



MAO TSE-TUNG

**CURRENT PROBLEMS
OF TACTICS
IN THE ANTI-JAPANESE
UNITED FRONT**

COMMUNIST PARTY
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1. The present political situation is as follows:

(a) Japanese imperialism has been dealt a heavy blow by China's War of Resistance and is already incapable of launching any more large-scale military offensives, so that the relation of forces between the enemy and ourselves has now reached the stage of strategic stalemate. But the enemy is still holding fast to his basic policy of subjugating China and is pursuing it by such means as undermining our anti-Japanese united front, intensifying his "mopping-up" campaigns¹ in the rear areas and stepping up his economic aggression.

(b) Britain and France are finding their positions in the East weakened by the war in Europe, while the United States is continuing its policy of "sitting on top of the mountain and watching the tigers fight", so that an Eastern Munich² conference is out of the question for the moment.

(c) The Soviet Union has gained new successes in its foreign policy and is maintaining its policy of giving active support to China's War of Resistance.

(d) The pro-Japanese section of the big bourgeoisie, having completely capitulated to Japan, is ready to play the puppet. The pro-European and pro-American big bourgeoisie may continue to resist Japan, but its proneness to conciliation remains serious. It follows a dual policy. While desiring to remain united with the various non-Kuomintang forces to cope with Japan, it is doing all it

can to suppress them, and especially the Communist Party and the other progressive forces. It forms the die-hard section of the anti-Japanese united front.

(e) The intermediate forces, including the middle bourgeoisie, the enlightened gentry and the regional power groups, often take a middle position between the progressives and the die-hards because of their contradictions with the main ruling sections of the big landlords and the big bourgeoisie on the one hand, and with the working class and the peasantry on the other. They form the middle section of the anti-Japanese united front.

(f) Recently, the Communist-led progressive forces of the proletariat, the peasantry and the urban petty bourgeoisie have grown much stronger and in the main have succeeded in creating base areas in which anti-Japanese democratic political power has been established. Their influence is very great among the workers, peasants and urban petty bourgeoisie throughout the country and is also quite considerable among the middle forces. On the battlefield the Communists are fighting roughly as many Japanese troops as is the Kuomintang. They form the progressive section of the anti-Japanese united front.

This is the present political situation in China. In these circumstances the possibility still exists of preventing the situation from deteriorating and of changing it for the better; the Central Committee's resolutions of February 1 are entirely correct.

2. The basic condition for victory in the War of Resistance is the extension and consolidation of the anti-Japanese united front. The tactics required for this purpose are to develop the progressive forces, win over the middle

forces and combat the die-hard forces; these are three inseparable links, and the means to be used to unite all the anti-Japanese forces is struggle. In the period of the anti-Japanese united front, struggle is the means to unity and unity is the aim of struggle. If unity is sought through struggle, it will live; if unity is sought through yielding, it will perish. This truth is gradually being grasped by Party comrades. However, there are still many who do not understand it; some think that struggle will split the united front or that struggle can be employed without restraint, and others use wrong tactics towards the middle forces or have mistaken notions about the die-hard forces. All this must be corrected.

3. Developing the progressive forces means building up the forces of the proletariat, the peasantry and the urban petty bourgeoisie, boldly expanding the Eighth Route and New Fourth Armies, establishing anti-Japanese democratic base areas on an extensive scale, building up Communist organizations throughout the country, developing national mass movements of the workers, peasants, youth, women and children, winning over the intellectuals in all parts of the country, and spreading the movement for constitutional government among the masses as a struggle for democracy. Steady expansion of the progressive forces is the only way to prevent the situation from deteriorating, to forestall capitulation and splitting, and to lay a firm and indestructible foundation for victory in the War of Resistance. But the expansion of the progressive forces is a serious process of struggle, which must be ruthlessly waged not only against the Japanese imperialists and the traitors but also against the die-hards. For the latter are opposed to the growth of the progressive forces, while the middle section is sceptical. Unless we engage in resolute struggle against the die-hards

and, moreover, get tangible results, we shall be unable to resist their pressure or dispel the doubts of the middle section. In that case the progressive forces will have no way of expanding.

4. Winning over the middle forces means winning over the middle bourgeoisie, the enlightened gentry and the regional power groups. They are three distinct categories, but as things are, they all belong to the middle forces. The middle bourgeoisie constitutes the national bourgeoisie as distinct from the comprador class, *i.e.*, from the big bourgeoisie. Although it has its class contradictions with the workers and does not approve of the independence of the working class, it still wants to resist Japan and, moreover, would like to grasp political power for itself, because it is oppressed by the Japanese imperialists in the occupied areas and kept down by the big landlords and big bourgeoisie in the Kuomintang areas. When it comes to resisting Japan, it is in favour of united resistance; when it comes to winning political power, it is in favour of the movement for constitutional government and tries to exploit the contradictions between the progressives and the die-hards for its own ends. This is a stratum we must win over. Then there are the enlightened gentry who are the left-wing of the landlord class, that is, the section with a bourgeois colouration, whose political attitude is roughly the same as that of the middle bourgeoisie. Although they have class contradictions with the peasants, they also have their contradictions with the big landlords and big bourgeoisie. They do not support the die-hards and they, too, want to exploit the contradictions between us and the die-hards for their own political ends. On no account should we neglect this section either, and our policy must be to win them over. As for the regional

power groups, they are of two kinds—the forces which control certain regions as their own, and the troops of miscellaneous brands which do not. Although these groups are in contradiction with the progressive forces, they also have their contradictions with the Kuomintang Central Government because of the self-seeking policy it pursues at their expense; they, too, want to exploit the contradictions between us and the die-hards for their own political ends. Most of the leaders of the regional power groups belong to the big landlord class and the big bourgeoisie and, therefore, progressive as they may appear at certain times during the war, they soon turn reactionary again; nevertheless, because of their contradictions with the Kuomintang central authorities, the possibility exists of their remaining neutral in our struggle against the die-hards, provided we pursue a correct policy. Our policy towards the three categories of middle forces described above is to win them over. However, this policy differs from that of winning over the peasants and the urban petty bourgeoisie, and, moreover, it varies for each category of the middle forces. While the peasants and the urban petty bourgeoisie should be won over as basic allies, the middle forces should be won over as allies against imperialism. Among the middle forces, it is possible for the middle bourgeoisie and the enlightened gentry to join us in the common fight against Japan and also in the setting up of anti-Japanese democratic political power, but they fear agrarian revolution. In the struggle against the die-hards, some may join in to a limited degree, others may observe a benevolent neutrality, and still others a rather reluctant neutrality. But, apart from joining us in the war, the regional power groups will at most observe a temporary neutrality in our struggle against the die-hards; they are

unwilling to join us in establishing democratic political power since they themselves belong to the big landlord class and the big bourgeoisie. The middle forces tend to vacillate and are bound to break up, and we should educate and criticize them appropriately, with special reference to their vacillating attitude.

The winning over of the middle forces is an extremely important task for us in the period of the anti-Japanese united front, but it can only be accomplished given certain conditions. These are: (1) that we have ample strength; (2) that we respect their interests; and (3) that we are resolute in our struggle against the die-hards and steadily win victories. If these conditions are lacking, the middle forces will vacillate or even become allies of the die-hards in the latter's attacks on us, because the die-hards are also doing their best to win over the middle forces in order to isolate us. The middle forces carry considerable weight in China and may often be the decisive factor in our struggle against the die-hards; we must therefore be prudent in dealing with them.

5. The die-hard forces at the present time are the big landlord class and the big bourgeoisie. Divided at the moment into the group that has capitulated to Japan and the group that favours resistance, these classes will gradually become still further differentiated. Within the big bourgeoisie, the group favouring resistance is now different from the group that has already capitulated. It pursues a dual policy. It still stands for unity against Japan, but at the same time it follows the extremely reactionary policy of suppressing the progressive forces in preparation for its eventual capitulation. As it still favours unity against Japan, we can still try and keep it in the anti-Japanese united front,

and the longer the better. It would be wrong to neglect our policy of winning over this group and co-operating with it and to regard it as having already capitulated and as being on the verge of launching an anti-Communist war. But at the same time, we must adopt tactics of struggle to combat its reactionary policy and carry on a determined ideological, political and military fight against it, because all over the country it pursues the reactionary policy of suppressing the progressive forces, because instead of carrying out the common programme of the revolutionary Three People's Principles³ it stubbornly opposes our efforts to do so, and because it works hard to prevent us from going beyond the limits it has set for us, *i.e.*, it tries to confine us to the passive resistance it itself practises, and, moreover, it tries to assimilate us, failing which it applies ideological, political and military pressure against us. Such is our revolutionary dual policy to meet the dual policy of the die-hards, and such is our policy of seeking unity through struggle. If in the ideological sphere we can put forward correct revolutionary theory and strike hard at their counter-revolutionary theory, if in the political sphere we adopt tactics suited to the times and strike hard at their anti-Communist and anti-progressive policies, and if in the military sphere we take appropriate measures and strike back hard at their attacks, then we shall be able to restrict the effective range of their reactionary policy and compel them to recognize the status of the progressive forces, and we shall be able to expand the progressive forces, win over the middle forces and isolate the die-hard forces. What is more, we shall be able to induce those die-hards who are still willing to resist Japan to prolong their participation in the anti-Japanese united front, and shall thus be able to avert

a large-scale civil war of the kind that broke out before. Thus the purpose of our struggle against the die-hards in the period of the anti-Japanese united front is not only to parry their attacks in order to protect the progressive forces and enable the latter to go on growing, it is also to prolong the die-hards' resistance to Japan and to preserve our co-operation with them in order to avert large-scale civil war. Without struggle, these progressive forces would be exterminated by the die-hard forces, the united front would cease to exist, there would be nothing to hinder the die-hards from capitulating to the enemy, and civil war would break out. Therefore, struggle against the die-hards is an indispensable means of uniting all the anti-Japanese forces, achieving a favourable turn in the situation and averting large-scale civil war. All our experience confirms this truth.

However, there are several principles which we must observe in our struggle against the die-hards in the period of the anti-Japanese united front. First, the principle of self-defence. We will not attack unless we are attacked; if we are attacked, we will certainly counter-attack. That is to say, we must never attack others without provocation, but once attacked we must never fail to return the blow. Herein lies the defensive nature of our struggle. The military attacks of the die-hards must be smashed—resolutely, thoroughly, wholly and completely. Second, the principle of victory. We will not fight unless we are sure of victory; we must never fight without a plan, without preparation, and without certainty of success. We must know how to exploit the contradictions among the die-hards and must not take on too many of them at a single time, but must direct our blows at the most reactionary of them first. Herein lies the limited nature of the struggle. Third, the principle

of a truce. After repulsing one die-hard attack, we should know when to stop and bring that particular fight to a close before another attack is made on us. A truce should be made in the interval. We should then take the initiative in seeking unity with the die-hards and, if they concur, we should make a peace agreement with them. On no account should we fight on day after day without cease, or be carried away by success. Herein lies the temporary nature of each struggle. Only when the die-hards launch a new attack should we counter with a new struggle. In other words, the three principles are to fight "on just grounds", "to our advantage" and "with restraint". By keeping to this kind of struggle, waged on just grounds, to our advantage and with restraint, we can develop the progressive forces, win over the middle forces and isolate the die-hard forces, and we can also make the die-hards think twice before attacking us, compromising with the enemy or starting large-scale civil war. Thus a favourable turn in the situation will become possible.

6. The Kuomintang is a heterogeneous party which includes die-hards, middle elements and progressives; taken as a whole, it must not be equated with the die-hards. Some people regard the Kuomintang as consisting entirely of die-hards because its Central Executive Committee has promulgated such counter-revolutionary friction-mongering decrees as the "Measures for Restricting the Activities of Alien Parties"⁴ and has mobilized every ounce of its strength for counter-revolutionary friction-mongering in the ideological, political, and military spheres throughout the country. But this is a mistaken view. The die-hards in the Kuomintang are still in a position to dictate its policies, but numerically they are in a minority, while the majority of

the membership (many are members only in name) are not necessarily die-hards. This point must be clearly recognized if we are to take advantage of the contradictions within the Kuomintang, follow a policy of differentiating between its different sections and do our utmost to unite with its middle and progressive sections.

7. On the question of political power in the anti-Japanese base areas, we must make sure that the political power established there is that of the Anti-Japanese National United Front. No such political power exists as yet in the Kuomintang areas. It is the political power of all who support both resistance and democracy, *i.e.*, the joint democratic dictatorship of several revolutionary classes over the traitors and reactionaries. It is different from the dictatorship of the landlord class and the bourgeoisie, and is also somewhat different from a strictly worker-peasant democratic dictatorship. Places in the organs of political power should be allocated as follows: one-third to the Communists, representing the proletariat and the poor peasantry; one-third to the left progressives, representing the petty bourgeoisie; and the remaining one-third to the middle and other elements, representing the middle bourgeoisie and the enlightened gentry. Traitors and anti-Communist elements are the only people disqualified from participation in these organs of political power. This general rule for the allocation of places is necessary, or otherwise it will not be possible to maintain the principle of united front political power. This allocation of places represents the genuine policy of our Party and must be carried out conscientiously; there must be no half-heartedness about it. It provides a broad rule which has to be applied according to the specific conditions, and there must be no mechanical filling up of quotas. At the lowest

level the ratio may have to be somewhat modified to prevent domination by the landlords and evil gentry, but the fundamental spirit of this policy must not be violated. We should not labour the question of whether the non-Communists in these organs have party affiliations, or what their party affiliations are. In areas under the political power of the united front, all political parties, whether the Kuomintang or any other, must be granted legal status so long as they co-operate with and do not oppose the Communist Party. On the question of suffrage, the policy is that every Chinese who reaches the age of eighteen and is in favour of resistance and democracy should have the right to elect and to be elected, irrespective of class, nationality, party affiliation, sex, creed or educational level. The organs of united front political power should be elected by the people and then apply to the National Government for confirmation. Their form of organization must be based on democratic centralism. The fundamental point of departure for all major policy measures in the united front organs of political power should be opposition to Japanese imperialism, opposition to confirmed traitors and reactionaries, protection of the people who are resisting Japan, proper adjustment of the interests of all the anti-Japanese social strata and improvement of the livelihood of the workers and peasants. The establishment of this anti-Japanese united front political power will exert a great influence on the whole country and serve as a model for united front political power on a national scale; therefore this policy should be fully understood and resolutely carried out by all Party comrades.

8. In our struggle to develop the progressive forces, win over the middle forces and isolate the die-hard forces, we must not overlook the role of the intellectuals, whom the

die-hards are doing their utmost to win over; therefore it is an important and indeed an essential policy to win over all progressive intellectuals and bring them under the influence of the Party.

9. In our propaganda we should stress the following programme:

(a) carry out the Testament of Dr. Sun Yat-sen⁵ by arousing the masses for united resistance to Japan;

(b) carry out the Principle of Nationalism by firmly resisting Japanese imperialism and striving for complete national liberation and the equality of all the nationalities within China;

(c) carry out the Principle of Democracy by granting the people absolute freedom to resist Japan and save the nation, by enabling them to elect governments at all levels, and by establishing the revolutionary democratic political power of the Anti-Japanese National United Front;

(d) carry out the Principle of the People's Livelihood by abolishing exorbitant taxes and miscellaneous levies, reducing land rent and interest, enforcing the eight-hour working day, developing agriculture, industry and commerce, and improving the livelihood of the people; and

(e) carry out Chiang Kai-shek's declaration that "every person, young or old, in the north or in the south, must take up the responsibility of resisting Japan and defending our homeland".

All these points are in the Kuomintang's own published programme, which is also the common programme of the Kuomintang and the Communist Party. But the Kuomintang has failed to carry out any part of this programme other

than resistance to Japan; only the Communist Party and the progressive forces are able to carry it out. It is a simple enough programme and is widely known, yet many Communists fail to use it as a weapon for mobilizing the masses and isolating the die-hards. From now on we should keep attention focussed on the five points of this programme and popularize them through public notices, manifestoes, leaflets, articles, speeches, statements, and so on. In the Kuomintang areas it is still only a propaganda programme, but in the areas reached by the Eighth Route Army and the New Fourth Army it is already a programme of action. In acting according to this programme we are within the law, and when the die-hards oppose our carrying it out, it is they who are outside the law. In the stage of the bourgeois-democratic revolution, this programme of the Kuomintang's is basically the same as ours, but the ideology of the Kuomintang is entirely different from that of the Communist Party. It is this common programme of the democratic revolution that we should put into practice, but on no account should we follow the ideology of the Kuomintang.

NOTES

¹ "Mopping-up" campaigns were the Japanese aggressors' euphemism for their barbarous policy of triple atrocity — burning all, killing all and looting all.

² In September 1938, the heads of the British, French, German and Italian governments met in Munich, Germany, and concluded the Munich Agreement under which Britain and France betrayed Czechoslovakia to Germany in exchange for a German attack on the Soviet Union. In 1938 and 1939, British and U.S. imperialism made several moves to reach a compromise with Japanese imperialism by sacrificing China. It was called

an "Eastern Munich" because of its similarity to the Munich conspiracy of Britain, France, Germany and Italy.

³ The Three People's Principles were the principles and the programme put forward by Sun Yat-sen on the questions of nationalism, democracy and people's livelihood in China's bourgeois-democratic revolution. In the manifesto adopted by the Kuomintang at its First National Congress in 1924 Sun Yat-sen restated the Three People's Principles. Nationalism was interpreted as opposition to imperialism and active support was expressed for the movements of the workers and peasants. Thus the old Three People's Principles were transformed into the new Three People's Principles characterized by the Three Great Policies, that is, alliance with Russia, co-operation with the Communist Party, and assistance to the peasants and workers. The new Three People's Principles provided the political basis for the co-operation between the Communist Party of China and the Kuomintang during the First Revolutionary Civil War period.

⁴ After the fall of Wuhan in October 1938 the Kuomintang gradually increased its anti-Communist activities. From January 1939 Chiang Kai-shek secretly issued in succession such reactionary documents as "Measures for Restricting the Activities of Alien Parties", "Measures for Dealing with the Alien Party Problem" and "Directives for Dealing with the Alien Party Problem". They imposed severe restrictions on the freedom of action, speech and thought of the Communist Party and all other progressives, with the aim of disrupting all the anti-Japanese organizations of the people; they also stipulated that in places where, in the opinion of the Kuomintang, "the Communists were most active", the "law of collective responsibility and collective punishment" was to be enforced and an "information network", or counter-revolutionary secret service, was to be generally established within the *pao-chia* organizations, in order to watch and restrict the people's activities at all times; they also contained plans for the political suppression of the Communist Party and military attacks on it in areas in central and northern China.

⁵ The Testament made by Sun Yat-sen on his deathbed in March 1925, enjoining the thorough implementation of the Manifesto of the Kuomintang's First National Congress.



毛 澤 東
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