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PARTY'S GENERAL LINE AND
MAO TSE-TUNG'S MILITARY
THINKING

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高举党的总路线和
毛泽东军事思想的红旗阔步前进

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THE PEOPLE'S

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I

TEN years have passed since the founding of the People's Republic of China, our great country. All the officers and men of the Chinese People's Liberation Army join with the people throughout the land in joyful celebration of this great, historic festival of the entire nation.

Ten years is only a brief moment in the span of history. Yet in these ten years our country has achieved the great victory of the socialist revolution immediately following the victory of the new-democratic revolution. In the struggle between the two roads of socialism and capitalism, socialism has basically defeated capitalism in all fields. The history of class exploitation, which lasted thousands of years, has in the main been ended. The 650 million Chinese people, one fourth of the world's population, have entered socialist society. Following three years of economic rehabilitation, our country fulfilled the First Five-Year Plan for Development of the National Economy (1953-1957) and thus laid the preliminary foundation for socialist industrialization. In 1958, on the recommendation of Comrade Mao Tse-tung, the Communist Party formulated the general line for building socialism — go all out, aim high and achieve greater, faster, better and more economical results. Under the guiding light of this general line, industry and agriculture, culture and education began their great leap forward, making it possible for our country to fulfil the major targets of the Second Five-Year Plan three years ahead

of schedule. Last autumn, in less than two months, people's communes were swiftly set up throughout our countryside. In less than a year they have consolidated themselves and embarked on the road of sound development and they are ever more clearly displaying their superiority. China's unparalleled speed in building socialism and her brilliant achievements testify eloquently to the inexhaustible power and wisdom of the industrious and courageous Chinese people in creating history under the leadership of the great Chinese Communist Party and the great people's leader, Comrade Mao Tse-tung. Imperialism, however, has not stopped its sabotage against us for a moment and still dreams of overthrowing us. Not long after the founding of our Republic, U.S. imperialism launched the war of aggression in Korea and, at the same time, seized our Taiwan in a vain attempt to occupy Korea and then to strangle the new-born People's Republic of China. This attempt ended in ignominious defeat. Now China's great leap forward and the people's communes have thrown the imperialists into terror and confusion and they have unleashed the most vicious slanders and attacks against China. But again they have failed miserably. Despite all the obstruction and sabotage of imperialism and reaction, China's wheel of history is rolling forward at a speed of "twenty years concentrated in a day." The Chinese people have now grown strong!

Great successes have been achieved on the national defence front, as on other fronts of socialist construction, in the past ten years. After the founding of the People's Republic of China, the Chinese People's Liberation Army rapidly mopped up the remnants of the Kuomintang reactionary forces and liberated the entire Chinese mainland.

Together with the Korean People's Army, the Chinese People's Volunteers defeated the armed forces of the No. 1 imperialism of the world. U.S. imperialism was exposed before the peoples of the world as a paper tiger. In liberating the off-shore islands, guarding the country's frontiers and its territorial waters and air, punishing Chiang Kai-shek's forces on Quemoy, preparing for the liberation of Taiwan and putting down the rebellion of Tibetan reaction, our army has been successfully discharging the duties entrusted to it by the people of the country. Along the national defence frontiers and at strategic points in depth, modern, large-scale national defence projects have been undertaken, so that our country has begun to have quite a complete network of modern defence installations. Guided by the correct line laid down by the Central Committee of the Party and Comrade Mao Tse-tung for building our army into a fine, modernized, revolutionary army, and with the assistance of the Soviet Union and other fraternal countries, the army itself has undergone a new major change in the history of its development. The technical equipment of the army has been improved and a series of reforms concerning the command, organization, training and other systems of the army has been effected. Now our army has developed from a single arm into a composite force of different arms. The major technical branches of the land forces have been markedly strengthened. A powerful air force has been built up and the navy has grown correspondingly. In the course of this modernization, the Party's absolute leadership in the army has been consolidated, the glorious tradition of the unity between the army and the civilian population, between officers and men, has been developed and the mass line has been carried out in various fields

of work. Following the great rectification campaign, inspired by the Party's general line for building socialism and the nation-wide big leap forward, the army has also made an all-out, comprehensive big leap forward in its work. As part of our national defence forces, in addition to a politically firm and technically modern standing army, we have built up a militia force of hundreds of millions of people. With this militia force, the entire population can be turned into a military force if ever imperialism dares to attack our country. In co-ordination with the standing army, this militia force can overwhelm the enemy in the flames of an all-out people's war. In addition to increasing its own strength, our army has at all times taken a great part in national construction and social reforms. In the political report to the Second Session of the Eighth National Congress of the Party, delivered on behalf of the Central Committee, Comrade Liu Shao-chi pointed out that "the People's Liberation Army is the defender as well as the builder of the cause of socialism."¹ Our army has in the past ten years faithfully carried out this honourable task.

In the past ten years our country has been undergoing a great change—the transition from the thorough victory of the democratic revolution to the carrying out of the socialist revolution and socialist construction. Militarily, our army has advanced from a single arm to a modern composite force of different arms; this is also a big leap forward. In these circumstances, we are confronted with a series of vital problems concerning the

¹ *Second Session of the Eighth National Congress of the Communist Party of China*, Foreign Languages Press, Peking, 1958, p. 54.

building up of the army. The main problem is: Is it still important in the stage of the modernization of the army for politics to be in command? Concretely speaking, what place has political and ideological work? What attitude should the members of the armed forces adopt towards the country's economic construction and mass movements? What is the correct way to handle intra-army relations and to strengthen still further the Party's leadership in the army? All these questions must be settled in the new stage of the building up of the army. In the past ten years, we have achieved the successes and victories mentioned above because we have dealt with these vital problems on the whole quite correctly. Today, on the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the founding of our Republic, we would like to dwell mainly on some of our experiences relating to this.

II

The realization of socialism and communism is the lofty ideal for which the officers and men of our army have struggled heroically for many years. Even in the stage of the democratic revolution, the Party never relaxed in educating its armed forces in the ideal of socialism and communism. The great majority of the comrades of our army displayed resolution and courage in the period of the democratic revolution and, in the period of the socialist revolution, exerted their efforts heroically for socialism and showed themselves undaunted fighters in the cause. However, quite a number of comrades lack a high degree of socialist consciousness, though they have certain aspirations for socialism and wish to see its frui-

tion. Consequently, the thinking of some of them often remained at the stage of the democratic revolution while the socialist revolution had already begun. It is in the very course of the socialist revolution that quite a few of them gradually prepare themselves mentally for the socialist revolution. The socialist revolution is much broader and deeper than the democratic revolution. Its aim is to liquidate all systems of exploitation and the private ownership of the means of production. Each step in this revolution has a powerful impact on the life and thinking of the several hundred million people of our country, and the various ideological trends in society are inevitably reflected, directly or indirectly, in the army. If adequate mental preparation for the socialist revolution and serious self-remoulding are lacking, the revolutionary army man cannot possibly maintain a firm stand in the socialist revolution and, consequently, cannot possibly carry through the Party's general line for building socialism in a conscious, resolute manner. When socialism actually comes and private ownership of the means of production by the bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie is actually coming to an end, he will therefore be taken by surprise and even lose his bearings. Thus the germ of bourgeois ideology would spread in that section of our Party and army where resistance is weak and exercise a corrosive and splitting influence on our Party and army. Consequently, we would encounter internal resistance in the struggle for the realization of socialism.

As two opposing classes, the bourgeoisie and the working class do not exist within our army, but the struggle between bourgeois and working-class ideology does exist. This ideological struggle is a reflection of the struggle between the two roads, socialist and capitalist, in the

transition period. As the situation now stands, the transformation of the old economic system of society has been completed in the main, but not fully; the economic system of society has been changed, but remnant bourgeois ideological and political activities still remain and the social basis for this, though shrinking, is still there to a certain extent. The force of habit of the bourgeoisie and small producers is a kind of social basis for bourgeois ideology which still finds a place among a section of the people and would become active and cause trouble when the opportunity arises. Either socialist or capitalist ideology must dominate the minds of the people. Therefore, in the transition period, the struggle to enhance proletarian ideology and liquidate bourgeois ideology remains vital at all times in building up the army. None of the work of our army, including its modernization, can be divorced from this ideological struggle. This political and ideological struggle between the working class and the bourgeoisie rises and ebbs, rises again and ebbs again, like the tides; it is far from over to this day and will not end until classes are finally and completely liquidated. Consequently, our work of socialist ideological education cannot be completed all at once. With the rise and ebb of the class struggle, it will necessarily be carried on sometimes steadily and evenly, in the form of long-term theoretical and policy education, and at other times in the form of large-scale rectification and ideological remoulding campaigns. Socialist ideology assumes its position and expands step by step through education and struggle. Every revolutionary must go through uninterrupted revolution ideologically. The *san fan* movement (against corruption, waste and bureaucracy), the movement to resist U.S. aggression and aid

Korea, the movement to study the Party's general line for the transition period, the movement to clean out the counter-revolutionaries, the rectification campaign, the anti-rightist struggle, the great debate on socialism around the central question of agricultural co-operation, and the study of the Party's general line for building socialism with the people's communes and the great leap forward as its main content—all these things which we carried out during the past ten years represent highly successful political and ideological work. Of course we do not rest content with these successes and do not believe that the future tasks on the political and ideological fronts will be any lighter because of these successes.

In waging the struggle on the political and ideological fronts, we always maintain that as far as the overwhelming majority of comrades are concerned this is mainly a question of education and raising their level. The officers and men of our army ardently love socialism, fight for it resolutely and can withstand tests of great stress. Those who insist on taking the road of capitalism and are deliberately against socialism are merely a handful of individuals from alien classes who have sneaked into the army. However, since the overwhelming majority of the officers and men of our army come from the peasantry, unavoidably some comrades sometimes consider questions from the temporary, partial interests of small producers and do not clearly understand certain questions of socialist change; unavoidably, too, a small number of comrades are affected, in the great storm and stress of the socialist revolution, by bourgeois and petty-bourgeois, and especially well-to-do middle peasant, ideological influences and reveal an insufficiently resolute standpoint. This is the situation and, if it were allowed to develop,

bourgeois ideology would spread in our army. Therefore, we must not slacken ideological work for a moment. These ideological questions belong to the category of contradictions among the people and must not be solved by methods used for handling contradictions between ourselves and the enemy, by coercive, high-handed methods; they should be solved only by democratic methods, methods of discussion, criticism, persuasion and education.

During the new historical period, political and ideological work in the army is very important and must never be slackened. "Political work is the life-blood of our army" — this is a truth which has been proved by decades of revolutionary practice of our army. Comrade Mao Tse-tung in one of his editorial notes in the book *Socialist Upsurge in China's Countryside* pointed out: "Political work is the life-blood of all economic work. This is particularly true at a time when the economic system of a society is undergoing a fundamental change."¹ This statement, of course, applies equally well to the army. In building up our army into a modernized army, we should of course pay very great attention to improving equipment and mastering technique. But we must at the same time pay attention to the other side, which is indeed the predominant side, that is, we must not forget political interests, we must emphasize the political side. Our army is an army to serve political interests, the political interests of socialism, and we must see to it that political interests guide our military and day-to-day work. This is most fundamental; if political and ideological work is not done well, everything else is out of the ques-

¹ *Socialist Upsurge in China's Countryside*, Foreign Languages Press, Peking, 1957, p. 302.

tion. The great achievements in the varied work of our army in the past ten years represent, first and foremost, the blossoming and fruition of socialist ideology. Henceforth it will still be a fundamental task in the building of our army to strengthen theoretical education in Marxism-Leninism, to strengthen education in socialism and the general line of the Party and to link this closely with the practice of the contemporary revolutionary struggle and the change in the thinking of the members of the army — so as continuously to eliminate from people's minds the vestiges of bourgeois and petty-bourgeois ideology and enhance their socialist consciousness.

III

The Chinese People's Liberation Army, which was born and grew up in the midst of the people's revolutionary struggles, has always regarded the revolutionary mass movement as its own affair. When the masses rise up and wage hard, bitter struggles against the old system and for the transformation of society and of nature, the People's Liberation Army always stands as one with the people and gives them wholehearted, powerful support; it participates directly in the seething, stirring mass movements in which, at the same time, it receives the greatest and best schooling. And when hostile forces attempt to obstruct and undermine the revolutionary mass movements, the People's Liberation Army always stands behind the masses. At the same time, the vast, surging mass movements, in turn, always inspire and educate the army greatly, serving as a revolutionary crucible in which the political consciousness of the army is tempered and

raised. The People's Liberation Army, under extremely difficult conditions, has been able to defeat an enemy far superior both in equipment and numbers precisely because it is an armed force that has flesh and blood ties with the masses who, when fully mobilized, "create a vast sea and drown the enemy in it, remedy our shortage in arms and other things, and secure the prerequisites to overcome every difficulty in the war."¹ Such relationship between the People's Liberation Army and the masses of the people is determined by the very nature of the People's Liberation Army and the very purpose for which it was founded. This was so in the period of democratic revolution and remains so in the period of socialist revolution. In March 1949, when the democratic revolution was attaining decisive victory and a new stage of socialist revolution was about to begin, Comrade Mao Tse-tung, at the Second Plenary Session of the Seventh Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party, again issued a timely, great call to us — that the People's Liberation Army shall for ever be a fighting force and at the same time a working force.

After the liberation of the mainland, the major task of our army shifted from fighting to training; instead of living scattered in villages as before, it moved into regular barracks and thus had less opportunity for direct contact with the masses. At that time some comrades held that since there was a division of labour between economic construction and the building up of national defence and that since army training was very heavy work, it appeared as if there were no need for the army to take part

¹ *Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung*, Lawrence & Wishart, London, 1954, Vol. II, p. 204.

in the revolutionary struggles of the masses of the people or in national economic construction, no need to take part in "civilian" business. We criticized this wrong view and firmly corrected it in time. We have continued to develop our army's long-standing, glorious tradition of simultaneously carrying out the three great tasks—fighting, mass work and production, and we have launched various activities in support of the mass movements in line with the requirements of different stages of socialist transformation and socialist construction. During the past ten years, the People's Liberation Army has vigorously supported and enthusiastically joined in every major social reform and mass movement. The spokesmen of the imperialists who are violently hostile to our socialist cause describe our army's active participation in the people's revolutionary movements as "armed suppression." Nothing, indeed, is more absurd. In fact, the imperialist bosses themselves are accustomed to employing their reactionary armed forces in brutal suppression of the people of their own countries and of the national-democratic movements of the colonial peoples. Their slanders and calumnies against our army only reveal their mortal fear of the close unity between our powerful People's Liberation Army and the more than 600 million people, and their vain attempts to cover up their own nefarious deeds with lies and fabrications.

The big leap forward in our national economy that began in 1958 along with the great upsurge to form the people's communes has shown the boundless vitality of our Party's general line for socialist construction. This line, which was readily grasped by the masses, has become a tremendous material force and brought about a vast mass movement unprecedented in history. What should

be our attitude to this mighty mass movement? Should we plunge into it and support the masses with all our hearts? Or should we stand outside the movement and pick fault with the masses here and there, or even stand in opposition to the movement and against the masses? In sharp contrast to the right opportunists, the People's Liberation Army, long brought up on the teachings of the Party and Comrade Mao Tse-tung and standing as one with the people, resolutely supports this great mass movement. The officers and men of the People's Liberation Army fully understand from their personal experience that the big leap forward and the people's communes have their objective material base and are the inevitable products of China's historical development. The Party and Comrade Mao Tse-tung concentrated the will and creative energy of the masses and pushed this mighty movement forward. The mighty upsurge of revolutionary fervour and socialist consciousness manifested by the broad masses of the labouring people during the big leap forward and the people's commune movement is due precisely to their determination to change our backward economic situation as quickly as possible, to put an end to our state of being "poor and blank" and to build our country into a great socialist state with highly developed modern industry, agriculture, science and culture. The officers and men of the People's Liberation Army fully understand this lofty aspiration and burning enthusiasm of the people; they see eye to eye with the people and are deeply moved by their great determination. The officers and men of the People's Liberation Army know only too well that the imperialists and their henchmen are eyeing our socialist construction with hostility and will never miss a single chance to sabotage. This makes it all the more necessary