

MINUTES OF A KWEICHOW MILITARY DISTRICT MEETING
ON SUPPORTING LEFTISTS

Following is a translation of an article in the Chinese-language newspaper Chung-hsueh Feng-pao (Middle School Storm), Peking, No. 1, 27 May 1967, page 2.

Chairman Mao said: We Shoult Dispatch the PLA to Support the Leftist Masses.

Recently, the Kweichow Military District held a discussion meeting to do research on the experiences and lessons of the military in supporting the leftists; it put forward several methods.

1. What are the signs of supporting conservatives?

If there is incorrect support in military training, there is immediately an emergency in the particular area; letters describing the situation and militant telegrams variously fly towards the leadership organs. At this time, the leadership of the particular military unit frequently is in the situation of "inner turmoil and considerable confusion." Its spirit has been touched, and the ideological struggle is sharp.

2. Why is there support for conservatives?

The basic question is the manifestation of the world view of the bourgeoisie; the concrete reason involves ten points:

(1) Many details are seen, but the main direction is not. As regards the methods of struggle of the revolutionaries, the defects in strategy, and erroneous approaches, they think it is a question of principle. The question of direction is not seen.

(2) Much stress is put on the question of maintaining the peace; little is placed on the struggle of the lines. Since in the past the army did not involve itself, it is not deeply aware of the harm of the reactionary line, nor does it clearly understand the struggle between the two lines. Thus it easily sympathizes with the enemy; from the angle of dictatorship it one-sidedly collects problems concerning the revolutionaries.

(3) There are close relations with the local leadership, but

not close contacts with the masses. In military sub-districts there are too many leadership cadres in armed units and too many local cadres; their relations are close. The dependents of military cadres are mainly conservative, and thus they primarily listen to their reports. They do not understand and do not believe the opinions of the masses.

(4) Much concern is lavished on the conservatives, while there is little contact with the revolutionaries. They feel that the conservatives obey well, while the revolutionaries do not; thus they don't like them.

(5) There is too much stress on the theory of components only, and too little concern about present political manifestations. Some use the conditions of raising an army to measure who is a revolutionary. They hold that if there are many party members in the conservative group, then the component is good. If the ranks of the revolutionaries are not pure, then they are controlled by bad persons. Some even use the element of investigation to serve as the main aspect for differentiating the leftists.

(6) There is too much subjectivism and too little scientific analysis. They consider rumors to be reality, and take appearances to be actuality. The accidental becomes the constant, the singular the general. The past (errors already corrected) becomes the present. It is almost as though truth need not be tested by practice.

(7) There is too much stress on old ways and methods and not enough acceptance of new things. People always want to follow the time-tested way, and they do not like the innovating of the revolutionaries; they react strongly.

(8) There is too much consideration of revolutionary motivation, and not enough thought about revolutionary objects. People think that since they are old revolutionaries, they are natural leftists. Some don't advance at all in four areas: They don't study the works of Chairman Mao with specific questions in mind; they don't disseminate the instructions of their superiors; they don't listen to the criticism of the masses; they don't study the experiences of others.

(9) People are too fearful and too little daring. Some well know that the conservatives are wrong, but they are afraid that the rebels are not pure; they are afraid to take risks and don't dare to uphold the truth. Some even say: "It is better to support the conservatives than the 'counter-revolutionaries'." Some are for reconciliation and the developing of a "third force."

(10) There is too much concern with the self and not enough with the public. The basic problem is that people put themselves first; they fear to commit errors and very seldom consider whether or not the country is changing.

3. What do we do about incorrect past support?

(1) Go among the masses, gain a thorough understanding.

As regards errors committed during mass movements, it is not easy to correct them by simply relying on the leadership. The best method is to follow the teaching of the Chairman: "Go among the masses."

The concrete method is "to go out and invite others in." Before going out, one should first study the works of the Chairman and the documents of the Central Committee. One should correct his attitude, make his standpoint clear, become clear about major differences, and then form joint investigation teams (jointly composed of cadres sent from above, cadres of the local military units, and revolutionary students brought in from outside). These should investigate the primary questions. Generally they should use three or four days to get the hang of things, to distinguish right from wrong. The majority of the opinions which oppose the leftists is without any foundation. Countless facts prove that whoever most contacts the masses will evolve the most rapid. The thinking of the members of the investigation teams often is first liberated, and their banners are most vivid. It is only by going among the masses that revolutionaries develop warm feelings; on contacting the masses, many questions are immediately solved.

As regards inviting others in, this is primarily to have representatives of revolutionary organizations, outside students, and revolutionary generals come into the military units for discussions, for making people acquainted with conditions, for the analysis of situations, and for levelling of charges against the reactionary bourgeois line. Originally the cadres of many units did not respect the students, thinking that they were merely beardless youths. Later they invited revolutionary students to come serve as teachers of a sort; they offered penetrating analyses, developed warm class feelings, gave straightforward criticisms, and the military units' cadres were very much surprised. They unanimously admired the young people brought up on the thought of Mao Tse-tung; they level was high, higher than their own. For example, some held that "there were no good people from the ti-hua (0966/0553) places." In discussions these representatives raised many doubts. After hearing reports, many cadres were moved to tears, and they took the initiative to shake hands with the representatives; they exclaimed: Learn from the revolutionaries.

(2) The education of the units must be tightened.

After the thinking of the leadership cadres and organs is on the right path, education in the units must be strengthened. There must be a detailed explanation of the reason for changing the objects of support; there must be suitable examinations, otherwise chaos will develop. This education will consist mainly of education of the lines and education in discipline. The method of education is going among the masses. For example: Some military sub-districts have invited revolutionary representatives to report to various hsien, and the results have been good.

(3) Be steadfast in "supporting the left," publicly manifest one's attitude.

After the leadership thinking is clarified, they must immediately manifest their attitudes and resolutely support the leftists. They must be informative about the situation, their attitudes must be clear and striking. If attitudes had been clearly manifested in the past,

then a series of past contradictions could have been rapidly resolved, and errors immediately eliminated. After the military sub-districts had made their attitudes clear, after they had publicly let it be known that they wanted to investigate, the revolutionaries thought that these were internal questions which they did not need to examine, and old accounts were settled just like that. Responsible persons among the revolutionaries took the initiative in supporting the military sub-district government committees. They sent articles of commemoration which were very moving. When some of the revolutionary masses heard that the army's viewpoints were identical with their own, they couldn't sleep all night long.

When this critical point is handled correctly in the military, the situation immediately changes for the better. The masses are fervently excited, celebrating all night long, pasting up posters of congratulations all over the city. The units continuously report the good tidings and they are very moved. It is only at this time that the soldiers come to have feelings for the revolutionaries, that they stand together. Doubting Thomases then start to give in.

(4) Educate the leftists, solidify the majority.

When support is resolutely rendered to the leftists, the situation rapidly changes. A great number of deceived persons among the conservatives throw down their weapons, put on the true insignia, admit their crimes to Chairman Mao, and surrender to the truth.

At this time we must educate the leftists to give heed to distinguishing and uniting the majority. We must not seek a tooth for a tooth and use methods of beating, destroying, or seizing.

As regards questions among the leftists, these must be honestly pointed out in a straightforward manner. After military sub-districts have pointed out that the leftists have problems among them, they must immediately purge the bad persons.

(5) Conservatives must be educated to surrender to the truth.

The army must work towards the conservatives by means of the leftists. First of all, they must educate the armed cadres and militia to withdraw from the conservative organizations; this has had a very good result as far as undermining conservative organizations goes.

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