



SELECTED WORKS
OF
MAO TSE-TUNG

Volume IV

WORKERS OF ALL COUNTRIES, UNITE!

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Volume IV

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**THE THIRD
REVOLUTIONARY CIVIL WAR
PERIOD**

THE SITUATION AND OUR POLICY AFTER THE VICTORY IN THE WAR OF RESISTANCE AGAINST JAPAN*

August 13, 1945

These are days of tremendous change in the situation in the Far East. The surrender of Japanese imperialism is now a foregone conclusion. The decisive factor for Japan's surrender is the entry of the Soviet Union into the war. A million Red Army troops are entering China's Northeast; this force is irresistible. Japanese imperialism can no longer continue the fight.¹ The Chinese people's hard and bitter War of Resistance is crowned with victory. As a historical stage, the War of Resistance Against Japan is now over.

In these circumstances, what are the relations among the different classes in China and what are the relations between the Kuomintang and the Communist Party at present? What will they be like in the future? What is the policy of our Party? These are questions of great concern to the people of the whole country and to all members of our Party.

What about the Kuomintang? Look at its past, and you can tell its present; look at its past and present, and you can tell its future. In the past, this party carried on a counter-revolutionary civil war for ten whole years. During the War of Resistance it launched three large-scale anti-Communist campaigns,² in 1940, 1941 and 1943, each time attempting to develop the attack into a country-wide civil war. It was only because of the correct policy adopted by our Party and the opposition of the people of the whole country that its attempts failed. As everyone knows, Chiang Kai-shek, the political representative of China's big landlords and big bourgeoisie, is a most brutal and treacherous fellow. His policy has been to look on with folded arms, wait for victory, conserve his forces and prepare for civil war. Indeed, the victory he has been waiting for has arrived, and now

this "generalissimo" is about to "come down from the mountain".³ In the past eight years we have changed places with Chiang Kai-shek – formerly we were on the mountain and he was by the water;⁴ during the War of Resistance we were behind the enemy lines and he went up the mountain. Now he is coming down from the mountain, coming down to seize the fruits of victory.

During the past eight years the people and army of our Liberated Areas, receiving no aid whatsoever from outside and relying solely on their own efforts, liberated vast territories and resisted and pinned down the bulk of the Japanese invading forces and practically all the puppet troops. Only by our determined resistance and heroic struggle were the 200 million people in the Great Rear Area⁵ saved from being trampled underfoot by the Japanese aggressors and the regions inhabited by these 200 million people saved from Japanese occupation. Chiang Kai-shek hid on Mount Omei with guards in front of him – the guards were the Liberated Areas, the people and army of the Liberated Areas. In defending the 200 million people of the Great Rear Area, we protected this "generalissimo" as well and gave him both the time and the space to sit around waiting for victory with folded arms. Time – eight years one month. Space – an area inhabited by 200 million people. These conditions we provided for him. But for us, he could not have stood by looking on. Is the "generalissimo" grateful to us, then? No, not he! This fellow has never known what it is to be grateful. How did Chiang Kai-shek climb to power? By the Northern Expedition,⁶ by the first period of co-operation between the Kuomintang and the Communist Party,⁷ by the support given him by the people, who had not yet seen through him. Once in power, Chiang Kai-shek, far from being

* This speech was delivered by Comrade Mao Tse-tung at a meeting of cadres in Yen-an. Based on the Marxist-Leninist method of class analysis, it presented a penetrating study of the fundamental political situation in China after victory in the War of Resistance Against Japan and set forth the revolutionary tactics of the proletariat. As Comrade Mao Tse-tung had pointed out in his opening address at the Seventh National Congress of the Communist Party of China in April 1945, China after defeating Japanese imperialism still faced two destinies, two futures – either to become a new China or to remain the old China. The big landlords and big bourgeoisie of China, represented by Chiang Kai-shek, wanted to wrest the fruits of victory in the War of Resistance from the hands of the people and to keep China a semi-colonial and semi-feudal country under their dictatorship. The Communist Party of China, representing the interests of the proletariat and the masses of the people, on the one hand strove for peace and opposed civil war with all its strength. On the other hand, it had to prepare fully against Chiang Kai-shek's counter-revolutionary plot of launching a

grateful to the people, knocked them down and plunged them into the bloodbath of ten years of civil war. You comrades are familiar with this segment of history. During the present War of Resistance the Chinese people again defended him. This war is now ending in victory and Japan is on the point of surrender, but he is not at all grateful to the people. On the contrary, thumbing through the records of 1927, he wants to act in the same old way.⁸ He says there has never been any "civil war" in China, only "bandit suppression". Whatever he likes to call it, the fact is he wants to start a civil war against the people, he wants to slaughter the people.

Until a civil war breaks out all over the country, many of the people and many of our Party comrades will not have a very clear understanding of this question. Since civil war is not yet here on a large scale, since it is not yet widespread or out in the open and since the battles are not yet numerous, many people think, "Well, there may not be a civil war after all!" Many others are afraid of civil war. Their fear is not without reason. There were ten years of fighting and then another eight years of the War of Resistance; if the fighting keeps on, where will it all end? It is quite natural that such fears should arise. With regard to Chiang Kai-shek's plot to launch a civil war, our Party's policy has been clear and consistent, that is, resolutely to oppose civil war, be against civil war and prevent civil war. In the days to come, we shall continue, with the utmost effort and greatest patience, to lead the people in preventing civil war. Nevertheless, it is necessary to be soberly aware that the danger of civil war is extremely serious because Chiang Kai-shek's policy is already set. Chiang Kai-shek's policy is civil war. Our policy, the policy of the people, is against civil war. The opponents of civil war

country-wide civil war and had to adopt the correct policy, that is to say, to harbour no illusions about imperialism and reaction, to have no fear of their threats, to resolutely safeguard the fruits of the people's struggle and strive to build a new China – a new-democratic China of the broad masses of the people under the leadership of the proletariat. The decisive struggle between the two destinies, the two futures facing China, constituted the content of the historical period from the conclusion of the War of Resistance Against Japan to the founding of the People's Republic of China, the historical period of the Chinese People's War of Liberation or Third Revolutionary Civil War. After the War of Resistance, Chiang Kai-shek, supported by U.S. imperialism, tore up peace agreements again and again and launched a gigantic counter-revolutionary civil war without parallel in history in an attempt to wipe out the people's forces. Because of the correct leadership of the Communist Party of China, it took the Chinese people only four years of struggle to win a great country-wide victory – the overthrow of Chiang Kai-shek and the creation of a new China.

consist only of the Chinese Communist Party and the Chinese people – it is a pity that they do not include Chiang Kai-shek and the Kuomintang. Here one side does not want to fight and the other does. If both did not want it, there would be no fighting. Now, since only one side is against it and this side is not yet strong enough to check the other, the danger of civil war is extremely grave.

Our Party pointed out in good time that Chiang Kai-shek would stick to his reactionary policy of dictatorship and civil war. Before, during and after the Seventh Party Congress,⁹ we did fairly adequate work to call the people's attention to the danger of civil war, so that the whole people, our Party members and our troops should be mentally prepared well in advance. This is a very important point, and it makes a world of difference whether or not there is such preparedness. In 1927 our Party was still in its infancy and was mentally wholly unprepared for Chiang Kai-shek's counter-revolutionary surprise attack. Consequently the fruits of victory won by the people were soon lost, the people had to undergo long suffering, and a bright China was plunged into darkness. This time things are different; our Party has acquired the rich experience of three revolutions¹⁰ and a much higher degree of political maturity. Time and again, the Central Committee of the Party has clearly explained the danger of civil war, and so the whole people, all Party members and the troops led by our Party are in a state of preparedness.

Chiang Kai-shek always tries to wrest every ounce of power and every ounce of gain from the people. And we? Our policy is to give him tit for tat and to fight for every inch of land. We act after his fashion. He always tries to impose war on the people, one sword in his left hand and another in his right. We take up swords, too, following his example. We found this method only after investigation and study. Such investigation and study are very important. When we see the other fellow holding something in his hands, we should do some investigating. What does he hold in his hands? Swords. What are swords for? For killing. Whom does he want to kill with his swords? The people. Having made these findings, investigate further – the Chinese people, too, have hands and can take up swords, they can forge a sword if there is none handy. The Chinese people have discovered this truth after long investigation and study. Warlords, landlords, local bullies and bad gentry and the imperialists all have swords in their hands and are out to kill. The people have come to understand this and so act

after the same fashion. Some of us often neglect such investigation and study. Chen Tu-hsiu,¹¹ for example, did not understand that with swords one can kill people. Some say, this is a plain everyday truth; how can a leader of the Communist Party fail to know it? But you never can tell. Chen Tu-hsiu made no investigation and study and so did not understand this, hence we called him an opportunist. He who makes no investigation and study has no right to speak, and accordingly we deprived Chen Tu-hsiu of that right. We have adopted a course different from Chen Tu-hsiu's and enabled the people suffering from oppression and slaughter to take up swords. If ever again anybody wants to kill us, we will act after his fashion. Not long ago, the Kuomintang sent six divisions to attack our Kuan-chung sub-region, and three of them drove in and seized an area measuring 20 by 100 *li*. We acted after their fashion and wholly, thoroughly and completely wiped out the Kuomintang troops in this area of 20 by 100 *li*.¹² Our policy is to give tit for tat and fight for every inch of land; we will never let the Kuomintang easily seize our land and kill our people. Of course, to fight for every inch of land does not mean following the old "Left" line of "not abandoning a single inch of land in the base area".¹³ This time we abandoned an area of 20 by 100 *li*. Abandoned late in July, it was retaken early in August. After the Southern Anhwei Incident of 1941,¹⁴ the Kuomintang liaison staff officer once asked me what we intended to do. I answered, "You are here in Yen-an all the time and you don't know? If Ho goes for us, we'll go for him. If Ho stops, we'll stop too."¹⁵ At that time Chiang Kai-shek was not named, only Ho Ying-chin. Today we say, "If Chiang goes for us, we'll go for him. If Chiang stops, we'll stop too." We will act after his fashion. As Chiang Kai-shek is now sharpening his swords, we must sharpen ours too.

The rights the people have won must never be lightly given up but must be defended by fighting. We don't want civil war. However, if Chiang Kai-shek insists on forcing civil war on the Chinese people, the only thing we can do is to take up arms and fight him in self-defence to protect the lives and property, the rights and well-being of the people of the Liberated Areas. This will be a civil war he forces on us. If we do not win, we will blame neither heaven nor earth but only ourselves. However, let no one think that the people can be easily robbed or defrauded of the rights they have won; that is impossible. Last year an American correspondent

asked me, "Who has given you the power to act?" I replied, "The people." Who else indeed, if not the people? The ruling Kuo-mintang hasn't given us any power. It doesn't recognize us. We take part in the People's Political Council in the capacity of a "cultural organization"¹⁶ as stipulated by its rules. But we are not a "cultural organization", we say, we have an army and are a "military organization". On March 1 this year Chiang Kai-shek stated that the Communist Party would have to turn over its army before it could acquire legal status. Chiang Kai-shek's statement still stands. We have not turned over our army, and so we have no legal status and are "defying laws human and divine". Our duty is to hold ourselves responsible to the people. Every word, every act and every policy must conform to the people's interests, and if mistakes occur, they must be corrected — that is what being responsible to the people means. Comrades! The people want liberation and therefore entrust power to those who can represent them and work faithfully for them, that is, to us Communists. As representatives of the people, we must represent them well and not act like Chen Tu-hsiu. Confronted by counter-revolutionary attacks against the people, Chen Tu-hsiu did not adopt the policy of giving tit for tat and fighting for every inch of land; as a result, in 1927, within the space of a few months, the people lost all the rights they had won. This time we must be on our guard. Our policy is absolutely different from Chen Tu-hsiu's; no trickery can fool us. We must be clear-headed and have a correct policy; we must not make mistakes.

To whom should the fruits of victory in the War of Resistance belong? It is very obvious. Take a peach tree for example. When the tree yields peaches they are the fruits of victory. Who is entitled to pick the peaches? Ask who planted and watered the tree. Chiang Kai-shek squatting on the mountain did not carry a single bucket of water, and yet he is now stretching out his arm from afar to pick the peaches. "I, Chiang Kai-shek, own these peaches," he says, "I am the landlord, you are my serfs and I won't allow you to pick any." We have refuted him in the press.¹⁷ We say, "You never carried any water, so you have no right to pick the peaches. We the people of the Liberated Areas watered the tree day in day out and have the most right to gather the fruit." Comrades! The victory of the War of Resistance has been won by the people with bloodshed and sacrifice, it should be the victory of the people and it is to the people that the fruits of the War of Resistance should go.