

UNIFY THE TRAINING PLAN AND SPEED UP THE BUILDING OF A MODERN AND REGULARIZED ARMY

September 24, 1951

The 1952 national plan for the training of our ground force has been formulated. We have invited you to this conference to familiarize you with the plan so that it can be carried out to the letter.

Here I am going to discuss the following five questions.

(1) The training plan for 1952 is mainly designed to modernize and regularize the army. This is to be done from bottom up, with the division as the basic unit. From the infantry through the specialized branches and public security troops, all will be trained under this unified plan.

We must carry out this training because current circumstances and the war we are fighting are totally different from those of the past. Without it, we shall be unable to achieve genuine modernization even if we have modern equipment. I would like to deal with this question by touching on the following points.

With regard to the enemy, we are now fighting U.S. imperialism and its lackeys. They are different from the enemy we fought during the civil war periods. They have complete services and all the necessary branches using highly sophisticated weapons. We should work out effective counter-measures against the organization and tactics of the U.S. aggressor troops and, according to the actual needs, build on the valuable experience we gained in the revolutionary war. By so

Speech at a conference on the implementation, in 1952, of a unified national training plan for the ground force. The conference, called in September 1951 by the Military Training Department of the People's Revolutionary Military Council under the Central People's Government, was attended by commanders and chiefs of staff from the various army branches and by chiefs of staff and heads of the training departments in the military areas.

doing, we can defeat the enemy. This truth has been borne out by our experience in the past year in the War to Resist U.S. Aggression and Aid Korea.²⁹¹ We are faced now with the new tasks of analysing our experience, reorganizing and consolidating the army and learning methods of modern warfare.

With regard to friends, the socialist and People's Democratic countries not only maintain profound friendship with us, but provide us with direct aid. With these friends joining us on the anti-imperialist front, our position is stronger and our victory more assured.

With regard to weaponry and equipment, since we enjoy assistance from fraternal countries and now have big cities with industries on a fair scale, we are beginning to equip our army with modern weapons. We have set up our naval, air, tank, engineering, air defence, railway and massive artillery forces. This variety of services and branches and the large-scale use of complex weaponry are indicative of the degree of our modernization. The modern weapons we are now using rank with those used in the rest of the world, some being fairly sophisticated. To master the technical use of sophisticated weapons and military equipment in the various services and branches and to learn how to conduct combined operations involving such services and branches, we must have a standard and unified training plan.

With regard to schedules, in 1952 most of the troops will be able to undergo a full year of regular training. In the past, we were more than satisfied to get one or two months' time for training. Now that we can devote an entire year to this activity under stable conditions, we must take full advantage of this in our effort to make our army a modern and regularized force.

With regard to logistics, both transport and supplies should be modernized because our material conditions have changed. Transport by men and pack animals should be continued, but we must learn to use trains, lorries, ships and planes. As for supplies, they should suit the needs of war and our troops must become accustomed to eating cold food such as bread and canned goods. We should do our utmost in all these respects.

Health care needs to be improved in light of the new situation. Logistical and administrative staff need to be cut back as far as possible and combat personnel increased. Consequently, it's been decided to increase combatants and reduce noncombatants.

It follows that along with modern weapons, equipment and organization, we need standardized training.

(2) We must carry on our fine traditions. We have won victory in a sustained war, and we have acquired a fine tradition in army building and gained rich experience in fighting, but such undesirable practices as guerrilla-ism and decentralism resulting from our protracted activities in the rural areas must be abandoned. All our work should be oriented towards encouraging initiative at all levels while ensuring centralized leadership. In the course of modernization and regularization, we must not abandon our fine traditions. Neither should we allow ourselves to be fettered by past experience.

(3) We should be firm in implementing the 1952 plan for training the ground force. It is a unified plan for modernizing and regularizing our army on the basis of our best traditions in army building. It is designed to unify command, work systems, organization, discipline and training. It means, in short, co-ordinating the acts of millions of people. In the past, army training plans were worked out independently by various units. Simple crash courses were conducted during intervals between battles and campaigns to carry out one or more types of technical or tactical training to meet immediate combat needs. This proved to be the best training method in the midst of a sustained war without extensive rear areas. It will also be the preferred method of wartime training now and in the future. It is not, however, a regular method. Now that conditions for standardized training exist, the wartime method, although it has played a great role in the past, must be changed. If it is not, it will be impossible for us to carry out modern, standardized training. The plan for 1952 is completely new. Vertically, it embraces individual training, division-wide training and large-scale joint exercises. Horizontally, it covers comprehensive training in a number of subjects, including tactics, skills, regulations and standard drills. Training curricula take into account co-ordinated activities and the appropriate teaching principles, ensuring that the various subjects support one another, that their vertical and horizontal relationships are maintained and that theory is integrated with practice. Stress is laid on field exercises for mastering the basic skills. No more than 12 months of such training will enable all our officers and men to acquire knowledge needed both in peace-time and wartime and to gradually achieve regularization. Rich and complete in content as it is, the plan may appear to be too crammed and to contain too many unfamiliar, complicated things to be put into practice. Such a first impression is natural, for training of this kind is not an easy job in the present circumstances, and there are

bound to be difficulties. However, all difficulties can and must be overcome. The essential thing is for our officers to strive to master new training methods. If we make up our minds to learn anew, I believe next year's training plan will be fulfilled.

(4) To ensure the proper implementation of our training plan, the following two things are imperative:

(a) Commanders must take charge and become personally involved.

In the past, our army lacked strict, unified training. Work in this respect was done mainly by staff officers. Some commanders concerned themselves only with fighting and neglected training, or only gave general directions. This should not have occurred in the past, and it certainly shouldn't today. If left unchanged, this practice will become a serious obstacle to our modernization and regularization. As future wars will involve massive use of military technology and equipment as well as large numbers of personnel, we shall not be able to defeat any enemy if we fail to master sophisticated technology and cannot direct combined operations involving the various services and arms. For the entire army to acquire this capability, commanders at all levels must attend to the matter themselves and make it a success. It is true that victory in future wars will depend on bravery, but bravery alone is not enough. All members of our army must be highly skilled. Commanders at all levels should master the modern art of command and be good at organizing planned warfare, in order to combine bravery and skill. Bravery and skill together will make us invincible. In the future, a commander who cannot conduct training will be unable to successfully direct any battle. Every commander must, therefore, learn to conduct training. Officers should be able to teach their men. Officers at different levels should take the responsibility to teach their subordinates. For instance, a divisional commander should teach regimental commanders, who in turn should teach battalion commanders, and so on. Training should become the primary task in peace-time. The fact that the newly-staffed divisions and regiments have no training officers does not imply that training is not important. On the contrary, it means that commanders should personally take charge of such work, and all of them should be able to serve as training officers. Implementing the 1952 training plan is a political task for the entire army. It is the central task to which all other work should be subordinated. Once this central point is grasped, our work as a whole will get moving.

A commander should provide leadership to the military training department, giving it regular, specific guidance and periodically supervising its work so that it will function efficiently. The Military Training Department of the Military Council is in charge of training the army as a whole. It will issue the training plan for the next year and its Military Training Department will be directly responsible for implementing it.

(b) Political and logistical departments must guarantee the plan's success.

As I've said above, training is the central task for the army in the coming year. It is aimed at building a modern, regularized army through strict, unified training. All other activities should be subordinated to this task. Party committees and political departments at various levels should all work towards this end.

In addition to providing troops with adequate provisions and clothing, the logistical departments, too, should endeavour to assure the success of the training plan. Material conditions are essential to its implementation. Ammunition and all other supplies budgeted for training should be guaranteed.

Meetings should be reduced and there should be none during class or drilling hours.

(5) Work of the military schools.

All military schools approved by the Military Council should have regular and unified plans and work systems, and should be well equipped. They should offer long-term courses of study (except for crash training courses). Cadets will be required to take entrance examinations and term and graduation examinations. Particularly strict requirements should be set for the graduation examination. There should be comprehensive and systematic curricula so that graduates will acquire comprehensive knowledge and skills for their future career. Therefore, regular military schools must improve the quality of teaching, and the course offerings and enrolment should be streamlined.

Regular schools run by the military areas must follow the plan of the Military Council and should not arbitrarily change syllabi or alter regulations. The Military Training Department is exclusively responsible for supervising teaching in both regular and advanced infantry schools. No other matters which are the responsibilities of the military areas should be referred to it.