

Mao Zedong: WHY IT IS NECESSARY TO DISCUSS THE WHITE PAPER

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We have criticized the U.S. White Paper and Acheson's Letter of Transmittal in three articles ("A Confession of Helplessness", [1] "Cast Away Illusions, Prepare for Struggle" and "Farewell, Leighton Stuart!"). Our criticism has aroused widespread attention and discussion in all democratic parties, people's organizations, the press, universities and schools, and among democratic personages in all walks of life throughout the country; they have issued many correct and useful declarations, statements and comments. Forums on the White Paper are being held and the entire discussion is still developing. The discussion covers Sino-U.S. relations, Sino-Soviet relations, China's foreign relations in the past hundred years, the mutual relation between the Chinese revolution and the revolutionary forces of the world, the relation between the Kuomintang reactionaries and the Chinese people, the proper attitude to be adopted by the democratic parties, people's organizations and democratic personages in all walks of life in the struggle against imperialism, the proper attitude to be adopted by liberals or so-called democratic individualists on the country's internal and external relations as a whole, the ways of dealing with new imperialist intrigues, and so on. All this is very good and is of great educational value.

The whole world is now discussing the Chinese revolution and the U.S. White Paper. This is no accident, this shows the great significance of the Chinese revolution in world history. As for us Chinese, though we have basically won victory in our revolution, we have had no opportunity for a long time to discuss thoroughly the interrelations of this revolution and various forces at home and abroad. Such a discussion is necessary, and now an opportunity has been found in the discussion of the U.S. White Paper. We had no opportunity for this kind of discussion before because we had not won basic victory in the revolution, because Chinese and foreign reactionaries had cut off the big cities from the People's Liberated Areas and because some aspects of the contradictions had not yet been fully revealed by the development of the revolution. Now the situation is different. The greater part of China has been liberated, all aspects of the internal and external contradictions have been fully revealed, and just at this moment the United States has published the White Paper. Thus the opportunity for the discussion has been found.

The White Paper is a counter-revolutionary document which openly demonstrates U.S. imperialist intervention in China. In this respect, imperialism has departed from its normal practice. The great, victorious Chinese revolution has compelled one section or faction of the U.S. imperialist clique to reply to attacks from another by publishing certain authentic data on its own actions against the Chinese people and drawing reactionary conclusions from the data, because otherwise it could not get by.

The fact that public revelation has replaced concealment is a sign that imperialism has departed from its normal practice. Until a few weeks ago, before the publication of the White Paper, the governments of the imperialist countries, though they engaged in counter-revolutionary activities every day, had never told the truth in their statements or official documents but had filled or at least flavoured them with professions of humanity, justice and virtue. This is still true of British imperialism, an old hand at trickery and deception, as well as of several other smaller imperialist countries. Opposed by the people on the one hand and by another faction in their own camp on the other, the newly arrived, upstart and neurotic U.S. imperialist group -- Truman, Marshall, Acheson, Leighton Stuart and others -- have considered it necessary and practicable to reveal publicly some (but not all) of their counter-revolutionary doings in order to argue with opponents in their own camp as to which kind of counter-revolutionary tactics is the more clever. In this way they have tried to convince their opponents so that they can go on applying what they regard as the cleverer counter-revolutionary tactics. Two factions of counter-revolutionaries have been competing with each other. One said, "Ours is the best method." The other said, "Ours is the best." When the dispute was at its hottest, one faction suddenly laid its cards on the table and revealed many of its treasured tricks of the past -- and there you have the White Paper.

And so the White Paper has become material for the education of the Chinese people. For many years, a number of Chinese (at one time a great number) only half-believed what we Communists said on many questions, mainly on the nature of imperialism and of socialism, and thought, "It may not be so." This situation has undergone a change since August 5, 1949. For Acheson gave them a lesson and he spoke in his capacity as U.S. Secretary of State. In the case of certain data and conclusions, what he said coincides with what we Communists and other progressives have been saying. Once this happened, people could not but believe us, and many had their eyes opened -- "So that's the way things really were!"

Acheson begins his Letter of Transmittal to Truman with the story of how he compiled the White Paper. His White Paper, he says, is different from all others, it is very objective and very frank:

This is a frank record of an extremely complicated and most unhappy period in the life of a great country to which the United States has long been attached by ties of closest friendship. No available item has been omitted because it contains statements critical of our policy or might be the basis of future criticism. The inherent strength of our system is the responsiveness of the Government to an informed and critical public opinion. It is precisely this informed and critical public opinion which totalitarian governments, whether Rightist or Communist, cannot endure and do not tolerate.

Certain ties do exist between the Chinese people and the American people. Through their joint efforts, these ties may develop in the future to the point of the "closest friendship". But the obstacles placed by the Chinese and U.S. reactionaries were and still are a great hindrance to these ties. Moreover, because the reactionaries of both countries have told many lies to their peoples and played many filthy tricks, that is, spread much bad propaganda and done many bad deeds, the ties between the two peoples are far from close. What Acheson calls "ties of closest friendship" are those between the reactionaries of the two countries, not between the peoples. Here Acheson is neither objective nor frank, he confuses the relations between the two peoples with those between the reactionaries. For the peoples of the two countries the victory of the Chinese revolution and the defeat of the Chinese and U.S. reactionaries are the most joyful events that have ever happened, and the present period is the happiest of their lives. Conversely, it is only for Truman, Marshall, Acheson, Leighton Stuart and other U.S. reactionaries and for Chiang Kai-shek, H. H. Kung, T. V. Soong, Chen Li-fu, Li Tsung-jen, Pai Chung-hsi and other Chinese reactionaries that it is truly "an extremely complicated and most unhappy period" in their lives.

In considering public opinion, the Achesons have mixed up the public opinion of the reactionaries with that of the people. Towards the public opinion of the people, the Achesons have no "responsiveness" whatsoever and are blind and deaf. For years they have turned a deaf ear to the opposition voiced by the people of the United States, China and the rest of the world to the reactionary foreign policy of the U.S. government. What does Acheson mean by "informed and critical public opinion"? Nothing but the numerous instruments of propaganda, such as the newspapers, news agencies, periodicals and broadcasting stations which are controlled by the two reactionary parties in the United States, the Republicans and the Democrats, and which specialize in the manufacture of lies and in threats against the people. Of these things Acheson says rightly that the Communists "cannot endure and do not tolerate" them (nor do the people). That is why we have closed down the imperialist offices of information, stopped the imperialist news agencies from distributing their dispatches to the Chinese press and forbidden them the freedom to go on poisoning the souls of the Chinese people on Chinese soil.

To say that a government led by the Communist Party is a "totalitarian government" is also half true. It is a government that exercises dictatorship over domestic and foreign reactionaries and does not give any of them any freedom to carry on their counter-revolutionary activities. Becoming angry, the reactionaries rail: "Totalitarian government!" Indeed, this is absolutely true so far as the power of the people's government to suppress the reactionaries is concerned. This power is now written into our programme; it will also be written into our constitution. Like food and clothing, this power is something a victorious people cannot do without even for a moment. It is an excellent thing, a protective talisman, an heirloom, which should under no circumstances be discarded before the thorough and total abolition

of imperialism abroad and of classes within the country. The more the reactionaries rail "totalitarian government", the more obviously is it a treasure. But Acheson's remark is also half false. For the masses of the people, a government of the people's democratic dictatorship led by the Communist Party is not dictatorial or autocratic but democratic. It is the people's own government. The working personnel of this government must respectfully heed the voice of the people. At the same time, they are teachers of the people, teaching the people by the method of self-education or self-criticism.

As to what Acheson calls a "Rightist totalitarian government", the U.S. government has ranked first in the world among such governments since the downfall of the fascist governments of Germany, Italy and Japan. All bourgeois governments, including the governments of the German, Italian and Japanese reactionaries which are being shielded by imperialism, are governments of this type. The Tito government of Yugoslavia has now become an accomplice of this gang. The U.S. and British governments belong to the type in which the bourgeoisie, and this class alone, exercises dictatorship over the people. Contrary in all respects to the people's government, this type of government practices so-called democracy for the bourgeoisie but is dictatorial towards the people. The governments of Hitler, Mussolini, Tojo, Franco and Chiang Kai-shek discarded the veil of democracy for the bourgeoisie or never used it because the class struggle in their countries was extremely intense and they found it advantageous to discard, or not to use, this veil lest the people too should make use of it. The U.S. government still has a veil of democracy, but it has been cut down to a tiny patch by the U.S. reactionaries and become very faded, and is not what it used to be in the days of Washington, Jefferson and Lincoln.[\[2\]](#) The reason is that the class struggle has become more intense. When the class struggle becomes still more intense, the veil of U.S. democracy will inevitably be flung to the four winds.

As everybody can see, Acheson makes a great many mistakes the moment he opens his mouth. This is inevitable because he is a reactionary. As to how much of a "frank record" the White Paper is, we think it is frank and not frank at the same time. The Achesons are frank where they imagine that frankness will benefit their party or faction. Otherwise, they are not. To feign frankness is a ruse of war.

NOTES

1. A commentary by the editorial department of the Hsinhua News Agency published on August 12, 1949.

2. George Washington (1732-99), Thomas Jefferson (1743-1826) and Abraham Lincoln (1809-65) were well-known bourgeois statesmen in the early days of the United States. Washington was the commander-in-chief of the revolutionary army of the colonies during the American War of Independence (1775-83) and the first president of the United States. Jefferson drafted the American Declaration of Independence and became president of the United States. Lincoln advocated the abolition of Negro slavery in the United States and during his presidency led the war against the slave-owners of the southern states (1861-65); he issued the "Emancipation Proclamation" in 1862.