

CHINA NEEDS DEMOCRACY & UNITY

by MAO TSE-TUNG

We print here an important interview given on June 12 by Mao Tse-tung, Chairman of the Chinese Communist Party, to Chinese and foreign correspondents visiting Yen-an, the capital of the Shensi-Kansu-Ninghsia Border Region. In view of recent reports on China it has special topicality.

I heartily welcome you all coming to Yen-an. Our war aim is the same as ever, and the same as that of the entire people of the world—to defeat Japanese militarism, to defeat the Fascists. The whole of China, as the whole of the world, is united on this issue.

“Your visit to Yen-an coincides with the opening of the Second Front in Europe. This is an historic moment for the whole world, because the Second Front will have profound influence not only upon Europe but upon the Pacific and Chinese theatres of war as well. China together with the rest of the world is anxious to go forward, to achieve the final victory.

“All the anti-Japanese forces in China must now concentrate their entire efforts on fighting the Japanese militarists side by side with this decisive offensive in Europe. The present offers a great opportunity to us.

“You must all be very anxious to learn about the internal situation in China. Here I shall speak a few words: the attitude of the Chinese Communist Party towards Kuomintang-Communist relations has been defined over and over again in the declarations and manifestoes of the Chinese Communist Party and its organs. I shall repeat them here again:

“The Chinese Communist Party has never wavered from its policy of supporting Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek, the policy of continuing the co-operation between the Kuomintang and the Communist Party and the entire people, and the policy of defeating Japanese imperialism and struggle for the building of a free democratic China. This was true in the first stage of resistance. This was true in the second stage of the war. This is also true today, because this is and has always been the wish of the entire Chinese people.

“But China has drawbacks and they are serious ones. They can be summed up in one phrase—the lack of democracy. The Chinese people are badly in need of democracy, because through democracy alone can the anti-Japanese war gain strength, China’s internal and external relations be put on a proper basis, the victory of the war of resistance ensured and the country be built upon sound foundations. It is democracy too that can ensure China’s post-war unity.”

Questioned by the correspondents, Mao announced that the negotiations between the Kuomintang and the Chinese Communist Party have been going on for a long time and he hoped that there would be fruitful results out of these negotiations. He could add nothing new for the present.

As for the Second Front, he added:

“In future it will be seen that the repercussions of the Second Front are felt in the Pacific as well. Apparently at the moment it might seem that its effects on China are not direct. Our China’s problems have to be settled by the Chinese themselves. The improvement of the situation outside by itself cannot solve China’s own problems.

“In order to defeat the common enemy, to achieve sound and peaceful internal relations and also sound and peaceful international relations, we hope that the National Government and the Kuomintang and other parties will carry out a thoroughly democratic policy in different spheres. The whole world, is in the midst of the war. The war in Europe has entered a decisive

phase, while decisive battles are also approaching in the Far East.

“But China is still in need of more democracy, which is necessary to further the anti-Japanese war. Only through democracy can our resistance be strengthened. This has been proved by the experiences of the U.S.S.R., U.S.A., and Great Britain. The experiences in the past and particularly of the last seven years of resistance have also proved it.

“ Democracy must be all-sided—political, military, economic and cultural, as also in Party affairs and internationally. All these spheres must be democratised and everything must be united. But this unity must be based on democratic foundations.

“Political unification is necessary, but only on the basis of freedom of press, platform and organisation. Only a government based on democratic franchise can strengthen the political unification of the country.

“No doubt, unity in the military sphere is more necessary, but even this could be achieved only on democratic principles. If there is no democratic life inside the army, democratic relations between the officers and men, between soldiers and the people, and also between the different armies, then such armies cannot be unified.

“As to economic democracy, what is meant is the introduction of an economic system which is based not on restriction of production and lack of provision for consumption by the vast mass of the people; but one which will give impetus to further production and ensure proper distribution and uniform consumption.

“And only democracy can promote the development of education, thought, the press and the arts. This is cultural democracy.

“Party democracy means that there should be democratic relations inside the Party and among the different parties.

“I repeat that we are today badly in need of unity, but only the unity that is based on democracy can be real and abiding. It is true for China’s internal problems, but it is equally true for the coming League of Nations. Only by democratic unification can Fascism be uprooted and a new China and a new world be established. That is why we stand for the Atlantic Charter, and the declarations of the Moscow, Cairo and Teheran Conferences. And these are what we expect of the National Government, the Kuomintang and other parties and other people’s organisations.

“These aims are what the Chinese Communist Party itself is striving to achieve. In our efforts to defeat the Japanese imperialists, we, the Chinese! Communists, have introduced a new spirit of democratic centralism in all our work.

“ It is on this basis that we can build a new China, defeat our enemies and build in the future sound and peaceful internal and external relations.”

(A short extract from this interview was printed in “World News and Views” on July 8, 1944. This fuller version is from “People’s War,” Bombay, 20th August, 1944.)