In inner-Party criticism, guard against subjectivism, arbitrariness and the vulgarization of criticism; statements should be based on facts and criticism should stress the political side.


Inner-Party criticism is a weapon for strengthening the Party organization and increasing its fighting capacity. In the Party organization of the Red Army, however, criticism is not always of this character, and sometimes turns into personal attack. As a result, it damages the Party organization as well as individuals. This is a manifestation of petty-bourgeois individualism. The method of correction is to help Party members understand that the purpose of criticism is to increase the Party’s fighting capacity in order to achieve victory in the class struggle and that it should not be used as a means of personal attack.


If we have shortcomings, we are not afraid to have them pointed out and criticized, because we serve the people. Anyone, no matter who, may point out our shortcomings. If he is right, we will correct them. If what he proposes will benefit the people, we will act upon it.


As we Chinese Communists, who base all our actions on the highest interests of the broadest masses of the Chinese people and who are fully convinced of the justice of our cause, never balk at any personal sacrifice and are ready at all times to give our lives for the cause, can we be reluctant to discard any idea, viewpoint, opinion or method which is not suited to the needs of the people? Can we be willing to allow political dust and germs to dirty our clean faces or eat into our healthy organisms? Countless revolutionary martyrs have laid down their lives in the interests of the people, and our hearts are filled with pain
as we the living think of them—can there be any personal interest, then, that we would not sacrifice or any error that we would not discard?


We must not become complacent over any success. We should check our complacency and constantly criticize our shortcomings, just as we should wash our faces or sweep the floor every day to remove the dirt and keep them clean.


As for criticism, do it in good time; don’t get into the habit of criticizing only after the event.


Taught by mistakes and setbacks, we have become wiser and handle our affairs better. It is hard for any political party or person to avoid mistakes, but we should make as few as possible. Once a mistake is made, we should correct it, and the more quickly and thoroughly the better.

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

A Communist should have largeness of mind and he should be staunch and active, looking upon the interests of the revolution as his very life and subordinating his personal interests to those of the revolution; always and everywhere he should adhere to principle and wage a tireless struggle against all incorrect ideas and actions, so as to consolidate the collective life of the Party and strengthen the ties between the Party and the masses; he should be more concerned about the Party and the masses than about any individual, and more concerned about others than about himself. Only thus can he be considered a Communist.


Every comrade must be brought to understand that the supreme test of the words and deeds of a Communist is whether they conform with the highest interests and enjoy the support of the overwhelming majority of the people.


At no time and in no circumstances should a Communist place his personal interests first; he should subordinate them to the interests of the nation and of the masses. Hence, selfishness, slacking, corruption, seeking the limelight, and so on, are most contemptible, while selflessness, working with all one's energy, wholehearted devotion to public duty, and quiet hard work will command respect.

Communists must be ready at all times to stand up for the truth, because truth is in the interests of the people; Communists must be ready at all times to correct their mistakes, because mistakes are against the interests of the people.


Communists must always go into the whys and wherefores of anything, use their own heads and carefully think over whether or not it corresponds to reality and is really well founded; on no account should they follow blindly and encourage slavishness.


We should encourage comrades to take the interests of the whole into account. Every Party member, every branch of work, every statement and every action must proceed from the interests of the whole Party; it is absolutely impermissible to violate this principle.

*Ibid.* , p. 44.

Communists should set an example in being practical as well as far-sighted. For only by being practical can they fulfil the appointed tasks, and only far-sightedness can prevent them from losing their bearings in the march forward.


Communists should be the most farsighted, the most self-sacrificing, the most resolute, and the least prejudiced in sizing up situations, and should rely on the majority of the masses and win their support.

Communists should set an example in study; at all times they should be pupils of the masses as well as their teachers.


Every Communist working in the mass movements should be a friend of the masses and not a boss over them, an indefatigable teacher and not a bureaucratic politician.

Ibid.

Communists must never separate themselves from the majority of the people or neglect them by leading only a few progressive contingents in an isolated and rash advance, but must take care to forge close links between the progressive elements and the broad masses. This is what is meant by thinking in terms of the majority.

Ibid., p. 201.

We Communists are like seeds and the people are like the soil. Wherever we go, we must unite with the people, take root and blossom among them.

“On the Chungking Negotiations” (October 17, 1945), Selected Works, Vol. IV, p. 58.

We Communists must be able to integrate ourselves with the masses in all things. If our Party members spend their whole lives sitting indoors and never go out to face the world and brave the storm, what good will they be to the Chinese people? None at all, and we do not need such people as Party members. We Communists ought to face the world and brave the storm, the great world of mass struggle and the mighty storm of mass struggle.


The exemplary vanguard role of the communists is of vital importance. Com-
munists in the Eighth Route and New Fourth Armies should set an example in fighting bravely, carrying out orders, observing discipline, doing political work and fostering internal unity and solidarity.


A Communist must never be opinionated or domineering, thinking that he is good in everything while others are good in nothing; he must never shut himself up in his little room, or brag and boast and lord it over others.

"Speech at the Assembly of Representatives of the Shensi-Kansu-Ningsia Border Region" (November 21, 1941), Selected Works, Vol. III, p. 33.

Communists must listen attentively to the views of people outside the Party and let them have their say. If what they say is right, we ought to welcome it, and we should learn from their strong points; if it is wrong, we should let them finish what they are saying and then patiently explain things to them.

Ibid.

The attitude of Communists towards any person who has made mistakes in his work should be one of persuasion in order to help him change and start afresh and not one of exclusion, unless he is incorrigible.


As for people who are politically backward, Communists should not slight or despise them, but should befriend them, unite with them, convince them and encourage them to go forward.

Ibid.
XXIX. CADRES

In order to guarantee that our Party and country do not change their colour, we must not only have a correct line and correct policies but must train and bring up millions of successors who will carry on the cause of proletarian revolution.

In the final analysis, the question of training successors for the revolutionary cause of the proletariat is one of whether or not there will be people who can carry on the Marxist-Leninist revolutionary cause started by the older generation of proletarian revolutionaries, whether or not the leadership of our Party and state will remain in the hands of proletarian revolutionaries, whether or not our descendants will continue to march along the correct road laid down by Marxism-Leninism, or, in other words, whether or not we can successfully prevent the emergence of Khrushchov’s revisionism in China. In short, it is an extremely important question, a matter of life and death for our Party and our country. It is a question of fundamental importance to the proletarian revolutionary cause for a hundred, a thousand, nay ten thousand years. Basing themselves on the changes in the Soviet Union, the imperialist prophets are pinning their hopes of “peaceful evolution” on the third or fourth generation of the Chinese Party. We must shatter these imperialist prophecies. From our highest organizations down to the grass-roots, we must everywhere give constant attention to the training and upbringing of successors to the revolutionary cause.

What are the requirements for worthy successors to the revolutionary cause of the proletariat?

They must be genuine Marxist-Leninists and not revisionists like Khrushchov wearing the cloak of Marxism-Leninism.

They must be revolutionaries who wholeheartedly serve the overwhelming majority of the people of China and the whole world,
and must not be like Khrushchov who serves both the interests of the handful of members of the privileged bourgeois stratum in his own country and those of foreign imperialism and reaction.

They must be proletarian statesmen capable of uniting and working together with the overwhelming majority. Not only must they unite with those who agree with them, they must also be good at uniting with those who disagree and even with those who formerly opposed them and have since been proved wrong in practice. But they must especially watch out for careerists and conspirators like Khrushchov and prevent such bad elements from usurping the leadership of the Party and the state at any level.

They must be models in applying the Party's democratic centralism, must master the method of leadership based on the principle of "from the masses, to the masses", and must cultivate a democratic style and be good at listening to the masses. They must not be despotic like Khrushchov and violate the Party's democratic centralism, make surprise attacks on comrades or act arbitrarily and dictatorially.

They must be modest and prudent and guard against arrogance and impetuosity; they must be imbued with the spirit of self-criticism and have the courage to correct mistakes and shortcomings in their work. They must never cover up their errors like Khrushchov, and claim all the credit for themselves and shift all the blame on others.

Successors to the revolutionary cause of the proletariat come forward in mass struggles and are tempered in the great storms of revolution. It is essential to test and judge cadres and choose and train successors in the long course of mass struggle.

Quoted in On Khruschev's Phoney Communism and Its Historical Lessons for the World (July 14, 1964), pp. 72—74.

Our Party organizations must be extended all over the country and we must purposefully train tens of thousands of cadres
and hundreds of first-rate leaders. They must be cadres and leaders versed in Marxism-Leninism, politically far-sighted, competent in work, full of the spirit of self-sacrifice, capable of tackling problems on their own, steadfast in the midst of difficulties and loyal and devoted in serving the nation, the class and the Party. It is on these cadres and leaders that the Party relies for its links with the membership and the masses, and it is by relying on their firm leadership of the masses that the Party can succeed in defeating the enemy. Such cadres and leaders must be free from selfishness, form individualistic heroism, ostentation, sloth, passivity, and arrogant sectarianism, and they must be selfless national and class heroes; such are the qualities and the style of work demanded of the members, cadres and leaders of our Party. 


Cadres are a decisive factor, once the political line is determined. Therefore, it is our fighting task to train large numbers of new cadres in a planned way. 


The criterion the communist Party should apply in its cadres policy is whether or not a cadre is resolute in carrying out the Party line, keeps to Party discipline, has close ties with the masses, has the ability to find his bearings independently, and is active, hard-working and unselfish. This is what “appointing people on their merit” means.

Ibid.

It is necessary to maintain the system of cadre participation in collective productive labour. The cadres of our Party and state are ordinary workers and not overlords sitting on the backs of the people. By taking part in collective productive labour,
the cadres maintain extensive, constant and close ties with the working people. This is a major measure of fundamental importance for a socialist system; it helps to overcome bureaucracy and to prevent revisionism and dogmatism.

Quoted in On Khrushchev’s Phoney Communism and Its Historical Lessons for the World (July 14, 1964), pp. 68—69.

We must know how to judge cadres. We must not confine our judgement to a short period or a single incident in a cadre’s life, but should consider his life and work as a whole. This is the principal method of judging cadres.


We must know how to use cadres well. In the final analysis, leadership involves two main responsibilities: to work out ideas, and to use cadres well. Such things as drawing up plans, making decisions, and giving orders and directives, are all in the category of “working out ideas”. To put the ideas into practice, we must weld the cadres together and encourage them to go into action; this comes into the category of “using the cadres well”.

Ibid.

We must know how to take good care of cadres. There are several ways of doing so.

First, give them guidance. This means allowing them a free hand in their work so that they have the courage to assume responsibility and, at the same time, giving them timely instructions so that, guided by the Party’s political line, they are able to make full use of their initiative.

Second, raise their level. This means educating them by giving them the opportunity so study so that they can enhance their theoretical understanding and their working ability.
Third, check up on their work, and help them sum up their experience, carry forward their achievements and correct their mistakes. To assign work without checking up and to take notice only when serious mistakes are made—that is not the way to take care of cadres.

Fourth, in general, use the method of persuasion with cadres who have made mistakes, and help them correct their mistakes. The method of struggle should be confined to those who make serious mistakes and nevertheless refuse to accept guidance. Here patience is essential. It is wrong lightly to label people “opportunists” or lightly to begin “waging struggles” against them.

Fifth, help them with their difficulties. When cadres are in difficulty as a result of illness, straitened means or domestic or other troubles, we must be sure to give them as much care as possible. This is how to take good care of cadres.

A leading group that is genuinely united and is linked with the masses can gradually be formed only in the process of mass struggle, and not in isolation form it. In the process of a great struggle, the composition of the leading group in most cases should not and cannot remain entirely unchanged throughout the initial, middle and final stages; the activists who come forward in the course of the struggle must constantly be promoted to replace those original members of the leading group who are inferior by comparison or who have degenerated.

“Some Questions Concerning Methods of Leadership” (June 1, 1943), Selected Works, Vol. III, p. 118.

If our Party does not have a great many new cadres working in unity and cooperation with the old cadres, our cause will come to a stop. All old cadres, therefore, should welcome the new ones with the utmost enthusiasm and show them the warmest solicitude. True, new cadres have
their shortcomings. They have not been long in the revolution and lack experience, and unavoidably some have brought with them vestiges of the unwholesome ideology of the old society, remnants of the ideology of petty-bourgeois individualism. But such shortcomings can be gradually eliminated through education and tempering in the revolution. The strong point of the new cadres, as Stalin has said, is that they are acutely sensitive to what is new and are therefore enthusiastic and active to a high degree — the very qualities which some of the old cadres lack. Cadres, new and old, should respect each other, learn from each other and overcome their own shortcomings by learning from each other’s strong points, so as to unite as one in the common cause and guard against sectarian tendencies.


Our concern should extend to non-Party cadres as well as to Party cadres. There are many capable people outside the Party whom we must not ignore. The duty of every Communist is to rid himself of aloofness and arrogance and to work well with non-Party cadres, give them sincere help, have a warm, comradely attitude towards them and enlist their initiative in the great cause of resisting Japan and reconstructing the nation.
XXX. YOUTH

The world is yours, as well as ours, but in the last analysis, it is yours. You young people, full of vigour and vitality, are in the bloom of life, like the sun at eight or nine in the morning. Our hope is placed on you.

............

The world belongs to you. China’s future belongs to you.

Talk at a meeting with Chinese students and trainees in Moscow (November 17, 1957).

We must help all our young people to understand that ours is still a very poor country, that we cannot change this situa-
tion radically in a short time, and that only through the united efforts of our younger generation and all our people, working with their own hands, can China be made strong and prosperous within a period of several decades. The establishment of our socialist system has opened the road leading to the ideal society of the future, but to translate this ideal into reality needs hard work.

On the Correct Handling of Contradictions Among the People (February 27, 1957), 1st pocket ed., pp. 44—45.

Because of their lack of political and social experience, quite a number of young people are unable to see the contrast between the old China and the new, and it is not easy for them thoroughly to comprehend the hardships our people went through in the struggle to free themselves form the oppression of the imperialists and Kuomintang reactionaries, or the long period of
arduous work needed before a happy socialist society can be established. That is why we must constantly carry on lively and effective political education among the masses and should always tell them the truth about the difficulties that crop up and discuss with them how to surmount these difficulties.

Ibid., p. 63.

The young people are the most active and vital force in society. They are the most eager to learn and the least conservative in their thinking. This is especially so in the era of socialism. We hope that the local Party organizations in various places will help and work with the Youth League organizations and go into the question of bringing into full play the energy of our youth in particular. The Party organizations should not treat them in the same way as everybody else and ignore their special characteristics. Of course, the young people should learn from the old and other aduirs, and should strive as much as possible to engage in all sorts of useful activities with their agreement.

Introductory note to “A Youth Shock Brigade of the No. 9 Agricultural Producers’ Co-operative in Hsinping Township, Chungshan County” (1955), The Socialist Upsurge in China’s Countryside, Chinese ed., Vol. III.

How should we judge whether a youth is a revolutionary? How can we tell? There can only be one criterion, namely, whether or not he is willing to integrate himself with the broad masses of workers and peasants and does so in practice. If he is willing to do so and actually does so, he is a revolutionary; otherwise he is a non-revolutionary or a counter-revolutionary. If today he integrates himself with the masses of workers and peasants, then today he is a revolutionary; if tomorrow he ceases
to do so or turns round to oppress the common people, then he becomes a non-revolutionary or a counter-revolutionary.


The intellectuals often tend to be subjective and individualistic, impractical in their thinking and irresolute in action until they have thrown themselves heart and soul into mass revolutionary struggles, or made up their minds to serve the interests of the masses and become one with them. Hence although the mass of revolutionary intellectuals in China can play a vanguard role or serve as a link with the masses, not all of them will remain revolutionaries to the end. Some will drop out of the revolutionary ranks at critical moments and become passive, while a few may even become enemies of the revolution. The intellectuals can overcome their shortcomings only in mass struggles over a long period.


Apart from continuing to act in co-ordination with the Party in its central task, the Youth League should do its own work to suit the special characteristics of youth. New China must care for her youth and show concern for the growth of the younger generation. Young people have to study and work, but they are at the age of physical growth. Therefore, full attention must be paid both to their work and study and to their recreation, sport and rest.

Talk at the reception for the Presidium of the Second National Congress of the Youth League (June 30, 1953).
XXXI. WOMEN

A man in China is usually subjected to the domination of three systems of authority [political authority, clan authority and religious authority]. . . . As for women, in addition to being dominated by these three systems of authority, they are also dominated by the men (the authority of the husband). These four authorities — political, clan, religious and masculine — are the embodiment of the whole feudal-patriarchal ideology and system, and are the four thick ropes binding the Chinese people, particularly the peasants. How the peasants have overthrown the political authority of the landlords in the countryside has been described above. The political authority of the landlords is the backbone of all the other systems of authority. With that overturned, the clan authority, the religious authority and the authority of the husband all begin to totter.

. . . As to the authority of the husband, this has always been weaker among the poor peasants because, out of economic necessity, their womenfolk have to do more manual labour than the women of the richer classes and therefore have more say and greater power of decision in family matters. With the increasing bankruptcy of the rural economy in recent years, the basis for men’s domination over women has already been undermined. With the rise of the peasant movement, the women in many places have now begun to organize rural women’s associations; the opportunity has come for them to lift up their heads, and the authority of the husband is getting shakier every day. In a word, the whole feudal-patriarchal ideology and system is tottering with the growth of the peasants’ power.

Unite and take part in production and political activity to improve the economic and political status of women.


Protect the interests of the youth, women and children — provide assistance to young student refugees, help the youth and women to organize in order to participate on an equal footing in all work useful to the war effort and to social progress, ensure freedom of marriage and equality as between men and women, and give young people and children a useful education....


[In agricultural production] our fundamental task is to adjust the use of labour power in an organized way and to encourage women to do farm work.


In order to build a great socialist society, it is of the utmost importance to arouse the broad masses of women to join in productive activity. Men and women must receive equal pay for equal work in production. Genuine equality between the sexes can only be realized in the process of the socialist transformation of society as a whole.


With the completion of agricultural cooperation, many co-operatives are finding themselves short of labour. It has become necessary to arouse the great mass of
women who did not work in the fields before to take their place on the labour front. ... China's women are a vast reserve of labour power. This reserve should be tapped in the struggle to build a great socialist country.

Introductory note to "Solving the Labour Shortage by Arousing the Women to Join in Production" (1955), The Socialist Uprising in China's Countryside, Chinese ed., Vol. II.

Enable every woman who can work to take her place on the labour front, under the principle of equal pay for equal work. This should be done as quickly as possible.


XXXII. CULTURE AND ART

In the world today all culture, all literature and art belong to definite classes and are geared to definite political lines. There is in fact no such thing as art for art's sake, art that stands above classes, art that is detached from or independent of politics. Proletarian literature and art are part of the whole proletarian revolutionary cause; they are, as Lenin said, cogs and wheels in the whole revolutionary machine.

"Talks at the Yenan Forum on Literature and Art" (May 1942), Selected Works, Vol. III, p. 86.

Revolutionary culture is a powerful revolutionary weapon for the broad masses of the people. It prepares the ground
ideologically before the revolution comes and is an important, indeed essential, fighting front in the general revolutionary front during the revolution.


All our literature and art are for the masses of the people, and in the first place for the workers, peasants and soldiers; they are created for the workers, peasants and soldiers and are for their use.

"Talks at the Yenan Forum on Literature and Art" (May 1942), Selected Works, Vol. III, p. 84.

Our literary and art workers must accomplish this task and shift their stand; they must gradually move their feet over to the side of the workers, peasants and soldiers, to the side of the proletariat, through the process of going into their very midst and into the thick of practical struggles and through the process of studying Marxism and society. Only in this way can we have a literature and art that are truly for the workers, peasants and soldiers, a truly proletarian literature and art.

Ibid. p. 78.

[Our purpose is] to ensure that literature and art fit well into the whole revolutionary machine as a component part, that they operate as powerful weapons for uniting and educating the people and for attacking and destroying the enemy, and that they help the people fight the enemy with one heart and one mind.

Ibid. p. 70.

In literary and art criticism there are two criteria, the political and the artistic....

There is the political criterion and there is the artistic criterion; what is the relationship between the two? Politics cannot be equated with art, nor can a general world outlook be equated with a method of artistic creation and criticism. We deny not only that there is an abstract and
absolutely unchangeable political criterion, but also that there is an abstract and absolutely unchangeable artistic criterion; each class in every class society has its own political and artistic criteria. But all classes in all class societies invariably put the political criterion first and the artistic criterion second. ... What we demand is the unity of politics and art, the unity of content and form, the unity of revolutionary political content and the highest possible perfection of artistic form. Works of art which lack artistic quality have no force, however progressive they are politically. Therefore, we oppose both works of art with a wrong political viewpoint and the tendency towards the "poster and slogan style" which is correct in political viewpoint but lacking in artistic power. On questions of literature and art we must carry on a struggle on two fronts.


Letting a hundred flowers blossom and a hundred schools of thought contend is the policy for promoting the progress of the arts and the sciences and a flourishing socialist culture in our land. Different forms and styles in art should develop freely and different schools in science should contend freely. We think that it is harmful to the growth of art and science if administrative measures are used to impose one particular style of art or school of thought and to ban another. Questions of right and wrong in the arts and sciences should be settled through free discussion in artistic and scientific circles and through practical work in these fields. They should not be settled in summary fashion.

*On the Correct Handling of Contradictions Among the People* (February 27, 1957), 1st pocket ed., pp. 49—50.

An army without culture is a dull-witted army, and a dull-witted army cannot defeat the enemy.

XXXIII. STUDY

In transforming a backward agricultural China into an advanced industrialized country, we are confronted with arduous tasks and our experience is far from adequate. So we must be good at learning.

"Opening Address at the Eighth National Congress of the Communist Party of China" (September 15, 1956).

Conditions are changing all the time, and to adapt one’s thinking to the new conditions, one must study. Even those who have a better grasp of Marxism and are comparatively firm in their proletarian stand have to go on studying, have to absorb what is new and study new problems. "Speech at the Chinese Communist Party’s National Conference on Propaganda Work (March 12, 1957), 1st pocket ed., p. 8.

We can learn what we did not know. We are not only good at destroying the old world, we are also good at building the new.


Now, there are two different attitudes towards learning from others. One is the dogmatic attitude of transplanting everything, whether or not it is suited to our conditions. This is no good. The other attitude is to use our heads and learn those things which suit our conditions, that is, to
absorb whatever experience is useful to us. That is the attitude we should adopt.

*On the Correct Handling of Contradictions Among the People* (February 27, 1957), 1st pocket ed., p. 75.

The theory of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin is universally applicable. We should regard it not as a dogma, but as a guide to action. Studying it is not merely a matter of learning terms and phrases but of learning Marxism-Leninism as the science of revolution. It is not just a matter of understanding the general laws derived by Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin from their extensive study of real life and revolutionary experience, but of studying their standpoint and method in examining and solving problems.


If we have a correct theory but merely prate about it, pigeonhole it and do not put it into practice, then that theory, however good, is of no significance.


It is necessary to master Marxist theory and apply it, master it for the sole purpose of applying it. If you can apply the Marxist-Leninist viewpoint in elucidating one or two practical problems, you should be commended and credited with some achievement. The more problems you elucidate and the more comprehensively and profoundly you do so, the greater will be your achievement.


How is Marxist-Leninist theory to be linked with the practice of the Chinese revolution? To use a common expression, it
is by “shooting the arrow at the target”. As the arrow is to the target, so is Marxism-Leninism to the Chinese revolution. Some comrades, however, are “shooting without a target”, shooting at random, and such people are liable to harm the revolution.


Those experienced in work must take up the study of theory and must read seriously; only then will they be able to systematize and synthesize their experience and raise it to the level of theory, only then will they not mistake their partial experience for universal truth and not commit empiricist errors.


Reading is learning, but applying is also learning and the more important kind of learning at that. Our chief method is to learn warfare through warfare. A person who has had no opportunity to go to school can also learn warfare—he can, learn through fighting in war. A revolutionary war is a mass undertaking; it is often not a matter of first learning and then doing, but of doing and then learning, for doing is itself learning.


There is a gap between the ordinary civilian and the soldier, but it is no Great Wall, and it can be quickly closed, and the way to close it is to take part in revolution, in war. By saying that it is not easy to learn and to apply, we mean that it is hard to learn thoroughly and to apply skilfully. By saying that civilians can very quickly become soldiers, we mean that it is not difficult to cross the threshold. To put the two statements together, we may cite the Chinese adage, “Nothing in the world is difficult for one who sets his mind to it.” to cross the threshold is not difficult, and mastery, too, is possible pro-
vided one sets one’s mind to the task and is
good at learning.

Ibid. p. 190.

We must learn to do economic work from
all who know how, no matter who they
are. We must esteem them as teachers,
learning from them respectfully and consci-
scientiously. We must not pretend to know
when we do not know.

“On the People’s Democratic Dictatorship” (June 30, 1949), Se-

Knowledge is a matter of science, and no
dishonesty or conceit whatsoever is permi-
sible. What is required is definitely the re-
verse—honesty and modesty.

“On Practice” (July 1937), Se-

Complacency is the enemy of study. We
cannot really learn anything until we rid
ourselves of complacency. Our attitude
towards ourselves should be “to be in-
satiable in learning” and towards others “to
be tireless in teaching”.

“The Role of the Chinese Commu-
nist Party in the National War”
(October 1938), Selected Works,

Some people have read a few Marxist
books and think themselves quite learned,
but what they have read has not penetra-
ed, has not struck root in their minds, so
that they do not know how to use it and
their class feelings remain as of old. Others
are very conceited and having learned some
book-phrases, think themselves terrific and
are very cocky; but whenever a storm
blows up, they take a stand very different
from that of the workers and the majority
of the peasants. They waver while the lat-
ter stand firm, they equivocate while the
latter are forthright.

Speech at the Chinese Communist
Party’s National Conference on
Propaganda Work (March 12,
In order to have a real grasp of Marxism, one must learn it not only from books, but mainly through class struggle, through practical work and close contact with the masses of workers and peasants. When in addition to reading some Marxist books our intellectuals have gained some understanding through close contact with the masses of workers and peasants and through their own practical work, we will all be speaking the same language, not only the common language of patriotism and the common language of the socialist system, but probably even the common language of the communist world outlook. If that happens, all of us will certainly work much better.

_Ibid._ p. 12.