

**MAO TSE-TUNG'S
THOUGHT
IS THE
INVINCIBLE
WEAPON**

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PUBLISHER'S NOTE

A new epoch in which the workers, peasants and soldiers are mastering Marxism-Leninism, Mao Tse-tung's thought, is emerging in China. Here we collect four articles written by the People's Liberation Army men who study and apply Mao Tse-tung's thought in a living way.

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MAO TSE-TUNG'S THOUGHT IS THE INVINCIBLE WEAPON

by the Party Branch of the *Sea Tiger*, a gunboat of the P.L.A. Navy

In 1958, the *Sea Tiger*, along with other gunboats of our navy, sank the U.S.-built Chiang warship *Tuochiang*. In an engagement off Chungwu, Fukien Province, in 1965 our vessel and other gunboats sank the frigate *Yungchang* and seriously damaged the submarine chaser *Yungtai*, both U.S.-built vessels of the Chiang gang.

What did we rely on when our small ships smashed up the enemy's larger vessels? We relied on Mao Tse-tung's thought and on the revolutionary spirit of people armed with Mao Tse-tung's thought.

COMPUTERS CAN WORK OUT THE TECHNICAL CAPABILITIES OF WARSHIPS BUT NOT THE POWER OF MAO TSE-TUNG'S THOUGHT

As soon as naval warfare is mentioned, some people think that victory must go to the side which has ships of greater displacement, speed, firepower, and therefore greater fighting potential. Our practice proves that this is fallacious. No

matter how complicated the technique used in naval warfare may be or how modern the equipment, fighting power is the sum of man plus material — and man is always the decisive factor. In naval warfare, warships are used to defeat the enemy. However, these vessels must be controlled and used by man. Ships are inanimate while men are living beings. However well-equipped a vessel may be, its potential cannot be fully brought into play unless manned by a class-conscious crew. The technical capabilities of a naval ship are limited and can be worked out with computers, but the power of men armed with Mao Tse-tung's thought is incalculable. With this power the capability of a weapon is tripled or even multiplied scores of times. With this power miracles can be performed and the enemy, no matter how strong, can be defeated.

In the Chungwu naval battle the enemy used their technical superiority and advantage in equipment to open concentrated fire on us, lighting up the sea and sending shells screaming over our heads. We paid no attention to this. We dashed fiercely forward and, when we had closed in, opening fire at almost point-blank range, we pinned the enemy down. When the battle was over, one of the prisoners we took aboard stared about him, looked at our guns and the piles of empty shell cases and then peered cautiously below decks. Terror, incredulity and suspicion showed in his face. He was wondering whether we had "new weapons" below. Our men told him that the best

weapon we had was not a gun but something far more powerful than a gun, a plane or an atom bomb and that that something is man armed with Mao Tse-tung's thought, man's proletarian class consciousness, man's courageous spirit.

**HATE THE ENEMY, LOVE THE PEOPLE;
DESTROY SELF-INTEREST, PROMOTE
DEVOTION TO THE PUBLIC INTEREST,
STRENGTHEN THE DETERMINATION TO
DEDICATE ONESELF TO THE
REVOLUTIONARY STRUGGLE**

Where do the class consciousness of the fighters and their courageous spirit come from? Were they born with them? No! They are the result of being nurtured on Mao Tse-tung's great thought. From our practice in revolutionary struggles we have come to realize that without an understanding of class and class struggle there can be no understanding of revolution, and a muddle-head who does not view things from the angle of class struggle will not acquire the true quality of great wisdom and courage. We regard the creative study and application of Chairman Mao's thesis on class and class struggle as a basic lesson in ideological work. It should be studied and applied over and over again so that our officers and men will deepen their hatred for imperialism and the exploiting classes, and strengthen their determination to dedicate themselves to the revolutionary struggle.

Most of our men are from poor or lower-middle peasant families who suffered at the hands of the predatory classes and the reactionaries in the old society. As they studied Chairman Mao's works they linked the past sufferings of their families with the class sufferings of countless working people and this gave birth to their revolutionary spirit of daring to dedicate themselves to the complete liberation of mankind. Sacrifices are bound to occur in fighting, but the fighters know that to die for the revolution is a death in the right cause, a death which in its significance is "weightier than Mount Tai". "Life and death," our men said, "are at once opposites and a unity. Without death there would be no life; without the martyrs' death in the cause of revolution there would be no life of happiness for the people of the whole country today, no good life for the generations to come." We hold no brief for death which is to no purpose. But whenever the people of our country need us to give up our lives we will do so without hesitation.

"This change in world outlook is something fundamental," Chairman Mao has said. To establish a communist world outlook is a repeated struggle towards destroying self-interest and fostering devotion to the public interest. A tradition has been established over the years in our ship of not assigning new comrades to a gun or giving them a weapon at once but of presenting them with copies of "Three Good Old Articles" by Chairman Mao — "Serve the People", "In Memory of Norman

Bethune" and "The Foolish Old Man Who Removed the Mountains". The first lesson is not "Capabilities of a Gunboat" but "Serve the People". In everyday life, fighters must consciously use these articles as weapons to get rid of bourgeois ideas and foster proletarian ones; in battle they must fight with conscious courage in the spirit of these articles. Numerous facts categorically prove that he who has destroyed the concept of private ownership most thoroughly will most firmly establish the concept of public ownership, become most courageous and resourceful, and serve the people in a most complete and thoroughgoing way.

Courage comes with selflessness, with the great thought of Mao Tse-tung. Only when a revolutionary fighter has established a world outlook, when he is ready to live and die for the revolution, can he consciously in battle put eliminating the enemy in the first place and preserving himself in the second place; and not until then can he really understand that it is only by destroying the enemy in large numbers that he can effectively preserve himself; and only when he is unafraid of sacrifice can he minimize sacrifices. The braver we are, the keener and more cool-headed we become, and the greater is the skill with which we fight and the better we fight. The braver we are, the more afraid our enemy become and the harder it is for them to make use of their technical capabilities. The braver we are, the quicker is the enemy destroyed and so the better we are able to preserve

ourselves. As we moved in to attack in the Chung-wu battle, the enemy ships laid down a heavy barrage to hold us off, but one of our gunboats nimbly wove through, shot up to the very jaws of the enemy and shelled them fiercely. This threw the enemy into confusion, beat down their fire and created conditions favourable for us to press home the attack. That gunboat of ours came through unscathed. This was irrefutable evidence that to dare to destroy the enemy is an effective way to preserve ourselves. When we muster up our courage, the enemy will go soft. The blows dealt by our dauntless fighters who are filled with deep-rooted hatred for the enemy will break down his resistance, no matter how tough he is.

**THOSE WHO STUDY CHAIRMAN MAO'S
WORKS THE BEST ARE THE MOST
COURAGEOUS, STAUNCHEST AND MOST
RESOURCEFUL**

For revolutionary fighters to defy death in battle is an extension in a concentrated form of not fearing hardships and difficulties in everyday life. The one who has the resolution to face severe hardships and to work very hard in daily life is the one who in battle will dare to charge forward in the forefront.

The navy's battlefield is the wide ocean and apart from struggling against the class enemy, we often have to battle the elements as well. Our men get sea-sick in rough weather but they stick resolutely to their posts. In winter, the sea winds

and rain cut like knives. In summer the decks are burning hot while down below it is stifling and muggy. With a life so arduous, we teach our fighters to face up to difficulties and take them as a test for steeling their revolutionary spirit. Resolute revolutionary fighters grow up amidst difficulties and hardships and are tempered by storm and stress. Radio operator Ni Yung-hsiang keeps on practising in his cramped room with a temperature of 40°C or higher in summer. When comrades urge him to take a break or to find a cooler place he says bluntly: "If I experience no hardships under normal conditions, how will I pass the test in battle?"

Why is it that our cadres and fighters are willing to train by choice under the most trying conditions? The answer is: They all study Chairman Mao's works, and from these absorb the basic principle of serving the people wholeheartedly. They say: "It is for the Chinese revolution and the world revolution that we undergo all possible hardships and work very hard, and for the happiness of the great majority stay at our posts and patrol in the roughest weather. It was the suffering of our revolutionary forbears which created the new China; today we are prepared to endure in order to create a new, communist world." Signalman Yang Jui-sung wrote in his notebook what he had learnt from Chairman Mao: "We've been on patrol for several nights on end, getting only three hours' sleep a day, but by sleeping a few hours less we ensure that countless people throughout our

motherland can sleep a few hours more. Even if I have to sacrifice my sleep for several more nights, I will do it."

People who readily accept hardships and difficulties for months and years for the sake of the revolution and who are able to die bravely when called upon by the revolution are certainly not acting on some passing impulse. Experience bears out that those fighters who are the best students of Chairman Mao's works have the least selfish ideas and concern themselves least with personal considerations; that they are the ones who best stand the test of hardship and fight most courageously in battle. Sailor Yang Chin-hsing has studied "Serve the People" more than thirty times since he joined the navy and each time his ideological level has been raised. In the battle off Chungwu he fulfilled his signalling duty meritoriously in spite of the deafening guns and the continuous shock from an electric leakage in his damp earphones.

Ke Yi, otherwise known as "Tiger Cub", became a "hard-boned" fighter as a result of studying Chairman Mao's works. He wrote a pledge after studying "Serve the People": "I'll give up my life to do anything if it is for the people; I'll never do anything which will bring harm to the people, not even if I lose my head for it. In battle I'll fight on even when I am wounded, even if I lose a leg or an arm. I'll give my all, my last drop of blood if it will help to win the battle." Fighters with such a high degree of conscious courage in serving

the Chinese people and the people of the world will be the most courageous, staunchest and most resourceful fighters.

**REVOLUTIONARY SPIRIT OF DARING TO
FIGHT COMBINED WITH SCIENTIFIC
ATTITUDE OF BEING GOOD AT FIGHTING**

We must despise large enemy warships as a decisive force and have confidence in being able to sink them, but at the same time we must take them seriously and be sure of being able to destroy them. We must not only have the revolutionary spirit of daring to fight and to win but also the scientific attitude of being good at fighting in order to win.

Before we had any practical experience in sinking large enemy ships with our small gunboats there were different views about this among our men. Some new comrades said it was difficult while some veterans said it was easy. Both views were one-sided. To enable everyone to see the question in all its aspects we looked up Chairman Mao's works for the answer. The comrades in animated discussions stated the difficulties, aired their views and made concrete analyses of the question.

Can small gunboats like ours sink enemy warships? Chairman Mao taught us long ago that **"under the leadership of the Communist Party, as long as there are people, every kind of miracle can be performed"**. We are revolutionary fighters

nurtured by Chairman Mao. Although for the time being our equipment is not yet as good as the enemy's we have the thought of Mao Tse-tung as our invincible "magic weapon", with which we are sure to perform miracles.

But what was the procedure for "performing miracles" since we had no previous experience to rely on? Chairman Mao teaches us that the masses have boundless creative power. If we follow his instructions, we shall have no doubts about the way, for "three cobblers who put their heads together become a master mind". There are paths over the mountain, however high it is; there are ships sailing on the sea, however deep it is. As long as man can think, there is bound to be a way.

The verdict after the discussions was that small gunboats undoubtedly can knock out larger warships but there must be a revolutionary spirit and a scientific attitude. Everyone said that there are difficulties for small gunboats in the sinking of large ships, but as Chairman Mao has taught us long ago, everything has two sides and so do difficulties. Difficulty and easiness are relative and under given conditions they can transform themselves into each other. Difficulties mean lack of practice and lack of understanding of the laws governing things. As soon as the laws are grasped through practice things will become easy. However, if difficulties are regarded as absolute, unchangeable, formidable and not to be tackled, then the laws governing things can never be understood and grasped and difficulties will always re-

main difficulties — and even what is not difficult will become difficult.

With this thought in mind we made a detailed analysis of each aspect of the enemy ships and concluded that although they were armoured they were not invulnerable. Chairman Mao teaches us that all things are interlinked and mutually conditioned. This also applies to the enemy vessel whose strong features were interlinked with its weak spots. If we avoided the enemy's strong features and attacked them where they were weak, then what was weak in them would become even weaker and what was comparatively resistant would become less resistant. In the fight with the frigate *Tuochiang* we first struck at the enemy's weak spots to turn his strengths into weaknesses. We aimed at the bridge, the gun mountings, enemy personnel, in fact, everything above the deck to destroy all there. Soon the enemy's guns were silenced, and the armour-plated ship was immediately reduced into a paper tiger and sent to the bottom.

THEY FIGHT WITH THEIR SUPERIORITY IN FIRE-POWER; WE FIGHT WITH OUR SUPERIORITY IN POLITICS

In the past some people saw fighting power in terms of the calibre and number of guns and the ship's displacement, holding that superiority belonged to the side which possessed all these advantages. This is looking at things from a metaphysical point of view. These people saw only the

size of the enemy vessel and crew but not that the enemy are not of one heart and mind, are low in morale and that the greater their numbers, the greater their disorder. They saw only the enemy vessel's greater displacement but not our advantages in small size, shallow draught and high manoeuvrability. They saw the number and designed capabilities of the enemy's guns but not that the guns are only as effective as the men who operate them. Our fighters have put it well: "Accurate shooting comes from red heart." From long experience in fighting we have worked out a special "formula" for calculating a vessel's fire-power, that is, the sum total of the designed fire-power multiplied by the fighting will of the men behind the gun. The higher the fighting will of the crew, the greater the vessel's fighting power. In morale, our armed forces have an absolute advantage over the enemy; they are beyond compare.

In naval engagements we apply the principle of letting the enemy rely on his superior fire-power and ourselves rely on our political superiority. We set against the enemy's fear of death our courage in defying death. In this way we not only bring our political superiority into full play but also transform our inferiority in weapon and equipment into a strong point; we whittle away at the enemy's already low morale and by doing this transform his superiority in weapon and equipment into a weak point.

Chairman Mao has said: **"In given conditions, each of the contradictory aspects within a thing**

transforms itself into its opposite, changes its position to that of its opposite.” Generally speaking, the large enemy warships have correspondingly greater fire-power and our small ships correspondingly less fire-power. In actual fighting, however, greater or less fire-power is not absolute; in given conditions they can transform themselves into their opposites, and the given condition here is the mental make-up of the men. In the Chungwu battle, while we were still at long range and our shelling was not yet effective, their firing was regular and intense. But as soon as we closed in and brought our guns to bear upon them, the enemy were thrown into confusion and their gunfire became more and more erratic. In another action we saw one enemy gun firing wildly up into the sky. Later we learnt from a prisoner that that enemy gun-layer was a coward who dared not expose himself in order to take aim. He kept lowering his head so the muzzle of his gun went up higher and higher! What is the use of a weapon, even of the most advanced design, in the hands of such a man?

**LET THEM RELY ON THEIR TECHNICAL
EQUIPMENT TO FIGHT AT A DISTANCE; WE
WILL RELY ON OUR COURAGE AND
RESOURCEFULNESS TO FIGHT AT CLOSE
QUARTERS**

After these engagements, our understanding of Chairman Mao's teachings on people's war has