

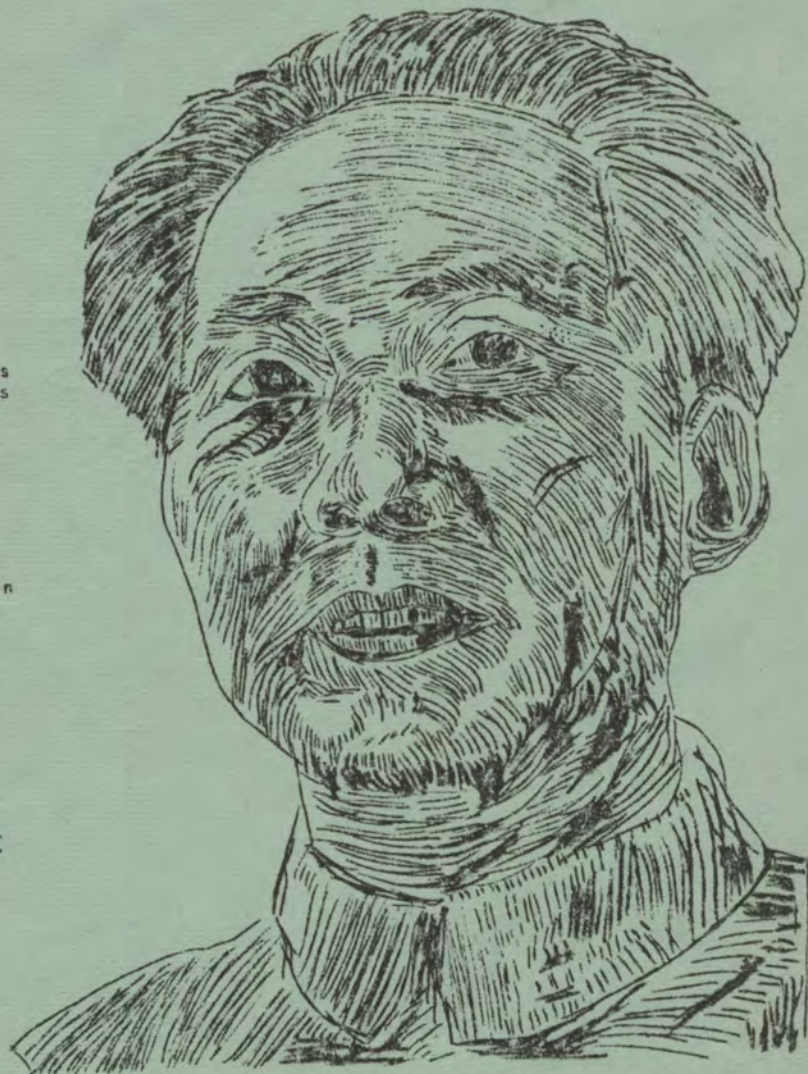
# THE DICTATORSHIP OF THE PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY

by MAO TZE-TUNG

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Work

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# THE DICTATORSHIP OF THE PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY

By

MAO TZE-TUNG

## Introduction

The Communist Party of China will be 28 years old on July 1, 1949. A party, like a human being, has its childhood, youth, manhood and old age. The Communist Party of China is no longer a child or a youth in its teens, but an adult. When a man becomes old, he dies. It is the same with a political party. When classes are eliminated, all the instruments of class struggle, political parties and the state apparatus, will, as a result, lose their functions, cease to be necessary and gradually wither away. Having completed their historical mission, they will give way to a higher stage of human society.

Our party is quite different from the political parties of the bourgeoisie. They are afraid to talk of abolishing classes, state authority and parties, while we openly declare that we struggle hard precisely to create those conditions for the elimination of these things. The Communist Party and the state power of the People's dictatorship furnish such conditions. Anyone who does not recognize this truth is no Communist. Young comrades who have just joined the party and have not studied Marxism-Leninism may not understand this truth. But they must understand it before they can develop a truly world outlook. They must understand that all mankind has to go through the process of eliminating classes, state authority and parties. The question is only one of time and conditions.

Communists everywhere in the world are more intelligent in this respect than the bourgeoisie. They understand the laws governing existence and development. They understand dialectics and thus see farther ahead. The bourgeoisie do not welcome this truth, because they do not want to be overthrown by the people. They are tormented by the thought that they can be overthrown in the same way that we have overthrown the Kuomintang reactionaries, and in the same way as we and the peoples of various other countries recently overthrew Japanese imperialism. The working class, workers and Communists are not confronted with the question of being overthrown, but with hard work and the creation of conditions for the natural elimination of classes, state authority and political parties so that mankind can take the path to world Communism.

We have touched on the long-range view of the progress of mankind in order to explain the following questions. Our Party is now 28 years old. Everyone knows that these were not years of peace but of difficulties. We had to fight our enemies at home and from abroad, and both within and outside the party. We are indebted to Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin who gave us the weapon with which to fight. This weapon is not the machine gun but Marxism-Leninism.

In his book "Left-Wing Communism, an Infantile Disorder", written in 1920, Lenin described how the Russians sought for revolutionary theory. After many years of hardship and tribulation they eventually came to Marxism. There are many similarities between China and pre-revolutionary Russia. Feudal oppression was the same. Economic and cultural backwardness were similar. Both countries were backward, China more so than Russia. Progressives in both countries struggled hard in search of revolutionary truth in order to bring about national recovery. This was the same in both countries.

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Written for the 28th Anniversary of the Communist Party of China (July 1, 1949)

## When China's Progressives Looked West

After China was defeated in the Opium War of 1840, progressive Chinese experienced countless difficulties searching for truth in Western countries. Hung Hsiu-chuan, Kang Yu-wei, Yen Fu\* and Sun Yat-sen were representative of this group of people who sought for truth in the West before the birth of the Communist Party in China. At that time, Chinese searching for progress read every book containing any new Western teaching. The number of students sent to Japan, England, America, France and Germany was enormous. Frantic efforts were made to learn from the West. The old imperial examination system was abolished and schools multiplied. I also studied like this in my youth. This was the modern culture of Western bourgeois democracy, or the so-called new school of learning, which included the doctrines of sociology and natural sciences of the time. It was the very opposite of the culture of Chinese feudalism, or the so-called old school of learning.

For quite a long time, people with this new knowledge were confident that it would save China. Unlike adherents of the "old school", very few of the "new school" had any doubts. The only way to save the country, they said, was to carry out reforms, and the only way to enforce reforms was to learn from foreign countries.

Of the foreign countries at that time, only the Western capitalist countries were progressive. They had successfully established their modern bourgeois states. The Japanese obtained good results by learning from the West. The Chinese also wanted to learn from the Japanese. To the Chinese at that time, Russia was backward and very few people wanted to learn from her. And so from the forties of the 19th century to the beginning of the 20th century, the Chinese learned from foreign countries.

## How China Turned to Marxism

Imperialist aggression shattered the Chinese dream of learning from the West. The Chinese wondered why the teachers always encroached on their pupils. The Chinese learned much from the West but what they learned could not be put into effect. Their ideals could not be realized. Many times the struggle, including the Revolution of 1911, failed. Meanwhile, the condition of the country grew worse day by day. The environment was such that the people could not live. Doubts arose, grew and developed.

The First World War shook the whole world. The Russians carried out the October Revolution, creating the first Socialist country in the world. Under the leadership of Lenin and Stalin, the revolutionary energy of the great Russian proletariat and working people, which had lain dormant and unnoticed by foreigners, suddenly erupted like a volcano. The Chinese and all mankind then began to look differently at the Russians. Then, and only then, did those Chinese working in the sphere of ideology enter an entirely new era. The Chinese found the universal truth of Marxism-Leninism which is applicable everywhere, and the face of China changed.

It was through the introduction of the Russians that the Chinese found Marxism. Before the October Revolution, the Chinese not only did not know Lenin and Stalin, but did not even know Marx and Engels. The gunfire of the October Revo-

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\*Hung Hsiu-chuan led the Taiping Rising of 1850-64 against the landlords and the Manchu government.

Kang Yu-wei was one of the first Chinese advocates of constitutional monarchy and co-leader of the reformation movement of the 1890's.

Yen Fu was a pioneer translator who did much to introduce Western theories to China

lution sent us Marxism-Leninism. The October Revolution helped the progressive elements of the world and of China to use the world outlook of the proletariat as the means of determining the destiny of the country and studying their own problems. Travel the road of the Russians--this was the conclusion.

In 1919, the "May Fourth" Movement took place in China, and the Communist Party of China was formed in 1921. The October Revolution took place, and the Communist Party of China was formed, at a time when Sun Yat-sen had lost hope. He welcomed the October Revolution, welcomed Russian help to China, and welcomed the cooperation of the Communist Party of China. Sun Yat-sen died and Chiang Kai-shek came to power. Over a period of 22 years, Chiang Kai-shek dragged China into desperate poverty.

During this period, the anti-fascist Second World War with the Soviet Union as its main force, ended with the destruction of three big imperialist powers, it weakened two other big imperialist powers, and left only one imperialist country in the world which had suffered no loss--the United States of America. Nonetheless, the domestic crisis in the United States is very serious. The U.S. wants to enslave the entire world. By sending arms to Chiang Kai-shek it helped to slaughter several million Chinese.

Under the leadership of the Communist Party of China, the Chinese people after driving out the Japanese imperialists, fought a People's war of liberation for three years and gained a basic victory. Thus, the civilization of the Western bourgeoisie, bourgeois democracy and the bourgeois republic all went bankrupt in the eyes of the Chinese people. Bourgeois democracy gave way to the people's democracy under the leadership of the working class, and the bourgeois republic gave way to the people's republic. Thus the possibility was created of achieving socialism and communism through the people's republic, of abolishing classes, and attaining world Communism. Kang Yu-wei wrote a book about world Communism, but he did not, and could not, find the road to it. The bourgeois republic existed in foreign countries but it could not exist in China, because China was a country oppressed by imperialists. The only road to the elimination of classes and to world Communism is through the people's republic under the leadership of the working class.

### Marxism and Sun Yat-sen's Views

All other ways were tried and all ended in failure. Of those who yearned for something else, some were defeated, some awakened to their mistakes or are now revising their views. Events developed so swiftly that many were taken by surprise. The desire of these people to learn anew is understandable and we welcome it.

The vanguard of the Chinese proletariat studied Marxism-Leninism after the October Revolution and established the Communist Party of China. Afterwards, the vanguard of the Chinese proletariat embarked on the political struggle and for 28 years pursued a tortuous path before gaining victory.

Drawing on the experience of its 28 years, as well as on the "experience of 40 years" mentioned in Sun Yat-sen's will, the following general conclusion can be drawn: "The firm belief that to attain victory we must awaken the masses of the people and unite ourselves in a common struggle with those peoples of the world who treat us on the basis of equality." Sun Yat-sen had a different world outlook from us and started out from a different class standpoint in observing and dealing with problems. But in the second decade of the 20th century, on the problem of how to struggle against imperialism he arrived at a conclusion which was fundamentally in agreement with ours.

Twenty-four years have passed since Sun Yat-sen's death, and under the leadership of the Communist Party of China, Chinese revolutionary theory and practice have made big strides forward, fundamentally changing the realities of China. To date the Chinese people have mastered two fundamentals:

1. To awaken the masses of the country. This is to unite the working class, the peasantry, petty bourgeoisie and national bourgeoisie into a united front under the leadership of the working class, and the establishment of a people's democratic dictatorship led by the working class, with alliance of workers and peasants as its base.

2. To unite in a common struggle with those nations of the world who treat us as equals, and with the peoples of all countries. This means alliance with the Soviet Union, with the People's Democracies in Europe, and with the proletariat and masses of other countries, to form an international united front.

### Some "Reproaches" and the Answers

We are told: "You lean to one side." Precisely. The 40 years' experience of Sun Yat-sen, and the 28 years' experience of the Communist Party of China have taught us that in order to win and consolidate victory we must "lean to one side." Both his experiences of 40 years and ours of 28 years have shown that, without exception, the Chinese people must either side with imperialism or with socialism. It is impossible to sit on the fence--no third road exists. We are against the Chiang Kai-shek reactionary clique which inclines towards imperialism. We also oppose the illusion of a third road, not only in China but also on a world scale. One is either on the side of imperialism or on the side of socialism. Neutrality is a camouflage and no third road exists.

We are told: "You are too provoking." This refers to our dealings with Chinese and foreign reactionaries, the imperialists and their running dogs; not with other people. With regard to foreign and domestic reactionaries, the question cannot arise. Being reactionaries, they would behave in the same way whether provoked or not. It is only by drawing a clear line between reactionaries and revolutionaries, only by exposing reactionary designs and plots, only by raising our own morale while puncturing the arrogance of the enemy, that reactionaries can be isolated, conquered and removed.

Confronted by a wild beast one must not show the slightest cowardice. We must learn from Wu Sung (one of the 108 heroes of the famous historical work, "All Men Are Brothers"--Ed.) who slew a tiger on Chingyang Ridge with his bare hands. Wu Sung knew that the tiger would devour people regardless of whether it was provoked or not. With a man-eating tiger, one has to choose between killing it and being eaten.

We are told that "we must do business." This is entirely correct. Business must be carried on. We oppose the domestic and foreign reactionaries who hamper us from doing business with foreign countries or even establishing diplomatic relations with them. Unite all forces at home and abroad to smash domestic and foreign reactionaries--then there will be business and the possibility of establishing diplomatic relations with all foreign countries on the basis of equality, mutual respect for territorial sovereignty.

### Victory Requires International Solidarity

We are told: "Victory is possible without international assistance." This is an error. In the era of imperialism, it is impossible for a real people's revolu-

tion in any country to win its own victory without assistance in various forms from the international revolutionary forces; it is also impossible, without such aid, to consolidate the victory even when it is won. The great October Revolution was won and consolidated only in this way, as Stalin told us long ago. This is precisely how the three imperialist (Axis--Ed.) countries were defeated and new democratic countries established. This is precisely how matters stand today and will stand in the future in China.

Let us see for ourselves. Had there been no Soviet Union; had there been no victory in the anti-fascist Second World War; had there been no defeat of German, Italian and Japanese Imperialism; had the new democratic countries of Europe not come into being; had there been no rising struggle of the oppressed nations in the East; no struggle by the masses of the people in the United States, Britain, France, Germany, Italy, Japan and other capitalist countries against the reactionary cliques ruling over them; had not all these things existed, then the pressure of the international reactionary forces would have been much stronger than it is today. Could we win victory under such circumstances? Of course not. It would also have been impossible to consolidate the victory after it was won.

The Chinese people have much experience in this regard. Sun Yat-sen's death-bed words about unifying ourselves with the international revolutionary forces have long since become an expression of this experience.

#### Only Anti-Imperialists Will Aid China

We are told that "we need the assistance of the British and American governments." This is a childish idea. Imperialists still rule in Britain and the United States. Would they extend aid to a People's State? If we were to do business with these countries, or if they were prepared to lend us money on mutually advantageous conditions, what would be the reason? It would be because the capitalists of these countries want to make money, the bankers want to earn interest to relieve their own crisis, and not because they want to help the Chinese people. Communist and progressive parties in these countries are now working to establish business and even diplomatic relations with us. Their intentions are good. They are a help to us. Such activities should not be put on a par with the actions of the bourgeoisie in those countries.

During his lifetime, Sun Yat-sen appealed many times for aid from the imperialist countries. It was futile, and instead he met with merciless attacks. During his lifetime, Sun Yat-sen received international aid only once; and that was from the Soviet Union. The reader can refer to Dr. Sun Yat-sen's will in which he called upon the people not to turn to the imperialist countries, but earnestly bade them "to unite with those peoples of the world who treat us as an equal nation." Dr. Sun had experience; he had been duped. We must remember his words and not be duped again. Internationally we belong to the anti-imperialist front headed by the Soviet Union, and we can only look for genuine friendly aid from that front and not from the imperialist front.

#### What Kind of Dictatorship?

We are told: "You are dictatorial." Yes, dear gentlemen, you are right. The experience of several decades has shown the Chinese people the need to establish a people's democratic dictatorship. This means that reactionaries must be deprived of the right to voice their opinion; only the people will have the right to voice their opinion.

Who are the people? At the present stage in China, the people are the working class, the peasant class, the petty bourgeoisie and the national bourgeoisie. Under the leadership of the working class and the Communist Party, these classes have united to form their own state and elect their own government; to erect a dictatorship over the lackeys of imperialism--the land lord class, the bureaucratic capitalist class, and the Kuomintang reactionaries and their henchmen which represent these classes--in order to crush them, in order to allow them to operate only within certain limits and prevent them from going outside these limits in words or deeds. If they talk and act wildly, they will be immediately punished.

The democratic system must be realized among the people, granting them freedom of speech, assembly and association. The right to vote is only given to the people and dictatorship over the reactionaries, combine to form the people's democratic dictatorship.

Why must things be done this way? It is obvious that otherwise the revolution would fail, the people would be overtaken by misfortune and the state would perish.

### Ultimate End of State Power

We are asked: "Don't you want to eliminate state authority?" Yes, but not at present. We cannot eliminate state authority now. Why? Because imperialism still exists, domestic reactionaries still exist, and classes still exist in the country. Our present task is to strengthen the machinery of the people's state, which means mainly, the people's army, the people's police and people's court, national defense and protection of the people's interests. This is an essential condition if China is to develop steadily, under the leadership of the working class and the Communist Party, from an agricultural to an industrial country, from a New Democracy to a Socialist and Communist Society, in order to abolish classes and bring about world Communism. The army, police and courts of any state are instruments for classes to oppress classes. To hostile classes, the State apparatus is an instrument of oppression. It is a weapon of violence and not of benevolence.

We are told: "You are not benevolent." Correct. We certainly are not benevolent toward reactionaries and the reactionary classes. Our benevolence applies only to the people and not to activities of the reactionaries and reactionary classes which are outside the people.

The people's state protects the people. Only under a people's state can the people apply democratic methods on a national scale and fully educate and re-educated themselves in order to cast off the influence of reactionaries at home and abroad.

This influence is still very strong, will continue to exist for a long time and cannot be quickly eliminated: to unlearn the bad habits and ideas acquired in the old society, on order not to be led along the incorrect path indicated by the reactionaries, but to continue to advance and develop in the direction of a Socialist and Communist society.

The methods we use in this field are democratic, that is, methods of persuasion and not coercion. If persons break the law, they will be punished, imprisoned or even sentenced to death. But these will be individual cases, differing in principle from the dictatorship carried out over the reactionary class as a class.

## Educating Enemies: Educating Friends

After the political regime of the reactionaries has been overthrown, individual members of the reactionary class and reactionary clique will also be given land, work and a means of subsistence, so that by working they will be able to re-educate themselves through work, provided they do not rebel, disrupt or sabotage. If they refuse to work, the people's state will compel them to. Furthermore, political, propaganda and educational work will be carried out among them, as was done among captured officers. This also can be regarded as benevolent administration. But this will be done through compulsion in relation to the former hostile classes and cannot be compared with our educational work among revolutionaries. Such re-education of the reactionary classes can only be carried out in a state of the people's democratic dictatorship.

If this work is properly done, the main exploiting classes of China--the landlord and bureaucratic capitalist or monopoly-capitalist class--will be finally eliminated. As for the remaining exploiting class--the national bourgeoisie, extensive educational work can be done among its members at the present stage. When Socialism has been realized, that is, when the nationalization of private enterprise has been carried out, it will be possible to further educate and reform the national bourgeoisie. The people hold a powerful state apparatus and are not afraid of revolt by the national bourgeoisie.

A serious problem is that of educating the peasants. The peasants' economy is scattered. Judging by the experience of the Soviet Union, it will require much time and careful work to socialize agriculture. Without socialization of agriculture, there will be no complete and consolidated Socialism.

In order to carry out the socialization of agriculture, a powerful industry, with state-owned enterprises as the pivot, must be developed. The State of the people's democratic dictatorship must, step by step, solve this problem of the industrialization of the country. This article does not deal with the economic problem, so I shall not go into details on this matter.

## How Chiang Betrayed Sun Yat-sen

In 1924, the first national Kuomintang congress, which was directed personally by Sun Yat-sen and attended by Communists, adopted its famous manifesto which stated: "The so-called democratic system in modern countries is often monopolized by the bourgeoisie and turned into an instrument for oppressing the people. But the democracy of the Kuomintang belongs to the people as a whole and is not the private property of a minority."

Aside from the question of who should lead and who should be led, the democracy mentioned here, when viewed as a general political program, is consistent with the people's democracy or the New Democracy practiced by us. If the state system, which is the common property of the people and not the private property of the bourgeoisie, is supplemented by the leadership of the working class, this state system will be that of the people's democratic dictatorship.

Chiang Kai-shek betrayed Sun Yat-sen and used the dictatorship of bureaucratic capital and landlords as a weapon to oppress the Chinese people. This counter-revolutionary dictatorship existed for 22 years and has now been overthrown by the Chinese people under our leadership.



## Peoples Dictatorship Vs. Reactionary Dictatorship

Foreign reactionaries who censure us for "dictatorship" and "totalitarianism" are in fact the very people who are carrying out dictatorship and totalitarianism of one class--the bourgeoisie--over the proletariat and other people. They are the very people whom Sun Yat-sen described as the bourgeois class in modern countries who are oppressing the people. Chiang Kai-shek's reactionary dictatorship learned from these reactionaries.

Chu Hsi, a philosopher of the Sung Dynasty (960-1260 A.D.), wrote many books and made many speeches which have been forgotten. But there is one sentence which we have not forgotten. It reads: "Do unto others as others do unto you." This is what we are going to do. It means, treat imperialists and their lackeys--the Chiang Kai-shek reactionary clique--as they treated others. Just this and nothing else.

The revolutionary dictatorship and the counter-revolutionary dictatorship are opposite in nature. The former learns from the latter. This process of learning is very important, for if the revolutionary people did not master the methods of ruling over counter-revolutionaries, they would not be able to preserve their regime which would be overthrown by reactionary cliques at home and abroad. The reactionary cliques would then restore their rule over China and bring misery to the revolutionary people.

The basis of the people's democratic dictatorship is the alliance of the working class, peasant class and the urban petty-bourgeois class, and chiefly the alliance of the working class with the peasantry, which constitute 80 to 90% of the population. It is mainly through the strength of these two classes that imperialism and the Kuomintang reactionary clique were overthrown. The transition from New Democracy to Socialism mainly depends on the alliance of these two classes.

The working class must lead the people's democratic dictatorship because the working class is the most far-sighted, just, unselfish and consistently revolutionary class. The history of all revolutions show that without the leadership of the working class the revolution will fail; with the leadership of the working class it will be victorious. In the period of imperialism, no other class in any country can lead any genuine revolution to victory. This has been clearly proved by the fact that the Chinese national bourgeoisie led the revolution on many occasions, but always met with failure.

### The National Bourgeoisie: Ally Not Leader

The national bourgeoisie is very important at the present stage. Imperialism is still close and this enemy is very fierce. It will require a long time for China to realize true economic independence. Only after Chinese industry is developed and the country no longer depends on foreign countries economically, can there be real independence. In China's national economy the proportion of modern industry is still small. There are not yet reliable figures, but according to certain data, it can be estimated that modern industry accounts for only some 10 per cent of the country's general industrial output. To cope with imperialist oppression and to raise our backward economic status a step higher, China must make use of every urban and rural capitalist enterprise which can benefit the national economy and is not detrimental to the people's standard of living. China must unite with the national bourgeoisie in common struggle.

Our present policy is to restrict capitalism and not to eliminate it. But the national bourgeoisie cannot be the leader of the revolution and should not

occupy the main position in the state, for its social and economic position determines its feebleness, its lack of foresight, its lack of courage, and fear of the masses which many of its members display.

Sun Yat-sen advocated "awakening the masses" or "helping the peasants and workers". Who is going to awaken and help them? Sun Yat-sen thought this could be done by the petty and national bourgeoisie. But this was unrealizable. Sun Yat-sen's 40 years of revolutionary work was a failure. Why? Because in the stage of imperialism, it is impossible for the petty and national bourgeoisie to lead any revolution to success.

Our 28 years' experience is quite different. We have acquired invaluable experience. The essence of this experience consists of the following three factors: 1. A disciplined party armed with the theories of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin, using the method of self-criticism and closely linked with the masses. 2. An army led by this party. 3. A united front of various revolutionary sections of society and groups led by this party.

These factors distinguish us from our predecessors. Relying on these three factors, we have won a basic victory, travelled tortuous paths and struggled against rightist and leftist opportunistic tendencies within the party. Whenever serious mistakes were committed in these three matters, the revolution suffered a setback. We learned from the mistakes and setbacks and became wiser. Thus, we were able to work better. Mistakes are unavoidable for any party or person. But we demand that mistakes become fewer. When a mistake is made it must be corrected--the quicker and more thoroughly the better.

#### Victory Only Begins Necessary Work

Our experience can be summarized in the following single point: The people's democratic dictatorship based on the alliance of workers and peasants led by the working class (through the Communist Party), must unite with international revolutionary forces. This is our formula, our main experience, the main point in our program.

In the 28 years of its existence our party has done only one thing--it has won the basic victory. This is worth celebrating because it is the people's victory, and a victory in a huge country. But we have plenty of work before us, what has been done in the past is simply the first step in the ten thousand mile long march. Remnants of the enemy still have to be wiped out, and the serious task of economic reconstruction still lies ahead.

The work we have grown accustomed to will soon be laid aside. We will have to tackle things with which we are unfamiliar. We shall meet with difficulties. The imperialists bank on their belief that we are incapable of tackling the economic job. They watch and wait for us to fail.

We must overcome all difficulties and master what we do not know. We must learn how to deal with economic work from those who know the ropes, no matter who they are. We must acknowledge them as our teachers and learn from them with respect and earnestness. We must not pretend that we know when we do not know. Do not put on bureaucratic airs. Stick to the problems and they will be mastered in a few months, one or two years, or three to five years.

During the early days of the Soviet Union, some Communists did not know how to do economic work. The imperialists waited for them to fail too. But the Communist Party of the Soviet Union won. Under the leadership of Lenin and Stalin

they not only did revolutionary work but also reconstruction. They have already built a great and brilliant Socialist State. The Communist Party of the USSR is our best teacher from whom we must learn. The international and domestic situation is favorable for us. We can put full reliance on the weapon of the people's democratic dictatorship to unite all people throughout the country, with the exception of the reactionaries, and advance steadily towards our goal.

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DISTRIBUTOR'S NOTE

The Committee for a Democratic Far Eastern Policy publishes this article by Mao Tze-Tung, Chairman of the Chinese Communist Party, as an important document for understanding current developments in China. The Committee believes that it deserves the careful study of all serious students of contemporary China whether or not they sympathize with the views expressed.

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