

Chapter 6 Primary Sources

Mao Zedong (1949)

Speech to Chinese Community Party

Communists the world over are wiser than the bourgeoisie [upper class], they understand the laws governing the existence and development of things, they understand dialectics and they can see farther. The bourgeoisie does not welcome this truth because it does not want to be overthrown.

As everyone knows, our Party passed through these twenty-eight years not in peace but amid hardships, for we had to fight enemies, both foreign and domestic, both inside and outside the Party. We thank Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin for giving us a weapon. This weapon is not a machine gun, but Marxism-Leninism...

The Russians made the October Revolution and created the world's first socialist state. Under the leadership of Lenin and Stalin, the revolutionary energy of the great proletariat [working class] and labouring people of Russia... suddenly erupted like a volcano, and the Chinese and all mankind began to see the Russians in a new light. Then, and only then, did the Chinese enter an entirely new era in their thinking and their life...

There are bourgeois republics in foreign lands, but China cannot have a bourgeois republic because she is a country suffering under imperialist oppression. The only way is through a people's republic led by the working class....

[T]he Chinese revolution, led by the Communist Party of China, has made tremendous advances both in theory and practice and has radically changed the face of China...

In the light of the experiences accumulated in these forty years and these twenty eight years, all Chinese without exception must lean either to the side of imperialism [and capitalism] or to the side of socialism [and communism]. Sitting on the fence will not do, nor is there a third road. We oppose Chiang Kaishek [the capitalist leader] who leans to the side of imperialism, and we also oppose the illusions about a third road...

[To those who say:] "We need help from the British and U.S. governments." This, too, is a naive idea in these times. Would the present rulers of Britain and the United States, who are imperialists, help a people's state? Why do these countries do business with us and, supposing they might be willing to lend us money on terms of mutual benefit in the future, why would they do so? Because their capitalists want to make money and their bankers want to earn interest to extricate themselves from their own crisis -- it is not a matter of helping the Chinese people.

[To those who say:] "You are dictators." My dear sirs, you are right, that is just what we are. All the experience the Chinese people have accumulated through several decades teaches us to enforce the people's democratic dictatorship, that is, to deprive the reactionaries of the right [i.e., anticommunists] to speak and let the people alone have that right.

"Who are the people?" At the present stage in China, they are the working class, the peasantry, the urban petty bourgeoisie and the national bourgeoisie. These classes, led by the working class and the Communist Party unite to form their own state and elect their own government they enforce their dictatorship over the running dogs of imperialism-the landlord class and bureaucrat bourgeoisie... Democracy is practiced within the ranks of the people, who enjoy the rights of freedom of speech, assembly, association and so on. The right to vote belongs only to the people, not to the reactionaries. The combination of these two aspects, democracy for the people and dictatorship over the reactionaries, is the people's democratic dictatorship.

"Why must things be done this way?" The reason is quite clear to everybody. If things were not done this way, the revolution would fail, the people would suffer, the country would be conquered.

"Don't you want to abolish state power?" Yes, we do, but not right now; we cannot do it yet. Why? Because imperialism still exists, because domestic reaction still exists, because classes still exist in our country. Our present task is to strengthen the people's state apparatus-mainly the people's army, the people's police and the people's courts-in order to consolidate national defense and protect the people's interests. Given this condition, China can develop steadily, under the leadership of the working class and the Communist Party, from an agricultural into an industrial country and from a new-democratic into a socialist and communist society, can abolish classes and realize the Great Harmony...

As for the members of the reactionary classes and individual reactionaries [those who oppose communism], so long as they do not rebel, sabotage or create trouble after their political power has been overthrown, land and work will be given to them as well in order to allow them to live and remold themselves through labor into new people. If they are not willing to work, the people's state will compel them to work....

To sum up our experience and concentrate it into one point, it is: the people's democratic dictatorship under the leadership of the working class (through the Communist Party) and based upon the alliance of workers and peasants. This dictatorship must unite as one with the international revolutionary forces. This is our formula, our principal experience, our main program...

The Communist Party of the Soviet Union is our best teacher and we must learn from it. The situation both at home and abroad is in our favor we can rely fully on the weapon of the people's democratic dictatorship, unite the people throughout the country, the reactionaries excepted, and advance steadily to our goal.

Uphold the Four Basic Principles” (Speech, March 30, 1979)

By Deng Xiaoping

The [Party] Center believes that in realizing the four modernizations in China we must uphold the four basic principles in thought and politics. They are the fundamental premise for realizing the four modernizations. They are [as follows]:

1. We must uphold the socialist road.
2. We must uphold the dictatorship of the proletariat.
3. We must uphold the leadership of the Communist Party.
4. We must uphold Marxism-Leninism and Mao Zedong Thought.

The Center believes that we must reemphasize upholding the four basic principles today because some people (albeit an extreme minority) have attempted to shake those basic principles. ... Recently, a tendency has developed for some people to create trouble in some parts of the country. ... Some others also deliberately exaggerate and create a sensation by raising such slogans as “Oppose starvation” and “Demand human rights.” Under these slogans, they incite some people to demonstrate and scheme to get foreigners to propagandize their words and actions to the outside world. The so-called China Human Rights Organization has even tacked up big character posters requesting the American president “to show solicitude” toward human rights in China. Can we permit these kinds of public demands for foreigners to interfere in China’s domestic affairs? A so-called Thaw Society issued a proclamation openly opposing the dictatorship of the proletariat, saying that it divided people. Can we permit this kind of “freedom of speech,” which openly opposes constitutional principles?