

# Norman Bethune — Internationalist Fighter Imbued With Mao Tse-tung's Thought

This is the last of a series of three articles on the Peking "Exhibition in Memory of Norman Bethune" which closed on June 21. For the previous two articles see "Peking Review," Nos. 26 and 27. — Ed.

CHAIRMAN MAO instructs: "Leninism teaches that the world revolution can only succeed if the proletariat of the capitalist countries supports the struggle for liberation of the colonial and semi-colonial peoples and if the proletariat of the colonies and semi-colonies supports that of the proletariat of the capitalist countries. Comrade Bethune put this Leninist line into practice. We Chinese Communists must also follow this line in our practice."

In a speech in the Shansi-Chahar-Hopei border area, Comrade Bethune said: "You and we are internationalists. We recognize no race, no colour, no language, no national boundaries to separate and divide us."

In the hall of the exhibition, people listen to the guide recounting how Comrade Bethune died at his post. On November 12, 1939, he gave his life for the great cause of the Chinese and world revolution. He will always be remembered by the Chinese people and revolutionary people throughout the world as a great internationalist fighter.

On the afternoon of October 21, during an operation, one of Bethune's fingers which Bethune had cut became infected and septicaemia developed. Though suffering, he went on with his work. Chinese comrades advised him to rest but Bethune said:

"What I worry about is the fighters at the front. What's an infected finger? I shall be able to operate again. You should use me like a machine gun! . . ."

A picture on display shows Bethune, his hand bandaged, going with the aid of a stick to the front in a snow-storm, along with other members of the medical team.

On November 10 Bethune's condition deteriorated and the leading comrades of the Command of the Shansi-Chahar-Hopei Military Area sent a messenger with an urgent letter calling for all-out efforts to save him. Doctors were dispatched by the Public Health Department of the Military Area Command. All possible emergency measures were taken, but to no avail.

Turning to the Chinese comrades at his bedside, Bethune made a last request:

"Please convey to Chairman Mao my thanks for the education I received from him and the Chinese Communist Party. I am confident that the Chinese people will win liberation. My only regret is that I shall

not be able to see the birth of New China with my own eyes!"

Our great leader Chairman Mao teaches us: "All men must die, but death can vary in its significance. . . . To die for the people is weightier than Mount Tai, but to work for the fascists and die for the exploiters and oppressors is lighter than a feather."

Comrade Bethune's death was weightier than Mount Tai.

For Bethune's memorial meeting in Yen-an, Chairman Mao wrote: "Learn from Comrade Norman Bethune's spirit of internationalism, spirit of sacrifice, sense of responsibility and warm-heartedness in work."

On December 21 of that year, Chairman Mao wrote his brilliant essay *In Memory of Norman Bethune* which has become a guide for the world's revolutionary people in learning from the great internationalist fighter. Chairman Mao called on the entire Chinese people to learn from Comrade Bethune's spirit of internationalism and communism, his utter devotion to others without any thought of self and his utter devotion to the world revolution.

Twenty-eight years have elapsed. Chairman Mao's great clarion call to learn from Norman Bethune has had wide repercussions throughout China and all over the world. Many internationalist fighters of the Bethune type have come forward.

In adhering to Chairman Mao's teachings, the Chinese people, taking Norman Bethune as an example, look on the cause of the liberation of the oppressed nations and peoples as their own. In the spirit of proletarian internationalism, they are ready at all times to give up their lives for the cause of the liberation of the whole of mankind.

In his brilliant work *In Memory of Norman Bethune*, Chairman Mao teaches: "We must unite with the proletariat of all the capitalist countries, with the proletariat of Japan, Britain, the United States, Germany, Italy and all other capitalist countries, before it is possible to overthrow imperialism, to liberate our nation and people, and to liberate the other nations and peoples of the world. This is our internationalism, the internationalism with which we oppose both narrow nationalism and narrow patriotism."

Following Chairman Mao's teachings, the Chinese people, developing the spirit of proletarian internationalism, consistently support the revolutionary struggles of the oppressed nations and oppressed people of the whole world, resolutely oppose narrow nationalism and narrow patriotism and resolutely oppose modern revisionism's betrayal of the world revolution.

During the war to resist U.S. imperialist aggression and to aid Korea, a fighter of the Chinese People's

Volunteers, Huang Chi-kuang, laid down his life to ensure victory by throwing himself against the machine-gun slit of a dugout of the U.S. aggressors.

Another of the Chinese People's Volunteers, Lo Sheng-chiao, lost his life saving a Korean child in an icy river.

Armed with Mao Tse-tung's thought, the Chinese People's Volunteers at the cost of their blood and lives fought shoulder to shoulder with the Korean people to defeat the barbarous aggression by U.S. imperialism and its accomplices in Korea.

Today, Chinese experts and workers are serving the people in many countries in the same great internationalist spirit as displayed by Comrade Norman Bethune.

A Chinese medical team, that did not include eye specialists, went to work in the Yemen. Drawing wisdom and courage from the "three constantly read articles" [Chairman Mao's *Serve the People*, *In Memory of Norman Bethune* and *The Foolish Old Man Who Removed the Mountains*], the Chinese medical personnel successfully removed a cataract that had affected a Yemeni patient's sight for many years.

The patient had a photo taken with the Chinese doctors in which he held Chairman Mao's portrait to his chest. He said: "I shall for ever be grateful to Chairman Mao for sending the doctors who gave me back my sight."

While helping a Tanzanian worker to fix a machine, Comrade Chao Chen-sheng, a Chinese worker, had his

left arm injured. The injury was so serious, the arm was finally amputated. The leadership suggested that he go back to China for treatment and recuperation. He insisted on staying so that he could continue working for the Tanzanian people. He said: "Comrade Bethune was a foreigner who laid down his life for the cause of the Chinese revolution. My injury is nothing to speak of. I have dedicated myself to the cause of the African people. Any Chinese worker armed with Mao Tse-tung's thought would continue serving the African people, even with just one arm."

Shih Yao-kang, a Chinese expert working in Mali, laid down his life for the Malian people in a struggle against a flood. He had insisted on joining the battle, even though he was ill. *Essor*, organ of the Mali Sudanese Union Party, in a commentary praised Shih Yao-kang as a proletarian internationalist fighter of the Bethune type. The commentary declared: "The 700 million dauntless Chinese builders of socialism will always stand on the side of the peoples struggling for national liberation, and will always fight against imperialism, colonialism, neo-colonialism and international reaction." They are steadfast defenders of the principles of proletarian internationalism, the commentary added.

A young Red Guard wrote in the visitor's book at the exhibition: "I pledge to learn from the spirit of Comrade Bethune and to contribute all my strength, even my life, to the unprecedented great proletarian cultural revolution, our great socialist construction and the cause of the world revolution."

Other visitors expressed their determination to follow Chairman Mao's teaching to take Comrade Bethune as their example and the "three constantly read articles" as their ideological weapon, ceaselessly **fight self-interest and repudiate revisionism**, thoroughly remould their world outlook, closely follow Chairman Mao's great strategic plan, win all-round victory in the great proletarian cultural revolution, support the world revolution and strive for the final elimination of imperialism, revisionism and all reaction, and the realization of communism, the magnificent cause of mankind's liberation.



Before his death, Comrade Bethune thought of Chairman Mao constantly and expressed infinitely warm love for him and full confidence in the sure victory of the Chinese revolution. He told his comrades around him: "Please convey to Chairman Mao my thanks for the education I received from him and the Chinese Communist Party. I am confident that the Chinese people will win liberation. My only regret is that I shall not be able to see the birth of New China with my own eyes."