

THE DOMESTIC SITUATION AND POINTS FOR ATTENTION AFTER CROSSING THE CHANGJIANG RIVER

April 11, 1949

I. Domestic situation.

The domestic situation has never been so good as at present. You have cleaned out all enemy forces in the Northeast and joined the First, Second and Third as well as the North China Field Armies in liberating Beiping and Tianjin. The enemy's main forces have been wiped out one after the other. His remaining troops now total about two million, of which combat forces account for no more than 1.4 million. Moreover, these combat forces belong to diverse cliques. Each goes its own way, lacks the power to resist and has low morale. That is why the Kuomintang government has asked to hold peace talks with us in an attempt to play for time, revamp its army and repair its defence along the Changjiang River for a desperate struggle. We must not be taken in but must actively prepare for an early crossing of the Changjiang River and a southward advance for the liberation of the whole country.

From now on there will be roughly three patterns for disposing of enemy troops.

The first is to follow the Tianjin pattern, i.e., resolutely annihilate any enemy troops refusing to surrender and putting up stubborn resistance. Our whole army must be ready at all times to dispose of the enemy by this method.

The second is the Beiping pattern, i.e., compel enemy troops to reorganize peacefully into units of the People's Liberation Army. This is highly possible.

Outline of a speech to senior cadres of the Fourth Field Army then in Beiping (Beijing).

The third is the Suiyuan pattern, i.e., allow part of the Kuomintang troops in remote areas or those of no strategic importance to stay there for the time being, waiting for reorganization later on.

In case the peace talks break down, we will have a mighty army over two million strong to cross the Changjiang River and advance south. You are an important part of it, being entrusted like the others with the glorious task of liberating the whole country. If our army does cross the Changjiang River and then thrust south, it will face the following advantages and disadvantages.

1. Advantages:

1) We have a big and powerful army with good morale, while the enemy is weak and small, divided and demoralized.

2) Because the Liberated Areas have been extended to the banks of the Changjiang River, there now are 200 million liberated people to give our army all-out support.

3) The broad masses of people south of the Changjiang River are eagerly expecting us to liberate them. So long as we make no mistakes in carrying out policies, they will support us. Another thing, they have had the experience of the Great Revolution (1924-27) and the agrarian revolutionary movement.

4) We have our guerrilla units (at present they have more than 50,000 men south of the Changjiang River) to co-ordinate with us.

2. Disadvantages:

1) Since our army is penetrating deep into the enemy areas far from its own rear, transportation and supply problems will be much more serious than in the past.

2) In the south there are more mountains, rivers, paddy fields and lakes, and our troops from the north generally lack combat experience on such terrain.

3) As the overwhelming majority of our troops are northerners, they will not easily adjust to life in the south. They will be susceptible to diseases such as malaria, sunstroke, beriberi and scabies. It will also be easy for them to get homesick, feel content with the liberation of their own home places and become reluctant to risk their lives for the liberation of other areas.

4) The continuous victory of our army may have made some fighters conceited so that they will underestimate the enemy. Weak though our enemy is, he will still try to put up a last, desperate struggle.

All the above conditions, favourable and unfavourable, must be

fully explained to our officers and men. We must not stress only the favourable factors and say nothing about the unfavourable ones. Only such public and detailed explanation can make the whole army conscientiously seek ways to surmount its difficulties, and only in this way can you fulfil the task entrusted to you by the Military Commission of the Party Central Committee.

II. Several points for attention after going to the south.

1. Policy and discipline.

1) Implementation of Party policies.

a. Agrarian reform policy. This is an important question, on which rests the success or failure of the Chinese revolution. We must carry out this reform thoroughly, but must not act impetuously in the newly liberated areas. We should first mobilize and organize the masses for reduction of rents and interests. Only after our army has gained a firm foothold there and the local people have increased their political awareness and become organized should thorough land distribution be carried out. Landlords and rich peasants should receive a share of land just as the peasants do.

b. Policies concerning urban industry and commerce. After we have crossed the Changjiang River, we will first capture cities and then villages. In the past many mistakes were made in carrying out policies concerning urban industry and commerce. Corrections were undertaken later on, and great progress has been made recently. All of China will soon be liberated and all the cities will come under our control. They should therefore be neither destroyed nor damaged. This will speed construction. From now on when a city is taken, we should first effectively protect its industry and commerce so that we can quickly restore and develop production. After capturing a city, we must rely heart and soul on the working class, unite with the other labouring masses and win over the intellectuals and also the largest possible number of the national bourgeoisie and their representatives who are ready to co-operate with us, or at least make them remain neutral — so that we can wage a resolute struggle against imperialism and the feudal and bureaucrat-capitalist classes and defeat these enemies step by step.

c. United front policy. We should broaden the anti-U.S. and anti-Chiang united front to win over the majority of the people and isolate the reactionary diehards, who are in the minority. But we must adhere to the principle of proletarian leadership. The Party Central Committee has stipulated that except for the property of bureaucrat-

capitalists headed by the big four families,²¹³ the property of all other capitalists will not be confiscated; furthermore, these latter capitalists will be permitted to develop those of their industries and commercial enterprises that are beneficial to the national economy and the people's livelihood. This will help extend the united front.

d. Policy to win over intellectuals. It is highly important to educate and win over intellectuals so that they will join the revolution and serve the people.

e. Social policy. It is forbidden to beat or kill indiscriminately. Our agrarian reform is aimed at eliminating the landlord class and feudal forces as such, not at physically annihilating the landlords themselves. Even those with towering crimes should be punished according to legal procedures, and no indiscriminate beating or killing is permitted. This policy assumes even greater significance in the newly liberated areas.

2) Strict observance of discipline.

Correct policy implementation requires strict observance of discipline to guarantee their enforcement. First, mass discipline. In carrying out mass discipline, there are many good examples to be seen in the emerging model squads, companies, regiments and divisions. These model units see to it that the interests of the masses are not infringed upon, and they observe rules such as the "three won't leaves" [won't leave before the water vat of the owner of the house they use is filled, won't leave before the floor is swept clean, and won't leave before the borrowed articles are returned] and the "four won't enters" [won't enter the inner rooms of the owner of the house they use, won't enter the women's latrine, won't enter any house not reserved for army use, and won't enter fields with standing crops] and do publicity when coming to and leaving a place. They also visited the poor, asking about their bitterness of the past, and they organize joint army-civilian meetings for pouring out grievances against the old society. Second, economic discipline. This means we do not scramble for war trophies, we turn in everything captured, and we do not search the pockets of captives. Third, discipline relating to command. This means obeying orders in all actions and resolutely fulfilling assignment.

There are still problems in enforcing discipline, especially as regards the masses and turning in of all things captured. In addition, there have been cases of disobeying orders and of withdrawing from designated positions without permission. Such lapses should not occur in the future.

Good enforcement of policies and discipline will help bring earlier victory. We should be good both in fighting and in enforcing policies and discipline. Only in this way can we unite with more than 90 per cent of the population and achieve nationwide victory.

3) How can we guarantee the implementation of policies and discipline?

a. By strengthening education in both policy and discipline among cadres and fighters. Reasons for enforcing policies and observing discipline should be explained. Efforts should be made to heighten the class awareness of the rank and file, mobilize them to carry out policies and observe discipline voluntarily and encourage and supervise each other in doing so.

b. By having cadres at all levels play an exemplary role and carry out strict control and inspection. In the past quite a number of cadres violated policies and discipline; some of them even took the lead in doing so. Where this was the case, how could they be expected to exercise strict control and supervision?

c. By seriously determining responsibility for specific policy and discipline violations, and by being strict but fair in meting out rewards or punishments. Hereafter, such violations should be seriously investigated and criticism made or disciplinary measures taken. Comrades or units that carry out policies and observe discipline exemplarily should be commended or rewarded.

2. Concerning our army's role as a working force.

The People's Liberation Army is not only a fighting force but a working force. Why?

Of course, in the present or in the historical period ahead (that is, as long as the imperialist system still exists), the People's Liberation Army is undoubtedly a fighting force. But there is now an increasing possibility of settling problems in the south by following the Beiping or the Suiyuan pattern. With the gradual decrease in hostilities, the army's function as a working force will increase correspondingly.

The areas to be liberated are vast, accounting for roughly three-fourths of the country's total territory. We do not have enough cadres. Although 53,000 cadres are ready to go, they are far from enough for the task lying ahead. Thus we must prepare to create a work force out of the more than two million field army men crossing the Changjiang River and advancing south. In this way we will have enough cadres to do the work in the vast southern areas, and you will be able to fulfil your task there. With their more than two million men, the related

field armies constitute an enormous school for cadres to learn how to carry out their new task.

You comrades should instruct your subordinates not only to be good fighters but good members of the work force as well. All comrades going south should be taught that in addition to fulfilling combat tasks, they should learn earnestly to do a good job as members of the work force, including mass work, work in connection with the building of the new state and administering the liberated cities.

3. Military democracy.

1) Military democracy is an important method for exercising good leadership. Its correct practice and the encouragement of criticism and self-criticism will improve relations between officers and men, between army and civilians and between different units of our army, thus promoting unity. They will bring the masses' initiative and creativity into play, help overcome various difficulties and raise combat effectiveness.

2) Military democracy in our army is a fine tradition that should be carried forward.

3) During intervals between training and fighting, our army units often hold various kinds of meetings, such as "meetings of Zhuge Liangs" (to pool the wisdom of the collective), "meetings for devising solutions to problems", "meetings for reviewing casualties" and "meetings to evaluate fighting skills". More importantly, since the start of the new-type ideological education movement in the army,²⁷⁸ there have been widespread mass activities such as the "three check-ups",²⁴⁹ "pouring out grievances", and "appraising merits". These have greatly heightened the class consciousness of officers and men in the entire army. The present relations between officers and men are much better than in the past so that commanders say it is now easier to direct troops and our fighters say the cadres have improved their work style. At the same time, relations between the army and civilians as well as relations between different units of our army have improved tremendously. This kind of military democracy must be further developed and the rich experience we have gained summarized for dissemination.

4. Concerning study.

Study should be carried out in two ways.

First, learn from practical struggle. This is indispensable. For instance, you comrades have developed skills on the battlefield and in actual work. This is a very practical and excellent form of study, but

it must now be elevated. You should analyse your experiences in practical struggle and take the further step of systematizing them.

Second, theoretical study. Our cadres are far from having carried out adequate theoretical study, which is as important as learning from practical struggle. If we ignore or have no such study at all, we will become blind in our actions. Lenin has a famous saying, "Without revolutionary theory there can be no revolutionary movement."²³⁰ Theory is the compass for our actions. Should we fail to grasp theory, we will be in danger of losing our orientation. Thus it is extremely hazardous not to study theory. Our comrades must study Marxism-Leninism and Mao Zedong Thought to heighten our theoretical level and political awareness. Only in this way can we effectively fulfil our glorious revolutionary task.

Last, I hope all comrades will collect and systematize as a new course for our army the rich experience it gained in the Agrarian Revolutionary War (1927-37), the War of Resistance Against Japan (1937-45) and the current War of Liberation. I hope you will all work hard to fulfil this task.