors will present no danger. The same is true of the new rich peasant economy which will inevitably emerge in the rural areas after the land reform. It is absolutely impermissible to repeat such wrong ultra-Left policies towards the upper petty bourgeois and middle bourgeois sectors in the economy as our Party adopted during 1931-34 (unduly advanced labour conditions, excessive income tax rates, encroachment on the interests of industrialists and merchants during the land reform, and the adoption as a goal of the so-called "workers' welfare", which was a short-sighted and one-sided concept, instead of the goal of developing production, promoting economic prosperity, giving consideration to both public and private interests and benefiting both labour and capital). To repeat such mistakes would certainly damage the interests both of the working masses and of the new-democratic state. One of the provisions in the Outline Land Law of China reads, "The property and lawful business of industrialists and merchants shall be protected from encroachment." "Industrialists and merchants" refers to all small independent craftsmen and traders as well as all small and middle capitalist elements. To sum up, the economic structure of New China will consist of: (1) the state-owned economy, which is the leading sector; (2) the agricultural economy, developing step by step from individual to collective; and (3) the economy of small independent craftsmen and traders and the economy of small and middle private capital. These constitute the whole of the new-democratic national economy. The principles guiding the new-democratic national economy must closely conform to the general objective of developing production, promoting economic prosperity, giving consideration to both public and private interests and benefiting both labour and capital. Any principle, policy or measure that deviates from this general objective is wrong.

VII

The People's Liberation Army issued a manifesto in October 1947 which stated in part:

Unite workers, peasants, soldiers, intellectuals and businessmen, all oppressed classes, all people's organizations, democratic parties, minority nationalities, overseas Chinese and other patriots; form a national united front; overthrow the dictatorial Chiang Kai-shek government; and establish a democratic coalition government.

That is the fundamental political programme of the People's Liberation Army and of the Communist Party of China. On the surface, our revolutionary national united front appears to have narrowed in the present period as compared with the period of the War of Resistance. As a matter of fact, it has been precisely in the present period, after Chiang Kai-shek sold out the nation's interests to U.S. imperialism and launched the country-wide civil war against the people and after the crimes of U.S.

imperialism and the reactionary Chiang Kai-shek clique were completely exposed before the Chinese people, that our national united front has really broadened. During the War of Resistance, Chiang Kai-shek and the Kuomintang were not yet completely discredited among the Chinese people and were still able to deceive them in many ways. Now it is different; all their deceptions have been shown up by their own deeds, they no longer have any mass following, they are completely isolated. In contrast to the Kuomintang, the Communist Party of China not only has the confidence of the broadest masses of the people in the Liberated Areas but has also won the support of the broad masses in the areas and big cities under Kuomintang control. If in 1946 a section of the upper petty bourgeois and middle bourgeois intellectuals under Chiang Kai-shek's rule still cherished the idea of a so-called third road,[9] this idea is now bankrupt. Because our Party adopted a thoroughgoing land policy, it has won whole-hearted support from much broader masses of peasants than during the War of Resistance. As a result of U.S. imperialist aggression, Chiang Kai-shek's oppression and our Party's correct policy of firmly protecting the interests of the masses, our Party has won the sympathy of the broad masses of the working class, the peasantry and the urban petty and middle bourgeoisie in Chiang Kai-shek's areas. Driven by hunger, political oppression and Chiang Kai-shek's civil war against the people, which has made life impossible, the masses have been waging incessant struggles against U.S. imperialism and Chiang Kai-shek's reactionary government; their basic slogans are against hunger, against persecution, against civil war and against U.S. interference in China's internal affairs. Never before has their awakening reached such a level, neither before nor during the War of Resistance, nor in the period immediately after the Japanese surrender. That is why we say that our new-democratic revolutionary united front is now broader and more consolidated than ever. This development is not only linked with our land and urban policies but is also closely linked with the whole political situation—with the victories of the People's Liberation Army, with Chiang Kai-shek's turn from the offensive to the defensive, with the People's Liberation Army's turn from the defensive to the offensive, with the period of a new high tide in the Chinese revolution. Realizing that Chiang Kai-shek's regime is inevitably doomed, people now place their hopes on the Communist Party of China and the People's Liberation Army, and this is quite natural. Without the broadest united front of the overwhelming majority of the population, it will be impossible to win victory in China's new-democratic revolution. Moreover, this united front must be under the firm leadership of the Communist Party of China. Without the Party's firm leadership, no revolutionary united front can win victory. When the Northern Expedition reached its climax in 1927, the capitulationists in our Party's leading body voluntarily gave up the Party's leadership of the peasant masses, urban petty bourgeoisie and middle bourgeoisie, and in particular gave up the Party's leadership of the armed forces, thus causing the defeat of the revolution. During the War of Resistance, our Party combated ideas similar to those of the capitulationists, that is, such ideas as making concessions to the Kuomintang's anti-popular policies, having more confidence in the Kuomintang than in the masses, not daring to arouse and give full rein to mass struggles, not daring to expand the Liberated Areas and the people's armies in the Japanese-occupied areas, and handing over the leadership in the War of Resistance to the Kuomintang. Our Party waged a resolute struggle against such impotent and degenerate ideas, which run counter to the principles of Marxism-Leninism, resolutely carried out its political line of "developing the progressive forces, winning over the middle forces and isolating the die-hard forces" and resolutely expanded the Liberated Areas and the People's Liberation Army. This ensured not only that our Party was able to defeat Japanese imperialism in the period of its aggression, but also that, in the period after the Japanese surrender when Chiang Kai-shek launched his counter-revolutionary war, our Party was able to switch smoothly and without loss to the course of opposing Chiang Kai-shek's counter-revolutionary war with a people's revolutionary war and to win great victories in a short time. All Party comrades must keep these lessons of history firmly in mind.

VIII

When the reactionary Chiang Kai-shek clique launched the country-wide civil war against the people in 1946, the reason they dared take this risk was that they relied not merely on their own superior military strength but mainly on the U.S. imperialists with their atom bombs, whom they regarded as "exceptionally powerful" and "matchless in the world". On the one hand, they thought U.S. imperialism could meet their military and financial needs with a stream of supplies. On the other hand, they wildly speculated that "war between the United States and the Soviet Union is inevitable" and that "the outbreak of a third world war is inevitable". This dependence on U.S. imperialism is the common feature of the reactionary forces in all countries since World War II. It reflects the severity of the blows world capitalism received in World War II; it reflects the weakness of the reactionary forces in all countries, their panic and loss of confidence; and it reflects the might of the world revolutionary forces -- all of which make reactionaries in all countries feel that there is no way out except to rely on U.S. imperialist support. But, in fact, is U.S. imperialism after World War II as powerful as Chiang Kai-shek and the reactionaries of other countries imagine? Can it really pour out a stream of supplies for them? No, that is not so. The economic power of U.S. imperialism, which grew during World War II, is confronted with unstable and daily shrinking domestic and foreign markets. The further shrinking of these markets will cause economic crises to break out. The war boom in the United States of America was only temporary. The strength of the United States of America is only superficial and transient. Irreconcilable domestic and international contradictions, like a volcano, menace U.S. imperialism every day. U.S. imperialism is sitting on this volcano. This situation has driven the U.S. imperialists to draw up a plan for enslaving the world, to run amuck like wild beasts in Europe, Asia and other parts of the world, to muster the reactionary forces in all countries, the human dregs cast off by their peoples, to form an imperialist and anti-democratic camp against all the democratic forces headed by the Soviet Union, and to prepare for war in the hope that in the future, at a distant time, some day, they can start a third world war to defeat the democratic forces. This is a preposterous plan. The democratic forces of the world must defeat this plan and certainly can defeat it. The strength of the world anti-imperialist camp has surpassed that of the imperialist camp. It is we, not the enemy, who are in the superior position. The anti-imperialist camp headed by the Soviet Union has already been formed. The socialist Soviet Union is free from crises, on the ascendant and cherished by the world's broad masses; its strength has already surpassed that of the imperialist United States, which is seriously menaced by crises, on the decline and opposed by the world's broad masses. The People's Democracies in Europe are consolidating themselves internally and are uniting with each other. In the European capitalist countries the people's anti-imperialist forces are developing, with those in France and Italy taking the lead. Within the United States, there are people's democratic forces which are getting stronger every day. The peoples of Latin America are not slaves obedient to U.S. imperialism. In the whole of Asia a great national liberation movement has arisen. All the forces of the anti-imperialist camp are uniting and forging ahead. The Communist and Workers' Parties of nine European countries have established their Information Bureau and issued a call to the people of the world to rise against the imperialist plan of enslavement.[10] This call to battle has inspired the oppressed people of the world, charted the course of their struggle and strengthened their confidence in victory. It has thrown world reaction into panic and confusion. All the anti-imperialist forces in the countries of the East, too, should unite together, oppose oppression by imperialism and by their domestic reactionaries and make the goal of their struggle the emancipation of the more than 1,000 million oppressed people of the East. We certainly should grasp our own destiny in our own hands. We should rid our ranks of all impotent thinking. All views that overestimate the strength of the enemy and underestimate the strength of

the people are wrong. If everyone makes strenuous efforts, we, together with all the democratic forces of the world, can surely defeat the imperialist plan of enslavement, prevent the outbreak of a third world war, overthrow all reactionary regimes and win lasting peace for mankind. We are soberly aware that on our way forward there will still be all kinds of obstacles and difficulties and that we should be prepared to deal with the maximum resistance and desperate struggle by all our enemies, domestic and foreign. But so long as we can grasp the science of Marxism-Leninism, have confidence in the masses, stand closely together with the masses and lead them forward, we shall be fully able to surmount any obstacle and overcome any difficulty. Our strength will be invincible. This is the historic epoch in which world capitalism and imperialism are going down to their doom and world socialism and people's democracy are marching to victory. The dawn is ahead, we must exert ourselves.

NOTES

1. For the circumstances of how the People's Liberation Army went over to the offensive on various fronts in succession and carried the war into the Kuomintang areas, see "On the Great Victory in the Northwest and on the New Type of Ideological Education Movement in the Liberation Army", Note 4, pp. 215-16 of this volume.

2. Liu Chih, Director of the Kuomintang's Pacification Headquarters in Chengchow, Honan Province, was dismissed in November 1946 for his defeat in the battle of Tingtao, southwestern Shantung Province, in September. Hsueh Yueh, Director of the Kuomintang's Pacification Headquarters in Hsuehchow, Kiangsu Province, was dismissed in March 1947 for a series of heavy defeats suffered by the Kuomintang troops under his command: in the campaign in the area north of Suchien, Kiangsu Province in December 1946; in the campaign in southern Shantung in January 1947; and in the Laiwu campaign, central Shantung, in February 1947. Wu Chi-wei, Deputy Director of the Kuomintang's Pacification Headquarters in Hsuehchow, was dismissed in March 1947 for his defeat in the campaign in the area north of Suchien in December 1946. Tang En-po, Commander of the Kuomintang's 1st Army, was dismissed in June 1947 because the Kuomintang's Reorganized 74th Division was wiped out in the battle of Mengliangku, southern Shantung, in May. Wang Chung-lien, Commander of the Kuomintang's 4th Army, was dismissed in August 1947 for his defeat in the Southwestern Shantung campaign in July. Tu Yu-ming, Commander of the Kuomintang's Peace Preservation Headquarters in the Northeast, and Hsiung Shih-hui Director of the Kuomintang Generalissimo's Headquarters in the Northeast, were both dismissed for being severely defeated by the People's Liberation Army in its summer offensive in the Northeast in June 1947. Sun Lien-chung, Commander of the Kuomintang's 11th War Zone, was demoted to Director of the Pacification Headquarters in Paoting, Hopei Province, for his defeats in the Ching-Tsang campaign and the campaign in the Hsushui area north of Paoting in June 1947. Chen Cheng Chiang Kai-shek's chief of general staff, was demoted to governor-general of the Northeast in August 1947 because of the successive defeats of the campaigns he directed in Shantung Province.

3. For the directive, see "A Three Months' Summary", Note 4, p. 118 of this volume.

4. The National Land Conference of the Communist Party of China was held in September 1947 in Hsipaipo Village, Pingshan County, Hopei Province. The Outline Land Law of China, adopted by the conference on September 13, was published by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China on October 10, 1947. It stipulated the following:

Abolish the land system of feudal and semi-feudal exploitation and put into effect the system of land to the tillers.

All the land of the landlords and the public land in the villages is to be taken over by the local peasant associations and, together with all other land there, is to be equally distributed among the entire rural population, regardless of sex or age.

The peasant associations of the villages shall take over the draught animals farm tools, houses, grain and other property of the landlords, requisition the surplus of such property of the rich peasants, distribute all this property among the peasants and other poor people who are in need of it and allot the same share to the landlords.

Thus the Outline Land Law not only confirmed the principle of "confiscation of the land of the landlords and its distribution among the peasants" laid down in the "May 4th Directive" of 1946 but also made up for the lack of thoroughness in that directive, which had shown too much consideration for certain landlords.

5. Subsequently in the implementation some changes were made in the method of equal distribution of land provided in the Outline Land Law of China. In February 1948 the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China specified in its "Directive on the Work of Land Reform and of Party Consolidation in the Old and Semi-Old Areas that in the old and semi-old Liberated Areas where the feudal system had already been overthrown, there would be no further equal distribution of land, but that the poor peasants and farm labourers who had not yet completely shaken off the feudal yoke should, if circumstances so required, be given a certain amount of land and other means of production through readjustment, by the method of taking from those who had a surplus and giving to those who had a shortage and taking from those who had better and giving to those who had worse, while the middle peasants would be allowed to keep more land than the average poor peasant. In areas where the feudal system still existed, equal distribution was confined mainly to the land and property of landlords and the surplus land and property of old-type rich peasants. In all areas, it was permissible to take the surplus land of middle peasants and new-type rich peasants for purposes of readjustment only if this was actually necessary and if the owners really consented. In the land reform in the new Liberated Areas, no land was to be taken from any middle peasant.

6. The question of the rich peasants in China's land reform was a peculiar one arising from her specific historical and economic conditions. China's rich peasants differed from those in many capitalist countries in two respects: first, they generally and to a great degree had the character of feudal and semi-feudal exploiters and, second, this rich peasant economy did not occupy an important place in the country's agricultural economy. In the struggle against feudal exploitation by the landlord class in China, the broad masses of poor peasants and farm labourers also demanded the abolition of feudal and semi-feudal exploitation by the rich peasants. During the War of Liberation, the Communist Party of China adopted the policy of requisitioning the surplus land and property of rich peasants for distribution among the peasants, and thus satisfied the demands of the masses of poor peasants and farm labourers and ensured victory in the People's War of Liberation. As the war progressed towards victory, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China in February 1948 laid down new policies for the land reform in the new Liberated Areas. The reform was to be divided into two stages: in the first stage, neutralize the rich peasants and concentrate the blows on the landlords, primarily the big landlords; in the second stage, while distributing the land of the landlords, also distribute the land rented out by rich peasants and their surplus land, but continue to treat the rich peasants differently from the landlords (see "Essential Points in Land

Reform in the New Liberated Areas", pp. 201-02 of this volume). After the founding of the People's Republic of China, the Central People's Government in June 1950 promulgated the Land Reform Law, which provided that in the land reform only the land rented out by the rich peasants should partly or wholly be requisitioned, while the rest of their land and property was to be protected. In the subsequent stage of socialist revolution, the rich peasant economy disappeared as the movement for agricultural co-operation deepened and the rural economy developed.

7. That is to say, a rich peasant household owned on the average more and better land than a poor peasant household. Taking the country as a whole, the quantity of the means of production owned by China's rich peasants and the volume of their farm produce were both very small. The rich peasant economy did not occupy an important place in China's rural economy.

8. This refers to the movement for rectifying the style of work conducted by the Communist Party of China in 1942-43 throughout the Party; its content was the combating of subjectivism, sectarianism and stereotyped writing. Under the leadership of Comrade Mao Tse-tung, this rectification movement adopted the principles of "learning from past mistakes to avoid their repetition, curing the sickness to save the patient" and "clearing up wrong thinking while uniting with comrades". Through the method of criticism and self-criticism, the movement corrected the "Left" and Right errors which had occurred on various occasions in the history of the Party by getting down to their ideological roots, greatly raised the ideological level of the broad ranks of Party cadres, helped immensely to unify thinking within the Party on the basis of Marxism-Leninism and thus brought about a high degree of unity in the whole Party.

9. In the early stage of the People's War of Liberation some democratic personages fancied that they could find a so-called third road, apart from the Kuomintang dictatorship of big landlords and big bourgeoisie and apart from the people's democratic dictatorship led by the Communist Party of China. This third road was in fact the road of a dictatorship of the bourgeoisie on the British and U.S. pattern.

10. The Information Bureau of the Communist and Workers' Parties was founded at a meeting held in Warsaw, Poland, in September 1947 by representatives of the Communist and Workers' Parties of Bulgaria, Rumania, Hungary, Poland, the Soviet Union, France, Czechoslovakia, Italy and Yugoslavia. Later, at a meeting in Rumania in June 1948, the Bureau announced the expulsion of the Yugoslav Communist Party because the latter persisted in its anti-Marxist-Leninist stand and adopted an attitude opposed to the Soviet Union and the socialist camp. The Information Bureau's call to the people of the world to rise against the imperialist plan of enslavement, mentioned here by Comrade Mao Tse-tung, was the "Declaration on the International Situation" adopted at the September 1947 meeting of the Information Bureau.