

SHAO TIEH-CHEN

**REVOLUTIONARY DIALECTICS
AND HOW TO APPRAISE
IMPERIALISM**

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Marxism-Leninism makes a scientific analysis of the development of the class struggle and, on the basis of this analysis, guides the revolutionary struggles of the proletariat and of all the people striving for emancipation. When the proletariat and other revolutionary people are in an oppressed position, their strength is always far inferior to that of the landlords and the bourgeoisie who have long been in the position of oppressors and rulers. However, as they represent the direction in which history advances, their strength is capable of growing daily. Provided they persist in struggle, using the correct methods, and provided they dare to seize victory at the decisive juncture, they will finally be able to defeat the reactionary and decadent ruling forces. After all, which are the really powerful forces: the newly rising forces of the people or the decadent forces of reaction? Marxist-Leninists answer without the slightest hesitation: the newly rising forces of the people, and not the decadent forces of reaction. This is a profoundly scientific answer, an answer which is full of revolutionary significance.

Hence, in the struggle against the class enemy, the proletariat and other revolutionary people must, first of all, make a correct estimate of the overall balance of class forces, must show dauntless revolutionary spirit and revolutionary aspirations, and must firmly believe that the revolutionary forces, which are outwardly weak, are certain to defeat the counter-revolutionary forces, which are outwardly strong. As Lenin said:

. . . all classes and all countries are not regarded statically, but dynamically, *i.e.*, not in a state of immobility, but in motion (the laws of which are determined by the economic conditions of existence of each class). Motion, in its turn, is regarded not only from the standpoint of the past, but also from the standpoint of the future, and, at the same time, not in accordance with the vulgar conception of the "evolutionists", who see only slow changes, but dialectically. . . .¹

Obviously, it is only when the correlation of class forces is examined from the revolutionary dialectical point of view, as described by Lenin, that the proletariat and other revolutionary people can correctly determine their strategic plans and, step by step, advance boldly to final victory in their struggle against the temporarily powerful enemy.

This was precisely the way the great revolutionary teachers, Marx, Engels and Lenin, treated the class enemy in their own revolutionary activity. More than a hundred years ago, when the bourgeoisie held sway over the entire world, Marx, Engels and a few others were the only Communists. They had neither political power nor armed forces, yet they dared to challenge the old world and to pass the death sentence upon the capitalist system in highly inspiring words. "Its fall [the fall of the bourgeoisie] and the victory of the proletariat are equally inevitable," they said. "Let the ruling classes tremble at a communist revolution. The proletarians have nothing to lose but their chains. They have a world to win."²

¹ V. I. Lenin, "Karl Marx", *Selected Works*, International Publishers, New York, 1943, Vol. II, p. 37.

² Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, "Manifesto of the Communist Party", *Selected Works*, Moscow, 1951, Vol. I, pp. 43, 61.

In 1848, because of the feeble strength of the proletariat, the fruits of the "March Revolution" in Germany were seized by the bourgeoisie which thought itself all-powerful. At that time Marx said contemptuously: ". . . it left no monsters, no revolutionary colossi, on the Berlin surface of the earth but creatures of the old style, squat bourgeois figures."¹ He said that they were like "an execrable old man, who saw himself doomed to guide and deflect the first youthful impulses of a robust people in his own senile interests — sans eyes, sans ears, sans teeth, sans everything — such was the *Prussian bourgeoisie* that found itself at the helm of the Prussian state after the March Revolution".²

When Lenin was arrested after he began taking part in revolutionary activity, a police officer asked him, "Why must you make trouble, young fellow? You're up against a brick wall!" Lenin replied unruffled, "A brick wall, but it's rotten; touch it and it will crumble."³ Early in the 20th century, after capitalism had developed into its imperialist stage, Lenin made a scientific analysis of the essence of imperialism on the basis of a wealth of data. Going straight to the heart of the matter, he declared that imperialism was moribund, decaying capitalism. After the victory of the Russian October Revolution, Britain, France, Japan, the United States and other imperialist powers formed a reactionary alliance and launched armed attacks against the new Soviet power. At the same time they lent energetic support to the counter-revolution-

¹ Karl Marx, "The Bourgeoisie and the Counter-Revolution", *ibid.*, p. 62.

² *Ibid.*, p. 65.

³ Cf. *Lenin, a Biography*, Lawrence and Wishart, London, 1955, p. 9.

ary revolts of the White-guard bandits Kolchak and Denikin in an attempt to strangle the Soviet power in the cradle. Lenin said firmly:

. . . all these seemingly huge and invincible forces of international imperialism are unreliable, and hold no terrors for us, . . . at the core they are rotten, . . . they are making us stronger and stronger, and . . . this added strength will enable us to win victory on the outer front and to make it a thoroughgoing one.¹

On the second anniversary of the October Revolution Lenin said in retrospect:

It seemed at that time that world imperialism was such a tremendous and invincible force that it was stupid of the workers of a backward country to attempt an uprising against it. Now, however, as we glance back over the past two years, we see that even our opponents are increasingly admitting that we were right. We see that imperialism, which seemed such an insuperable colossus, has proved before the whole world to be a colossus with feet of clay, . . .²

Lenin has also said that international capitalism was "a decrepit, dying, hopelessly sick old man".

All this shows the combination of a great scientific insight and a high revolutionary spirit in the persons of Marx, Engels and Lenin. They were able to penetrate all the surface phenomena to the weak essence of the seemingly strong reactionary forces, and they therefore dared to lead the proletariat in struggle against the tem-

¹ V. I. Lenin, "Two Years of Soviet Rule", *Lenin on War and Peace*, Foreign Languages Press, Peking, 1960, p. 23.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 22-23.

porarily much stronger enemy. It was for the same reason that Lenin dared to launch the onslaught of the Great October Revolution against imperialism, at a time when the philistines thought it utterly impossible.

History has confirmed the Marxist-Leninist prediction about the fate of all reactionaries: their might is unreliable and is not to be feared, and in the end they will meet their inevitable doom in the face of the struggle of the revolutionary people. The Russian tsar appeared to be very strong but he was swept away by the storm of the February Revolution. Hitler, Mussolini and the Japanese imperialists in their day annexed nearly half the world and were high and mighty, yet they had to surrender to the people of the world when pounded by the iron fists of the people of the Soviet Union and other countries.

Basing himself on the Marxist-Leninist theory of the class struggle, and especially on Lenin's theory of imperialism, Comrade Mao Tse-tung has summed up a wealth of rich historical experience, stating that imperialism and all reactionaries are paper tigers, that they are powerful only in appearance, that in reality they are inwardly weak though outwardly strong, weak inside though fierce in countenance, and that therefore are not terrifying. This is completely in accord with the ideas of Marx, Engels and Lenin in their appraisal of the class enemy.

Comrade Mao Tse-tung's thesis that imperialism and all reactionaries are paper tigers was put forward 16 years ago. At that time, with the end of World War II, the international situation underwent a fundamental change and a realignment of class forces took place on an international scale. The fascist bandits of Germany, Italy

and Japan were defeated, the imperialists of Britain, France and other countries were weakened, the socialist camp began to take shape and the forces of peace and democracy and the national-liberation movement of the peoples of the world were growing. However, U.S. imperialism took the place of the German, Italian and Japanese fascists and became the centre and bulwark of world reaction. Relying on the economic power it had gained through the huge profits derived from the war, and relying on its monopoly of "the might of the atomic bomb", U.S. imperialism rallied the reactionary forces of all countries, pulled together the remnant forces of fascism and formed an imperialist and anti-democratic camp to oppose the socialist and all other democratic forces, in a vain attempt to dominate and enslave the whole world. At that time, a seemingly powerful adverse current emerged both internationally and in China, which was directed against the Soviet Union, against communism and against the people. In China, the Chiang Kai-shek reactionaries, relying on the immense military and financial support given them by U.S. imperialism, launched a war against the people with the aim of wiping out the Chinese people's revolutionary forces. At the same time, they made every effort to spread the myth of the invincibility of U.S. imperialism among the people.

In those conditions of tense and acute class struggle, how was one to appraise the balance of class forces? Could the revolutionary forces defeat the counter-revolutionary forces? These were questions about which not only the people of China but the people of the whole world were closely concerned. Taking a revolutionary proletarian stand and applying the Marxist-Leninist scientific method, Comrade Mao Tse-tung analysed the

international and domestic situation following the end of World War II. He pointed out that the contradiction between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie within each imperialist country, the contradiction between the imperialist powers, and the contradiction between imperialism and the people of the colonial and semi-colonial countries not only continued to exist but were becoming more acute and widespread. These contradictions were most strikingly exhibited by U.S. imperialism. After the war, its economic power, which had increased during the world war, was faced with an unstable and constantly shrinking foreign and domestic market. The shrinking of the market would inevitably lead to a new economic crisis. After the war, U.S. imperialism became more and more reactionary and rotten politically. It began to institute a fascist rule at home and gradually discarded even the shadow of democracy and freedom, arousing more and more opposition from the American people. The fact that U.S. imperialism had rallied the reactionary forces of various countries around itself as its tools for ruling and oppressing the peoples of these countries was provoking firm opposition among the people of the whole world. The irreconcilable contradictions facing U.S. imperialism at home and abroad were like volcanoes which threatened it every minute and could erupt into revolutions at any moment. Comrade Mao Tse-tung said that the imperialist enemy "has a weak and fragile foundation, he is disintegrating internally, he is alienated from the people, he is confronted with inextricable economic crises; therefore, he can be defeated".¹

¹ Mao Tse-tung, "Revolutionary Forces of the World Unite, Fight Against Imperialist Aggression!", *Selected Works*, Foreign Languages Press, Peking, 1961, Vol. IV, p. 285.

In the light of the above analysis Comrade Mao Tse-tung pointed out:

All reactionaries are paper tigers. In appearance, the reactionaries are terrifying, but in reality they are not so powerful. From a long-term point of view, it is not the reactionaries but the people who are really powerful.

He went on to elaborate:

Chiang Kai-shek and his supporters, the U.S. reactionaries, are all paper tigers too. Speaking of U.S. imperialism, people seem to feel that it is terrifically strong. Chinese reactionaries are using the "strength" of the United States to frighten the Chinese people. But it will be proved that the U.S. reactionaries, like all the reactionaries in history, do not have much strength.¹

By comparing imperialism and all reactionaries to paper tigers, Comrade Mao Tse-tung provided a fundamental strategic concept for the revolutionary people, armed them ideologically, and strengthened their confidence in victory over the counter-revolutionary forces. This concept played a very great role in the Chinese People's Liberation War.

In the past ten years or so, Comrade Mao Tse-tung's thesis that imperialism and all reactionaries are paper tigers has stood the test of many events in the world arena and been proved correct. The victory of the Chinese people's revolution was one powerful confirmation. Comrade Mao Tse-tung put forward his thesis at the very time when the reactionary Chiang Kai-shek clique had

¹ Mao Tse-tung, "Talk with the American Correspondent Anna Louise Strong", *ibid.*, pp. 100, 101.

forced a civil war on the Chinese people. The balance of forces was tilted in favour of the reactionary Chiang Kai-shek clique. Its military strength amounted to more than 4 million troops, it controlled an area containing more than two-thirds of China's population, it had taken over all the equipment of the one million invading Japanese troops in China and had received tremendous aid from U.S. imperialism. The People's Liberation Army, far inferior to the Chiang Kai-shek troops both in numbers and in equipment, had only 1,200,000 men. The liberated areas were much smaller than the areas under the Kuomintang. Yet, through bitter struggles, the Chinese people finally defeated its powerful enemy and put an end to the 22-year-old reactionary rule of the "Chiang Kai-shek dynasty".

The Vietnamese people waged a protracted and arduous struggle in extremely difficult conditions during the eight years from 1946 to 1954. They finally defeated the U.S.-backed French colonialists, bringing to an end the more than 80 years of French imperialist colonial rule in the northern part of their country. In their national-democratic revolution, the Iraqi people overthrew the imperialist-supported Faisal monarchy in 1958, thus knocking an important link out of the Baghdad Treaty Organization. The Algerian people started their fight against the French colonialists with a guerrilla force of only 3,000 men. Yet the French colonialists failed to stem the revolutionary torrent of the Algerian people, even though they threw in 800,000 troops. After seven years of armed struggle, the Algerian people ultimately compelled France to recognize Algeria's independence, and thus brought to an end 130 years of colonial rule. All these facts provide ample proof that imperialism and

reaction are weak, and that the revolutionary forces of the people are strong enough to defeat them.

Cuba, situated right next to the United States, is an island country with a population of 7 million people and an area of 114,000 square kilometres. Beginning with only 12 men and 7 rifles, the revolutionary struggle under Fidel Castro's leadership overthrew the fascist dictatorship of U.S. imperialism's running-dog Batista in a little more than two years of heroic fighting, thus smashing a link in the U.S. imperialist chain binding Latin America, in the Western hemisphere over which U.S. imperialism has been accustomed to ride roughshod. U.S. imperialism bitterly hates the victorious Cuban people's revolution and seeks by every means to subvert the Cuban revolutionary regime. Yet at the same time it fears Cuba with its 7 million people, because justice and the sympathies of the people the world over are on Cuba's side. U.S. imperialism is afraid lest the Cuban revolution should influence all Latin America. Two months ago, U.S. imperialism stirred up tension in the Caribbean in an attempt to strangle the Cuban revolution. But with support from the people all over the world the heroic Cuban people waged a resolute struggle, hit back hard at the war provocations of U.S. imperialism and thus defended their sovereignty and their revolution.

The thesis that imperialism and all reactionaries are paper tigers has been readily accepted by the revolutionary masses because it fully accords with objective reality. This has severely shaken imperialism and all the reactionaries. The imperialists are in constant fear that the people of the world will recognize them for the paper tigers that they are and will thus hold them in contempt. They therefore seize on every occasion to argue on their

own behalf, declaring themselves to be powerful, real tigers, and not paper ones. Yet facts are most stubborn things. The self-aggrandizement of the imperialists only proves that the paper tiger thesis has hit them where it hurts most and has exposed their true nature.

Some people use a metaphysical approach to interpret the thesis that imperialism and all reactionaries are paper tigers. These people say, if imperialism and the reactionaries are paper tigers, how is it that they are able to go around committing aggression and unleashing wars? Or they say, if they are paper tigers, wouldn't scarcely any effort be needed to wipe them out? These people, it is clear, know nothing whatsoever of Marxist dialectics. Marxism teaches us over and over again not to be misled by superficial phenomena but to look at the essence of a problem and discover the essential relationships amid a host of phenomena. Lenin has said: "Dialectics in the proper sense is the study of contradiction in the very essence of objects."¹ In regarding imperialism and the reactionaries as paper tigers, Comrade Mao Tse-tung is referring to their essential nature. On the one hand, imperialism and the reactionaries are "tigers", for they can frighten people, can devour people. On the other hand, they are made of "paper", and their strength is not so great. This is the dual nature of imperialism and all reactionaries. Comrade Mao Tse-tung has pointed out:

Just as there is not a single thing in the world without a dual nature (this is the law of the unity of opposites),

¹ V. I. Lenin, "Conspectus of Hegel's Book, *Lectures on the History of Philosophy*", *Collected Works*, Foreign Languages Publishing House, Moscow, 1961, Vol. 38, pp. 253-54.

so imperialism and all reactionaries have a dual nature — they are real tigers and paper tigers at the same time.¹

One reason why Marxist revolutionary dialectics constitutes a sharp ideological weapon is that it discerns the signs of inevitable extinction in existing things. Imperialism and all reactionaries are invariably out to “devour the people”, are ruthless towards the people, and will go on being so until their doom. But Marxism accurately points out that imperialism, though rampant at the moment, is in essence a mere paper tiger, and thus it inspires all the oppressed people with revolutionary ardour and militancy. No politically conscious worker and no rank-and-file fighter in this revolutionary struggle finds such revolutionary dialectics at all hard to understand. They would never say that since imperialism and the reactionaries are paper tigers, they would not therefore oppress the people at home or commit aggression abroad or that one could therefore simply poke a hole in them with a finger. On the contrary, because the revolutionary people see through the nature of imperialism, they are fighting with full confidence and greater heroism and resolution and using the strength of the masses to push imperialism and reaction into the grave.

Those who do not acknowledge that imperialism is a paper tiger are scared out of their wits by its seeming strength and hold it in awe; they think that to hold imperialism with its power in contempt would be to fly in the face of reality. But it must be pointed out that the reality they see is only reality as it appears to opportunist

¹ Mao Tse-tung, “Talk with the American Correspondent Anna Louise Strong”, *Selected Works*, Peking, Vol. IV, p. 98.

philistines. Lenin said of such opportunists that they “know only pedestrian realism; the revolutionary dialectics of Marxist realism, which emphasizes the urgent tasks of the advanced class, and discovers in the existing state of things those elements that will lead to its overthrow, are absolutely alien to them”.¹

It is a fundamental characteristic of the opportunists that they have no faith in the strength of the people and do not believe that those forces of the people which are temporarily in an inferior position will grow strong and be able to defeat imperialism and all the reactionaries; hence, they cannot accept the thesis that imperialism is a paper tiger. Contrary to all the opportunists, Marxist-Leninists hold that the strength of the people is the most powerful force of all and is the decisive force pushing social development forward. Every revolutionary struggle is bound to generate inexhaustible strength, provided it is rooted in the masses, fully sets the masses in motion and really becomes the business of the masses themselves. This strength has no match in the world and is capable of smashing any reactionary force, however formidable. It was from this standpoint — belief in the strength of the people — that Lenin viewed imperialism as a “colossus with feet of clay”. He said:

He wins in war who has the greater reserves, the greater sources of strength, the greater endurance in the mass of the people.

We have more of all of this than the Whites have, and more than “universally-mighty” Anglo-French imperialism, that colossus with feet of clay. We have

¹ V. I. Lenin, “Revolution Teaches”, *Collected Works*, Moscow, Vol. 9, p. 149.

more of this because we can draw on and can go on drawing for a long time more and more deeply from among the workers and labouring peasants, from among those classes which were oppressed by capitalism and which everywhere comprise the overwhelming majority of the population.¹

Lenin regarded the people as the richest "reservoir" of strength and pointed out,

Our enemies, whether the Russian bourgeoisie or the world bourgeoisie, have nothing even remotely like this reservoir; the ground beneath their feet is quaking more and more.²

Similarly, the concept of imperialism as a paper tiger proceeds from confidence in the strength of the people. Comrade Mao Tse-tung has pointed out:

I say that all the reputedly powerful reactionaries are merely paper tigers. The reason is that they are divorced from the people.³

Imperialism always tries to intimidate the people with the weapons at its disposal, but whatever the weapons, they cannot alter imperialism's fatal weakness of being divorced from the people. The factor that decides the destiny of humanity has never been any weapon; it is always the masses of the people. Not the nuclear weapon, but the strength of the people, is the greatest power in the world. The nuclear weapons which imperialism is using for the intimidation of the people and

¹ V. I. Lenin, "The Results of the Party Week in Moscow and Our Tasks", *Lenin on War and Peace*, Peking, p. 21.

² *Ibid.*, p. 22.

³ *Imperialism and All Reactionaries Are Paper Tigers*, Foreign Languages Press, Peking, 1958, p. 26.

for nuclear blackmail, are also like a paper tiger in the eyes of the revolutionary people, and can never intimidate the masses.

While attacking other Marxist-Leninist teachings, the Yugoslav modern revisionists began long ago to denounce the thesis that imperialism is a paper tiger. They distorted its meaning, calling it "a prediction of pure invention". That the renegade Tito clique should deny that imperialism and all reactionaries are paper tigers is not at all surprising. They have moved very far away from the people and, together with imperialism, are blocking the people's revolutionary movement. Cringing before the might of imperialism and disseminating fear of imperialism among the masses of the people, they attempt to make the masses follow their example of knuckling under to imperialism. In no circumstances, therefore, do they dare or want to admit that imperialism is a paper tiger.

Proceeding from the appraisal of the essence of imperialism and all reactionaries and basing himself on the experience gained over many years in China's revolutionary struggles, Comrade Mao Tse-tung formulated the strategy and tactics of the revolution and developed Marxist-Leninist thinking on strategy and tactics. He has said:

In order to struggle against the enemy, we have formed the concept over a long period that strategically we should despise all enemies, but tactically take them seriously. This also means that we should despise the enemy in general but take him seriously on each and every concrete question.¹

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 27.

To despise the enemy strategically means to perceive that the class enemy, viewed in his essence and in the long run, is bound to perish in the end, no matter how powerful he may be for a time; and that the revolutionary forces will eventually win, no matter how weak they may be for a time. In the last analysis, it is the masses of the people who are really powerful, and not imperialism and the reactionaries. That is why we should dare to struggle against the enemy, dare to overthrow the rule of imperialism and the reactionaries and dare to seize victory. When the War of Resistance Against Japan was drawing to its close, Comrade Mao Tse-tung taught us that we must act in the spirit in which Yu Kung in the legend removed mountains, in order to overthrow imperialism and feudalism, the two big mountains pressing like a dead weight on the backs of the Chinese people. According to the book of *Lieh Tse*, there were two very high, massive mountains, Taihang and Wangwu, but Yu Kung believed that he and his posterity could dig these two mountains away and level them. Yu Kung knew how to despise the "enemy" strategically. When the Third Revolutionary Civil War (1945-1949) began, Comrade Mao Tse-tung pointed out that the "millet plus rifles" of the people would prove more powerful than the aeroplanes plus tanks of the Chiang Kai-shek reactionary clique. He later added:

Chiang Kai-shek's superiority in military forces was only transient, a factor which could play only a temporary role, that U.S. imperialist aid was likewise a factor which could play only a temporary role, while the anti-popular character of Chiang Kai-shek's war and the feelings of the people were factors that would

play a constant role, and that in this respect the People's Liberation Army was in a superior position. Patriotic, just and revolutionary in character, the war waged by the People's Liberation Army was bound to win the support of the people of the whole country. That was the political foundation for victory over Chiang Kai-shek.¹

This contempt for the enemy strategically is the expression of a thoroughgoing revolutionary spirit. For Marxist-Leninists, what is most important is, first and foremost, to have the revolutionary courage, revolutionary aspiration and revolutionary spirit to defeat imperialism and the reactionaries, and to combine this revolutionary zeal with a scientific approach.

To take full account of the enemy tactically means that with regard to any given part of the whole, and in each specific struggle, it is necessary to take the enemy seriously, to be prudent, to pay careful attention to the art of struggle and to adopt forms of struggle suited to different times, places and conditions in order to isolate and wipe out the enemy step by step. Comrade Mao Tse-tung has used homely analogies to illustrate the idea of taking full account of the enemy tactically. He has said:

In war, battles can only be fought one by one and the enemy can only be annihilated bit by bit. Factories can only be built one by one. The peasants can only plough the land plot by plot.²

¹ Mao Tse-tung, "The Present Situation and Our Tasks", *Selected Works*, Peking, Vol. IV, p. 160.

² *Imperialism and All Reactionaries Are Paper Tigers*, Peking, p. 27.

When we were waging the struggle against the Chiang Kai-shek reactionaries, Comrade Mao Tse-tung on the one hand took them as paper tigers, pointing out that the reactionaries would eventually be defeated and that the people would eventually triumph. On the other hand, in each specific struggle against the Chiang Kai-shek reactionaries, he was always most serious and circumspect, went painstakingly into the art of struggle and opposed any inclination to take the enemy lightly or any adventurism. In each specific struggle, he always saw to it that our army was fully prepared and fought no battle unprepared, fought no battle it was not sure of winning. In every battle, our army concentrated an absolutely superior force (two, three, four and sometimes even five or six times the enemy's strength), in order to wipe out the enemy completely and gain victory. Comrade Mao Tse-tung has also pointed out that, when we wage a struggle against the enemy, it is necessary not only to gauge the possibilities in our favour, but also to take into account the different kinds of difficulties we might encounter, and that it is necessary to be fully prepared for the greatest difficulties that might emerge. Only in this way can we stand invincible.

The struggle of the revolutionary people against imperialism and the reactionaries is an arduous and complex one, and victory is impossible without paying a considerable price. The road of revolution is not without its twists and turns and is sometimes beset with difficulties and setbacks which make certain detours and temporary retreats necessary. When an unfavourable situation arises, it is all the more necessary for the revolutionary people firmly to adhere to the general strategy for defeating the enemy if they are to carry

the struggle forward and transform the situation into a favourable one. Lack of courage to despise the enemy strategically would not only result in loss of revolutionary determination in unfavourable circumstances; but even given a most favourable revolutionary situation, such loss of revolutionary determination would deprive one of the courage to seize the opportunity for victory and would thus damage the revolutionary cause. At the same time, precisely because the road of revolution is tortuous, it is necessary to take full account of the enemy tactically; heedless and reckless action in any specific struggle will also damage the revolution.

The two aspects — despising the enemy strategically and taking full account of him tactically — must be integrated dialectically. This is an important Marxist-Leninist principle. All who genuinely want revolution, and want to win victory, must take this attitude in dealing with the enemy; there is and can be no other attitude to take. Departure from this Marxist-Leninist principle in the revolutionary struggle will lead to opportunist errors of one kind or another. Anyone who takes full account of the enemy tactically, but does not dare to despise him strategically, will inevitably commit Right opportunist errors. Anyone who despises the enemy both tactically and strategically will inevitably commit "Left" adventurist errors. Anyone who dares not despise the enemy strategically and moreover does not take full account of him tactically, will commit both Right opportunist errors in strategy and "Left" adventurist errors in tactics. These conclusions are derived from the abundant experience, both of success and failure, accumulated by the Chinese people during their protracted revolutionary struggles. Only by despising the enemy

strategically and taking full account of him tactically, and by integrating the two closely, is it possible to hold the initiative and to strike with telling effect at the enemy until his defeat is complete.

To despise the enemy strategically is an essential precondition for taking full account of him tactically. Tactics are guided by strategy. Though tactics must vary with the circumstances in specific struggles, the ultimate aim is always to defeat the enemy. If anyone does not dare to despise the enemy strategically, refusing to look upon imperialism and the reactionaries as paper tigers, either he will give up the revolutionary struggle, make one-sided compromise or accommodation with the enemy, and even shamelessly surrender, or he will take reckless, imprudent and adventurist steps in specific struggles. Naturally, in neither case can he be said to take full account of the enemy tactically. Therefore, it is only by really despising the enemy strategically that one can really take full account of him tactically.

The fundamental contradiction in the present-day world between imperialism and its lackeys on the one hand and the people of all countries on the other has not been resolved. The anti-imperialist struggle of the people in all countries is steadily surging forward. For the present, the main danger in this struggle against imperialism and the reactionaries is overestimation of the enemy's strength and underestimation of the people's strength. To lack the courage to see imperialism and reactionaries as paper tigers, that is, not daring to despise the enemy strategically, not daring to expose the essence of imperialism and the reactionaries before the people of the world, or to wage a resolute and thoroughgoing struggle against them, is a manifestation of Right

opportunism. The task of all Marxist-Leninists and all revolutionaries is to free the masses of the people from the influence of this Right opportunism, to help them see the essence of imperialism and the reactionaries clearly and to enhance their revolutionary confidence and determination.