

1952

Speeches/Documents

**Title:** Address to the First Graduating Class of the Military Academy

**Author:** Mao Zedong

**Date:** July 10, 1952

**Source:** The writing of Mao Zedong 272-273

**Description:**

President Liu, commanders, members of the Political Work Staff, members of the Rear Services Work Staff, instructors and the graduates of the First Term of the High Level Accelerated Program Department of the Military Academy, Comrades:

The first term of the high-level accelerated program department and the senior level accelerated program department of the Military Academy of the Chinese People's Liberation Army, which itself stands for a great transition in the history of the construction of the armed forces of the Chinese people, has now come to a fruitful conclusion, and we are now holding commencement exercises. I hereby extend to you my most enthusiastic congratulations.

The establishment of the Military Academy and the educational work that it has undertaken to provide in the last year or so have contributed greatly to the construction of the regularized and modernized national defense troops [of our country]. This is the result of the combined and unified efforts of President Liu, of all our comrade advisors from the Soviet Union, of all the commanders, the members of the Political Work Staff, the members of the Rear Services Work Staff, the instructors, and the students. I wish now to extend to you my gratitude and appreciation.

The Chinese people in its history of building its armed forces, has traveled through a long trek of twenty-five years. It is, in international circles, with the exception of the Soviet Union, unparalleled in its richness of revolutionary experience. Nevertheless, prior to the nationwide victory of the Chinese people, its military construction, owing to the limitations of objective material conditions, was in a relatively low stage of development. By this I mean that we were in a situation in which [our armed forces] had simple and low-quality equipment, in which there was an absence of regular organization and systematization, in which they lacked strict military discipline, and in which combat leadership was decentralized and non unified, and often carried within it guerrilla characteristics, and so on. These were natural and inevitable conditions in the past, and were therefore correct [for the past]. Nevertheless, since the Chinese people attained nationwide victory, the objective conditions have undergone a fundamental transformation. We have now entered the higher stage in which we must be in control of modern technology. This possibility is now fully inherent in the existing objective conditions; as long as we add to it our indefatigable subjective efforts, it is bound to be realized. In step with the modernization of [our armed forces'] equipment, there is a demand that the establishment of the troops become regularized; this means the implementation of a unified command, a unified system, organization, discipline and training [for all the troops], that is, the materialization of closely knit coordinated actions on the part of all the various arms of the services. For this purpose, the decentralization, lack of unity and phenomena of lassitude and simplicity in discipline, as well as the guerrilla mentality and practices, which might have been appropriate and correct in the past but are no longer appropriate and correct today, must be overcome, and, in their place, we must strengthen the sense of organization, of planning, of precision and discipline which is to be cultivated in the full range of our work and command, and particularly first of all in terms of education and training. This is an indispensable condition in the establishment of regularized and modernized national defense troops [for our country].

At the same time, in order that we may organize [and prepare for] such complex, highly mechanized and modern battle or combat, we cannot do without a sound commanding organ that can act as the brains and is rich in scientific organization and division of labor. The type of commanding organs of the past that were unsound, low in efficiency or even far from being equal to their tasks must, from now on, be improved and strengthened by much effort. The kind of situation that in the past placed emphasis exclusively on political work and neglected staff work must be resolutely changed around (it is correct to emphasize political work, and there should still continue to be this emphasis from now on).

In the past some weaker people, people who lacked organizational ability, or even people who had committed some mistakes and did not have a high level of activism, were chosen to work in the commanding organs, and this has caused some commanding officers to be reluctant to serve as staff officers or chiefs of staff. This situation must be radically turned around. From now on we must select quality commanders who are rich in organizational and commanding abilities to serve in the commanding organs at all levels, and thus create a new work-style and a new atmosphere in the commanding organs. This, too, is an indispensable condition in the establishment of regularized and modernized national defense troops [for our country].

Commanders, members of the Political Work Staff and the Rear Services Work Staff, instructors, graduates of the first term of the Military Academy, and students still in pursuit of their studies, comrades: The Military Commission hopes that you will continue to exert your efforts in the glorious cause of the building of regularized and modernized national defense troops, and also that, through your efforts, the spirit of building regularized and modernized national defense troops will be infused into all the units.