

**IMPERIALISM AND  
ALL REACTIONARIES ARE  
PAPER TIGERS**

*(Enlarged Edition)\**

FOREIGN LANGUAGES PRESS  
PEKING

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*Printed in the People's Republic of China*

## EDITOR'S NOTE

*Comrade Mao Tse-tung on "Imperialism and All Reactionaries Are Paper Tigers"* is a political document of prime importance. It gives a correct, penetrating and systematic answer to the question of how to assess the forces of revolution and the forces of reaction in their true light.

We are putting out this collection in order to help the readers to gain a better understanding of this important political document, the views of the Chinese people on the present world situation and the current struggle in the Taiwan Straits area.

Included in this booklet are the full text of *Comrade Mao Tse-tung on "Imperialism and All Reactionaries Are Paper Tigers,"* some important documents on the Taiwan issue, and a number of relevant editorials and commentaries of *Hongqi* (Red Flag) and *Renmin Ribao* (People's Daily), organs of the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party.

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# ***PART I***





## COMRADE MAO TSE-TUNG ON "IMPERIALISM AND ALL REACTIONARIES ARE PAPER TIGERS"

Renmin Ribao Editorial Department, October 27, 1958

*How to assess the forces of revolution and the forces of reaction in their true light is still a major problem in China and in the whole world as well. A lot of people have never been able to do this correctly. Imperialism and its lackeys in all countries are like the setting sun in the western sky, while socialism and the national revolutionary movements which have its support are like the rising sun in the eastern sky. This is the characteristic of our times. The days when the imperialists could ride roughshod where they pleased are gone for ever and they are on their last legs. It is the reactionaries that should fear the revolutionary forces, and not the other way round. At present, there are quite a few people who still fail to see this, who still cherish superstitions and illusions, who still stand in awe of imperialism, U.S. imperialism in particular. They still remain passive in face of this problem. All progressives, all Marxists and revolutionaries must do some persuading among these people so as to help the broad masses gain revolutionary confidence and determination, revolutionary foresight and firmness. This is an indispensable spiritual condition for quickening the triumphant advance of the revolutionary cause.*

Comrade Mao Tse-tung has often told us that in considering a problem, one must grasp its essentials and not be misled by superficialities. During the last thirty-odd years, at every crucial moment in the class struggle in our country, Comrade Mao Tse-tung has made a penetrating analysis of the state of the struggle on the basis of the science of Marxism-Leninism, and has shown that all reactionaries are doomed and the revolutionary cause is bound to triumph. He uses the term "paper tiger" to describe imperialism and the reactionary forces which seem to be powerful but are actually weak; he uses the old saying "a single spark can start a prairie fire" to symbolize the new-born forces growing up day by day in the course of revolution, and on the basis of this estimation maps out his strategic plans. Comrade Mao Tse-tung's idea, that the forces of revolution are invincible and that the reactionary forces, though temporarily powerful, are bound to come to grief, has armed the Chinese Communists, educated and inspired the Chinese people and led us to our great victories. This wise conclusion of Comrade Mao Tse-tung, that "imperialism and all reactionaries are paper tigers," has already been borne out by the victory of the Chinese revolution and it will continue to be borne out by the successful development of the cause of revolution in China and the whole world.

The editorial department of the magazine "Shijie Zhishi" (World Culture) has recently collected and published a series of excerpts from the articles, speeches and interviews of Comrade Mao Tse-tung on the theme that "imperialism and all reactionaries are paper tigers." This is a matter of political significance. It is very valuable for the people's fight against imperialist aggression and oppression, especially that of U.S. imperialism. We

*publish here the material collected, with the addition of some important related materials and some stylistic changes and re-paragraphing.*

*The material falls into three parts. The first part deals with the idea that imperialism and all reactionaries representing the moribund forces have no future, and that their momentary rampancy means nothing but their last dying kicks. The second part points out that imperialism and all reactionaries are outwardly strong but inwardly feeble, and there is every reason for the revolutionaries to despise them, but they deserve our full attention in the course of every concrete struggle. The third part describes the essential features of the current international situation, in which the East wind prevails over the West wind and the forces of socialism have outstripped those of imperialism. Although most of these articles, speeches and interviews have already been published and only a small part has not appeared before, although they range over a period of twenty years and are published in the form of a collection, they still read like a fresh and integrated political essay. That is because the fundamental contradiction between imperialism and its lackeys on the one hand and the peoples of all lands on the other has not yet been solved, and because U.S. imperialism especially is baring its teeth and threatening world peace with an atomic war—a tense situation which exercises the minds of the oppressed and menaced people, who urgently demand the solution of this contradiction. That is why readers are naturally interested in Comrade Mao Tse-tung's discussion on this question of whether or not imperialism and all reactionaries are paper tigers, which is the primary and major issue in the manifold problems relating to the solution of this contradiction.*

## I

In *On New Democracy*, a work of historic significance published in January 1940, Comrade Mao Tse-tung pointed out that capitalism has reached the stage of decay and death while communism is "sweeping the world with the momentum of a landslide and the power of a thunderbolt":

"Communism is at once the complete proletarian ideological system and a new social system. Different from any other ideological system or social system, it is the most complete, the most progressive, the most revolutionary and the most rational system since human history began. The ideological system and social system of feudalism have a place only in the museum of history. The ideological system and social system of capitalism have also become museum-pieces in one part of the world, in the Soviet Union, while in other countries they resemble 'a person on the brink of death sinking fast like the sun setting beyond the western hills,' and they too will soon be relegated to the museum. On the other hand, the communist ideological system and social system enjoy perpetual youth and are sweeping the world with the momentum of a landslide and the power of a thunderbolt."

In *On New Democracy*, Comrade Mao Tse-tung further pointed out that the unrestrained violence of all reactionaries representing the decaying forces means their last dying kicks:

"The unrestrained violence of all these dark forces of reaction, domestic and foreign, has brought calamity to our nation, but this very violence indicates that, while the dark forces have still some strength left, it is their final struggle and that the masses of the people are

approaching victory. This is true of China, of the East and of the whole world."

On June 17, 1945, Comrade Mao Tse-tung pointed out, in an address delivered at a memorial meeting for Chinese revolutionary martyrs, that the more reactionary the reactionaries become the nearer they are to their doom:

"All reactionaries attempt to stamp out revolution by mass murder and think that the more people they massacre, the weaker the revolution will become. But, contrary to this reactionary wishful thinking, the fact is that the more people the reactionaries massacre, the greater becomes the strength of the revolution and the nearer the reactionaries come to their doom. This is an irresistible law."

On November 6, 1957, Comrade Mao Tse-tung at the meeting of the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. celebrating the 40th anniversary of the October Revolution declared:

"The socialist system will eventually replace the capitalist system. This is an objective law independent of human will. No matter how hard the reactionaries try to hold back the wheel of history, revolution will take place sooner or later and will surely triumph. 'To pick up a rock only to crush his own toes' is a Chinese saying used to describe the act of some fools. The reactionaries of every country are this kind of fool. Their multiform persecution of revolutionary people can only end in arousing the people to wider and more intensive revolution. Didn't the multiform persecution of revolutionary people by the Russian tsar and Chiang Kai-shek serve precisely to stimulate the great Russian and Chinese revolutions?"

In a speech entitled *New-Democratic Constitutional Government* delivered in Yen-an on February 20, 1940 before the As-

sociation for Advancing the Establishment of Constitutional Government, Comrade Mao Tse-tung exposed Chiang Kai-shek's deceitful propaganda about the establishment of a constitutional government and showed that in the end "their (the reactionaries') schemes always backfire."

"The die-hards in the world may be die-hards today, tomorrow and even the day after tomorrow, but they cannot be die-hards for ever; they will have to change in the end. Take Wang Ching-wei for instance; after being a die-hard for a long time, he could not keep on playing the die-hard any longer in the anti-Japanese arena and had to fall into the arms of Japan. Take Chang Kuo-tao as another example; he was also a die-hard for a long time, but he, too, took to his heels after we held a number of meetings to wrestle with him. The die-hards are hard, but not hard unto death; after playing the die-hard for some time, in the end they have to change, to change into something so filthy as to be beneath contempt, like a heap of dog's dirt. There are some who have changed for the better because they came to see their mistakes after we had repeatedly wrestled with them. At any rate, it is certain that the die-hards will change. They always have a number of schemes in hand, schemes to reap profits at the expense of others, to act the double-dealer, and so on. But their schemes always backfire. They always start by doing harm to others but end by ruining themselves. We once said that Chamberlain was 'picking up a rock only to crush his own toes,' and we were right. Chamberlain was formerly bent on picking up Hitler as a rock to crush the toes of the people of the Soviet Union, but on that day in September last year, when war broke out between

Germany on the one side and England and France on the other, the rock in Chamberlain's hand dropped on his own toes. It is still hurting him. There are many similar instances in China as well. Yuan Shih-kai wanted to crush the toes of the common people, but he finally got his own crushed and died after having been emperor for a few months. Tuan Chi-jui, Hsu Shih-chang, Tsao Kun, Wu Pei-fu and others all wanted to repress the people, but were all overthrown by the people in the end. Anyone who tries to reap profits at the expense of others will come to a bad end."

On April 24, 1945, Comrade Mao Tse-tung delivered his famous political report *On Coalition Government* to the Seventh National Congress of the Communist Party of China. In the section headed "Our Specific Programme" Comrade Mao Tse-tung warned against the attempt of the Kuomintang reactionaries to carry out anti-popular conspiratorial activities by convoking a "national assembly," and predicted that by following this reactionary line "they are putting a noose round their own necks" and are heading for disaster. Comrade Mao Tse-tung said:

"The measures which our anti-popular heroes are going to adopt in accordance with their line of disunity, will lead them to disaster. They are putting a noose round their own necks which will never be loosened, and this noose is the 'national assembly.' They planned to use the so-called 'national assembly' as a magic wand, first, to counter the proposal for a coalition government, second, to maintain the dictatorship, and third, to find some justification for a civil war. History, however, will by its own logic take a course contrary to their wishes, and they are 'picking up a rock only to crush their own toes.'"

In a commentary *On the Danger of the Hurley Policy* that he wrote for the *Hsinhua News Agency* on July 12, 1945, Comrade Mao Tse-tung pointed out that the U.S. policy towards China had created the crisis of civil war in China; he warned that the U.S. policy, which was hostile to the Chinese people, would result in "endless trial and tribulation" for the U.S. government and people:

"From the lips of the selfsame Hurley, the Kuomintang government represented by Chiang Kai-shek suddenly became the Beauty while the Chinese Communist Party became the Beast; he even bluntly declared that the United States would co-operate only with Chiang Kai-shek and not with the Chinese Communist Party. This, of course, is not just Hurley's personal view but the view of a group in the U.S. government; it is a wrong and dangerous view. . . . If Hurley's policy continues, the U.S. government will fall hopelessly into the deep, stinking cesspool of Chinese reaction; it will place itself in opposition to the hundreds of millions of awakened or awakening Chinese people, and become a hindrance to the Anti-Japanese War at present and to world peace in the future. . . . One thing is certain however: if Hurley's policy, which aids and abets the anti-popular forces in China in opposition to such vast numbers of Chinese people, is to continue, it will place a crushing burden on the government and people of the United States and plunge them into endless trial and tribulation; this is a point that should be brought home to the people of the United States."

In his concluding speech at the Seventh National Congress of the Communist Party of China on June 11, 1945, which was later published under the title "How the Foolish Old Man Removed the Mountains," Comrade Mao Tse-tung said:



"The U.S. government's policy of supporting Chiang Kai-shek and opposing the Communist Party is proof of the unrestrained violence of the American reactionaries. But all the scheming of the reactionaries, domestic or foreign, to prevent the Chinese people from achieving victory is doomed to failure. In the world today democracy is the main current and reaction against democracy is only a little eddy. Reaction is attempting to sweep away the movement of national independence and people's democracy, but this little eddy can never become the main current."

The reactionaries are bound to collapse and the revolution is bound to triumph. In his concluding speech at the Seventh National Congress of the Communist Party of China, Comrade Mao Tse-tung called on the people to have confidence in the certain victory of the revolution. He cited the ancient Chinese fable, "How the Foolish Old Man Removed the Mountains," to show that provided the revolutionary people have confidence, do not fear the reactionaries and have the determination to persist in the struggle to the very end, the revolution will certainly triumph:

"In popularizing the line of the Congress, our aim is to inspire the whole Party and the whole people with confidence that the victory of the revolution is certain. First of all, we must inspire the vanguard of the revolution so that, resolute and ready for self-sacrifice, they will overcome all difficulties in the struggle for victory. This, however, is not enough; we must also inspire the mass of the people throughout the country so that they too will join us whole-heartedly in the common struggle for victory. We must instil into them the belief that China belongs to the Chinese people and not to the reactionaries. There is an ancient fable called 'How the