

# Unite the People, Defeat the Enemy

— A study of *On Policy*\*

by the Writing Group of the Hupeh Provincial  
Committee of the Communist Party of China

**O**UR great leader Chairman Mao wrote the brilliant work *On Policy* in December 1940 in the critical period when China's War of Resistance Against Japan entered the stage of a strategic stalemate and there was a high tide of anti-Communist attacks by the Kuomintang reactionaries.

Using dialectical and historical materialism, Chairman Mao scientifically analysed in this work the social contradictions and class relations of the time, penetratingly criticized the Right and "Left" erroneous lines and policies pushed by the renegades Chen Tu-hsiu, Wang Ming and others, systematically summed up our Party's rich experience in protracted struggle against the Kuomintang reactionaries, incisively explained the change and development of the Party's policies during the War of Resistance, and drew up for our Party the tactical principles and the various concrete policies in the Anti-Japanese National United Front. This enabled our Party to keep a clear head in the extremely complex struggle and ensured the implementation of Chairman Mao's correct line and victory in the War of Resistance Against Japan.

The tactical principles and different policies drawn up by Chairman Mao reflect the objective laws of class struggle and manifest the thoroughgoing revolutionary spirit of the proletariat and flexibility in the art of struggle. They enrich and develop the Marxist-Leninist ideas of tactics and have played a powerful part in defeating the enemy and winning victory in the various historical stages of revolutionary struggle. They are always a powerful proletarian weapon for uniting the people and defeating the enemy.

## I

In *On Policy*, Chairman Mao repeatedly spelled out the importance of policy and tactics and, in terms of the situation at the time, emphatically pointed out from the very start that **"the policy we adopt is of decisive importance."** Chairman Mao has always attached great importance to the decisive role of proletarian policy and tactics. He pointed out: **"The proletariat has**

**to depend for its victory entirely on the correct and firm tactics of struggle of its own party, the Communist Party."** (*Oppose Book Worship*.) In every historical period, Chairman Mao not only drew up the general line and the general policy for the Party but also laid down the tactical principles and various concrete policies for struggle. Chairman Mao's revolutionary tactics and policies are concrete expressions of his revolutionary line while the erroneous policies pushed by such political charlatans as Chen Tu-hsiu, Wang Ming and Liu Shao-chi are precisely to serve the realization of their "Left" or Right opportunist lines. In this sense, the various aspects of the struggle between the two lines are concretely revealed through the struggle between the two different kinds of policy. **"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."** ("On the Policy Concerning Industry and Commerce," *Selected Works*, Vol. IV.) As their starting-point is wrong, all Right or "Left" policies can never have a correct orientation and if they are not corrected in time but are continued, errors in orientation and line inevitably will be committed.

## II

To fully comprehend and correctly implement Chairman Mao's proletarian policies, it is necessary to clearly understand the basis for drawing up and setting forth the tactical principles and policies. The great teacher Lenin pointed out: **"Only an objective consideration of the sum total of the relations between absolutely all the classes in a given society, and consequently a consideration of the objective stage of development reached by that society and of the relations between it and other societies, can serve as a basis for the correct tactics of an advanced class."** ("Karl Marx," *Collected Works*, Vol. 21.) This tells us that Marxist tactical principles and policies are all drawn up on the basis of correct observations and a concrete analysis

\* *Selected Works of Mao Tsetung*, Vol. II.

of the situation in class struggle internationally and domestically, the relations between the various classes and the changes and developments in them.

Without making distinctions, there can be no policy. Marxists must concretely analyse concrete contradictions. Chairman Mao pointed out: **"To understand their [the different social classes] interrelations, to arrive at a correct appraisal of class forces and then to formulate the correct tactics for the struggle, defining which classes constitute the main force in the revolutionary struggle, which classes are to be won over as allies and which classes are to be overthrown."** (*Oppose Book Worship.*) The tactical principles and policies Chairman Mao put forth based on class analysis are precisely for correctly handling the relations between the enemy, ourselves and our friends, to unite all forces that can be united, isolate and attack the most stubborn enemy, which consists of a handful, and constantly lead the revolution to victory.

Since the national contradiction between China and Japan during the War of Resistance heightened and became the principal contradiction, the domestic class contradictions subsided to a secondary and subordinate position and the resultant changes in international relations and domestic class relations formed a new stage in the developing situation. On the basis of a scientific analysis of the basic characteristics of the situation in class struggle, Chairman Mao in *On Policy* made very profound and concrete distinctions concerning the complex international and domestic class relations in the historical conditions of that period and built **our policy on these distinctions** to consolidate and expand the Anti-Japanese National United Front and defeat Japanese imperialism.

In analysing the relations between the various classes at home and their different political attitudes, Chairman Mao first of all emphatically pointed out that **"within the united front our policy must be one of independence and initiative, i.e., both unity and independence are necessary,"** **"all people favouring resistance (that is, all anti-Japanese workers, peasants, soldiers, students and intellectuals, and businessmen) must unite in the Anti-Japanese National United Front"** to defeat the principal enemy of that time, Japanese imperialism, and its running dogs, the traitors and pro-Japanese elements.

What attitude did the Party take towards the various classes in the country in the course of the War of Resistance Against Japan? Chairman Mao clearly pointed out: **"With regard to the alignment of the various classes within the country, our basic policy is to develop the progressive forces, win over the middle forces and isolate the anti-Communist die-hard forces."**

To educate the whole Party to implement this guiding principle, Chairman Mao concretely pointed out the class content of the progressive forces, the middle forces and the die-hard forces.

Developing the progressive forces meant 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 and boldly developing mass movements of the workers, peasants, youth, women and children, etc. In criticizing the Right opportunist viewpoint of being afraid to boldly develop the revolutionary anti-Japanese forces, Chairman Mao pointed out: **"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."** (*"Current Problems of Tactics in the Anti-Japanese United Front," Selected Works, Vol. II.*) This is the guiding principle of making the work of developing the people's forces the basic thing. It has always been our Party's fundamental starting-point in defeating all enemies.

By also pointing out that **"the winning over of the middle forces is an extremely important task for us in the period of the anti-Japanese united front"** (*"Current Problems of Tactics in the Anti-Japanese United Front," Selected Works, Vol. II.*), Chairman Mao criticized the "Left" viewpoint of neglecting to win over the middle forces and gave us a profound analysis of the various conditions for doing this. These were: **we have ample strength, we respect the interests of the middle forces, we resolutely struggle against the die-hard elements and steadily win victories.**

To isolate the die-hard forces, Chairman Mao made a profound and concrete analysis and made distinctions between the different social forces and political groupings in the enemy camp and within the middle forces. He pointed out that the pro-Japanese big landlords and big bourgeoisie who were against resistance to Japan must be distinguished from the pro-British and pro-American big landlords and big bourgeoisie who were for resistance; similarly the ambivalent big landlords and big bourgeoisie who wanted to resist but vacillated, and who were for unity but were anti-Communist, must be distinguished from the national bourgeoisie, the middle and small landlords and the enlightened gentry, the duality of whose character was less pronounced.

**"We deal with imperialism in the same way."** The Communist Party opposes all imperialism but we distinguished between Japanese imperialism which was committing aggression against China and the imperialist powers which were not doing so, and we also made distinctions between the various imperialist countries which adopted different policies under different circumstances and at different times. The scientific distinctions made by Chairman Mao with regard to the enemy camp by using the revolutionary dialectics of one dividing into two most clearly

pointed out who was the principal enemy, who was the secondary enemy and who were temporary allies or indirect allies. Such a concrete and careful differentiation isolated to the greatest extent the Chinese people's principal enemy at the time — the Japanese imperialists who were then invading China.

During the War of Resistance, it was precisely because the whole Party carried out Chairman Mao's tactical principles and policies on the fundamental question of who to rely on, who to unite with and who to attack, that we overcame interference from the erroneous lines, organized millions of people, brought into play a mighty revolutionary army, expanded the people's revolutionary forces, won the sympathy and support of the world's people, hurled back the attacks of the anti-Communist die-hards, thoroughly defeated the principal enemy of the time, Japanese imperialism, and won great victory in the War of Resistance.

### III

On the basis of a profound analysis of the relations between the various classes, Chairman Mao in *On Policy* clearly set forth the important tactical principle in struggling against the enemy: **"To make use of contradictions, win over the many, oppose the few and crush our enemies one by one."** This principle armed the whole Party and played a tremendous role not only in the struggle against the enemy in the past, but in the practical struggle of today it is still a sharp weapon for us to defeat the enemy and win victory.

To preserve their reactionary force and exploit and oppress the people, the imperialist countries and the various class strata, cliques and factions in all enemy camps are bound to collude and work hand in glove. But, as determined by their class nature, they are bound to have many contradictions and contentions. That these contradictions are an objective reality means they are independent of the subjective wishes of any reactionary. The view that all enemies are the same, that they are one monolithic bloc, is not in accord with objective reality. Moreover, with the development of the situation and with the people's revolutionary forces daily expanding, the enemies' contradictions will become more and more acute. The proletariat and its party must learn to concretely analyse the situation in class struggle in the international and domestic spheres at different historical periods and be good at seizing the opportunity to **"turn to good account all such fights, rifts and contradictions in the enemy camp and turn them against our present main enemy."** ("On Tactics Against Japanese Imperialism," *Selected Works*, Vol. I.)

Chairman Mao's analysis of the enemy camp completely conforms to the objective laws governing the development of things. There are four major contradic-

tions in the world today: between the oppressed nations on the one hand and imperialism and social-imperialism on the other; between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie in the capitalist and revisionist countries; between imperialist and social-imperialist countries and among the imperialist countries; and between socialist countries on the one hand and imperialism and social-imperialism on the other. All these contradictions are irreconcilable. Their existence and development are bound to give rise to revolution. For example, U.S. imperialism and social-imperialism are colluding and contending with each other and they are stepping up the expansion of their aggressive forces in the vast intermediate zones trying to redivide the world. This has aroused the people of the world to rise and attack them. To put down the revolution of the world's oppressed nations and people, U.S. imperialism and social-imperialism collude with each other; but to satisfy their own imperialist interests, they are in bitter contention. This includes their contention over the Middle East, Europe and the Mediterranean Sea. Such contentions are growing sharper and sharper. And their collusion and contention will continue to arouse strong opposition from the oppressed people of the world. Therefore, the analysis of the enemy camp contained in this work by Chairman Mao is also of great guiding significance for us to correctly understand today's international situation.

The tactical principles in the struggle against the enemy drawn up by Chairman Mao are the dialectical unity of firm principle and high flexibility. Using flexible tactics in struggle is to realize a firm revolutionary principle. Chairman Mao teaches us: **"We should be firm in principle; we should also have all the flexibility permissible and necessary for carrying out our principles."** ("Report to the Second Plenary Session of the Seventh Central Committee of the Communist Party of China," *Selected Works*, Vol. IV.) The nature of imperialism and all reactionaries will never change. Inevitably, their subjective wish at all times is to oppress and exploit the revolutionary people of the whole world and to oppose the revolutionary cause of the people of all countries. But this is only one side of the coin. There is another side, that is, there are objectively many difficulties for them to realize their counter-revolutionary wishes. Proceeding from their reactionary nature and counter-revolutionary needs, they inevitably and ceaselessly switch their counter-revolutionary tactics and resort to counter-revolutionary dual tactics. On our part, we must seize and make use of all enemy contradictions and difficulties, wage a tit-for-tat struggle against him, strive to gain as much as possible for the people's fundamental interests and seize victory in the struggle against him. To smash the enemy's counter-revolutionary dual policy, we must adopt a revolutionary dual policy. While persisting in armed struggle as the main form of struggle, we must also engage in various forms of struggle with the enemy

on many fronts. The different forms of flexible tactics in struggle are required by the proletariat in the fight against the enemy.

#### IV

To consolidate and develop the revolutionary united front, the proletariat must have a correct policy. In *On Policy*, Chairman Mao concisely summed up the policy for the Anti-Japanese National United Front. He pointed out that in such a united front it **"is neither all alliance and no struggle nor all struggle and no alliance, but combines alliance and struggle."**

Alliance and struggle — the relationship between the two is one of dialectical unity. Such a dual-nature policy of combining alliance and struggle is built on the basis that those to be united with in the united front have a dual nature. In the War of Resistance period, it was to unite all social strata that opposed Japanese imperialism and form a united front with them. But we carried out various forms of struggle against them according to the degree of their capitulationist and anti-Communist and anti-popular vacillations. In dealing with the relation between alliance and struggle in the anti-Japanese united front, Chairman Mao pointed out: **"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."** ("Current Problems of Tactics in the Anti-Japanese United Front," *Selected Works*, Vol. II.) If it is only all struggle and no alliance, we will not be able to unite all the forces that can be united and consolidate and develop the revolutionary united front. We will also not be able to push the principal enemy into a narrow and isolated position and therefore will not be able to win victory in the struggle against the enemy. If it is only all alliance and no struggle, we will lose our revolutionary, principled stand, relinquish the Party's revolutionary leadership in the united front, the Party will disintegrate ideologically, politically and organizationally, and the revolution will fail.

Chairman Mao sharply pointed out: **"Both extremist policies [all alliance and no struggle and all struggle and no alliance] caused great losses to the Party and the revolution."** The lessons in blood from these two erroneous policies in our Party's history are extremely profound. Chen Tu-hsiu, Wang Ming, Liu Shao-chi and their like wildly pushed their "Left" or Right opportunist lines. They never made a scientific class analysis, always negated class differentiation and reversed the relations between the enemy and ourselves. Whether it was in the period of the democratic revolution or during the period of the socialist revolution, they always opposed class analysis and class differentiation and set themselves against Chairman Mao's proletarian revolutionary line and policies formulated on the basis of revolutionary, scientific class analysis. History has proved that the two extremist policies of all alliance and no struggle and all struggle and no alliance are out-and-out opportunist policies and that only the policy of

forming a broad united front through alliance and struggle is Marxist-Leninist policy. The victory of the Chinese revolution is the victory of Chairman Mao's proletarian revolutionary line and the victory of Chairman Mao's great tactical thinking.

#### V

In *On Policy*, Chairman Mao summed up our Party's historical experience and fully explained the importance of raising the level of tactical thinking in the whole Party. He emphatically pointed out: **"To correct the lop-sided views of many Party cadres on the question of tactics and their consequent vacillations between 'Left' and Right, we must help them to acquire an all-round and integrated understanding of the changes and developments in the Party's policy, past and present."** Chairman Mao's teaching clearly points out the direction for us to better our tactical thinking and raise our level of understanding and carrying out of policy. In restudying *On Policy* today, a fundamental problem for us is to arm our minds with dialectical and historical materialism, acquire an all-round and integrated understanding of our Party's policies and tactics and overcome the erroneous "Left" and Right tendencies while carrying out policy.

Chairman Mao's tactical principles and policies reflect both the fundamental laws of proletarian revolution and the specific laws of various historical stages. They are the dialectical unity of the universality and particularity of contradiction, and it is necessary to acquire an all-round and integrated understanding of them. If we use the idealist and metaphysical viewpoint to comprehend the Party's tactical principles and various policies in a one-sided, isolated and static way, completely affirming or negating complicated matters, then we will inevitably go to the extreme "Left" or the extreme Right in the course of implementing policy. We must persevere in the Marxist scientific method advocated by Chairman Mao of investigating and studying social conditions; conscientiously observe, analyse and study the complicated international and domestic class struggles, the relations between the various classes and their changes and development; correctly distinguish and handle the two different types of contradictions; be good at grasping and exploiting the various contradictions in the enemy camp; and differentiate in dealing with different people and different conditions. By doing this, we will not be saddled with subjectivism, one-sidedness or superficiality when we observe and handle problems; we will overcome thinking in absolute terms, and enable our thinking to constantly fit in with changes in the objective situation. Thus, we can remain firm, overcome vacillation, do away with blindness and raise our consciousness in implementing the Party's policies.

(Abridged translation of an article originally published in the journal "Hongqi," No. 9, 1971.)