QUOTATIONS FROM CHAIRMAN MAO TSE-TUNG
WORKERS OF ALL COUNTRIES, UNITE!
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Unless otherwise stated, the page number given for the source of a quotation refers to the first English edition of the book or pamphlet cited as published by the Foreign Languages Press, Peking.

In cases where a word or phrase linked to the preceding text has been omitted in the opening sentence of the quotation, an asterisk is placed after the source. This is also done in a number of places where the English rendering has been reworded to make up for omission of context or to improve the translation.

Translator

I. THE COMMUNIST PARTY

The force at the core leading our cause forward is the Chinese Communist Party. The theoretical basis guiding our thinking is Marxism-Leninism.

Opening address at the First Session of the First National People's Congress of the People's Republic of China (September 15, 1954).

If there is to be revolution, there must be a revolutionary party. Without a revolutionary party, without a party built on the Marxist-Leninist revolutionary theory and in the Marxist-Leninist revolutionary style, it is impossible to lead the working class and the broad masses of the people
in defeating imperialism and its running dogs.


Without the efforts of the Chinese Communist Party, without the Chinese Communists as the mainstay of the Chinese people, China can never achieve independence and liberation, or industrialization and the modernization of her agriculture.


The Chinese Communist Party is the core of leadership of the whole Chinese people. Without this core, the cause of socialism cannot be victorious.

Talk at the general reception for the delegates to the Third National Congress of the NewDemocratic Youth League of China (May 25, 1957).

A well-disciplined Party armed with the theory of Marxism-Leninism, using the method of self-criticism and linked with the masses of the people; an army under the leadership of such a Party; a united front of all revolutionary classes and all revolutionary groups under the leadership of such a Party — these are the three main weapons with which we have defeated the enemy.

"On the People’s Democratic Dictatorship" (June 30, 1949), Selected Works, Vol. IV, p. 422.

We must have faith in the masses and we must have faith in the Party. These are two cardinal principles. If we doubt these principles, we shall accomplish nothing.


Armed with Marxist-Leninist theory and ideology, the Communist Party of China
has brought a new style of work to the Chinese people, a style of work which essentially entails integrating theory with practice, forging close links with the masses and practising self-criticism.


No Political party can possibly lead a great revolutionary movement to victory unless it possesses revolutionary theory and a knowledge of history and has a profound grasp of the practical movement.


As we used to say, the rectification movement is "a widespread movement of Marxist education". Rectification means the whole Party studying Marxism through criticism and self-criticism. We can certainly learn more about Marxism in the course of the rectification movement.


It is an arduous task to ensure a better life for the several hundred million people of China and to build our economically and culturally backward country into a prosperous and powerful one with a high level of culture. And it is precisely in order to be able to shoulder this task more competently and work better together with all non-Party people who are actuated by high ideals and determined to institute reforms that we must conduct rectification movements both now and in the future, and constantly rid ourselves of whatever is wrong.

Ibid., pp. 15-16.

Policy is the starting-point of all the practical actions of a revolutionary party and manifests itself in the process and the end-result of that party’s actions. A revolutionary party is carrying out a policy
whenever it takes any action. If it is not carrying out a correct policy, it is carrying out a wrong policy; if it is not carrying out a given policy consciously, it is doing so blindly. What we call experience is the process and the end-result of carrying out a policy. Only through the practice of the people, that is, through experience, can we verify whether a policy is correct or wrong and determine to what extent it is correct or wrong. But people’s practice, especially the practice of a revolutionary party and the revolutionary masses, cannot but be bound up with one policy or another. Therefore, before any action is taken, we must explain the policy, which we have formulated in the light of the given circumstances, to Party members and to the masses. Otherwise, Party members and the masses will depart from the guidance of our policy, act blindly and carry out a wrong policy.

“On the Policy Concerning Industry and Commerce” (February 27, 1948), Selected Works, Vol. IV, pp. 204-05.

Our Party has laid down the general line and general policy of the Chinese revolution as well as various specific lines for work and specific policies. However, while many comrades remember our Party’s specific lines for work and specific policies, they often forget its general line and general policy. If we actually forget the Party’s general line and general policy, then we shall be blind, half-baked, muddle-headed revolutionaries, and when we carry out a specific line for work and a specific policy, we shall lose our bearings and vacillate now to the left and now to the right, and the work will suffer.

“Speech at a Conference of Cadres in the Shansi-Suiyuan Liberated Area” (April 1, 1948), Selected Works, Vol. IV, p. 238.

Policy and tactics are the life of the Party; leading comrades at all levels must give them full attention and must never on any account be negligent.

II. CLASSES AND CLASS STRUGGLE

Classes struggle, some classes triumph, others are eliminated. Such is history, such is the history of civilization for thousands of years. To interpret history from this viewpoint is historical materialism; standing in opposition to this viewpoint is historical idealism.


In Class society everyone lives as a member of a particular class, and every kind of thinking, without exception, is stamped with the brand of a class.


Changes in society are due chiefly to the development of the internal contradictions in society, that is, the contradiction between the productive forces and the relations of production, the contradiction between classes and the contradiction between the old and the new; it is the development of these contradictions that pushes society forward and gives the impetus for the supersession of the old society by the new.


The ruthless economic exploitation and political oppression of the peasants by the landlord class forced them into numerous uprisings against its rule. . . . It was the class struggles of the peasants, the peasant uprisings and peasant wars that constituted the real motive force of historical development in Chinese feudal society.