

**Dates of Meeting:**

7-12-1953 – 26-1-1954

**Type of Meeting:**

Meeting on the PLA

**Place of Meeting:**

Zhongnanhai, Beijing

**Attendance:**

123 participants: PLA commanders, CMC standing members, academy presidents. Zhu, Peng, Chen Yi, Ye Jianying, Liu Bocheng, Nie Rongzhen, He Long, Su Yu, Deng Xiaoping

Peng chairs

**Major Agenda Items:**

Modernization of PLA

On the agenda was to reach a consensus among PLA leaders on the single-responsibility system.

**Speeches/Reports:**

**Su Yu** summarizes the lessons of the war

**Peng Dehuai:** “China’s Military Experience in the Past Four Years and the Fundamental Issues for Our Future Military Development” December 1953

silenced any dissenting opinions and signaled the beginning of Soviet style military reform. The meeting set new principles for the PLA’s modernization over the next decade by agreeing that the Chinese must learn advanced military science and technology from the Soviets.

He pointed out that ‘the war to resist US aggression and aid Korea was an important challenge to our army . . . its importance lies in the fact that we must raise the military art of our armed forces to a new level’

**Deng Hua:** ‘since we beat the highly modernized invading forces led by US imperialists with [our] inferior equipment, [our] experience in the Korean War is evidently valuable and realistic.’ To him, it was urgent and imperative that the Chinese forces should enhance the People’s Liberation Army’s capacity to fight anti-amphibious, anti-airborne, and anti-nuclear warfare.

Deng explained: ‘We must study hard to catch up and master modern military technology so that [we] will be able to reduce the advantages of enemy’s technology and equipment.’

**Other Decisions and/or Actions:**

- PLA must learn advanced military science and technology from the soviets. In examining the Korean lessons, the Chinese military commanders seemed to have firmly believed that advanced - technology was as important as manpower in modern wars.
- This conference passed the “Regulations of PLA Political Work,” which abandoned the single-responsibility system and resumed the party’s control over the PLA at all levels. In addition, the CMC decided to resume the old system on the basis of the principle of “individual responsibility of the leaders under the collective leadership of the Party committee.”
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**Remarks:**

1. In early 1954, Deng Hua wrote a lengthy report on ‘principles and guidelines of combat operations’ in Korea. ‘My general observation . . . is,’ he maintained, ‘that although nature of war and the army’s political quality will still play a decisive role in modern warfare, [our army’s] sources of military materiel and technological conditions will be indispensable factors.
2. After the CMC gave up the single-responsibility system, the Soviet model faced criticism and challenges. There was also increasing criticism of excessive reliance on Soviet practices.
3. Most sources only mention the debate without describing the details; however, other sources give some clues about the contentious issues and debates in the PLA leadership. One such source was Marshal Luo Ronghuan, director of the General Political Department, who not only opposed the Soviet model of the single-responsibility system but also directly confronted Soviet advisers about the issue. In addition, this conference came after Luo had convinced Peng Dehuai to support the opposition against the Soviet single-responsibility system in the summer of 1953. Guo Xuezi (2012). China’s Security State: Philosophy, Evolution, and Politics. Page 202