

**FROM "THE DICTATORSHIP OF THE PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY": ON
LEANING TO ONE SIDE (SPEECH, JULY 1, 1949)
By Mao Zedong**

Introduction

In July 1949 the Chinese Communist Party was on the verge of pushing Chiang Kai-shek's Nationalist forces completely out of mainland China. Victory was all but assured. Mao Zedong (1893-1976) and the other Communist Party leaders were thinking forward to the tremendous task ahead of them: stabilizing the country, restoring production, and establishing a new socialist state and economy.

On July 1, 1949, Mao spoke on the occasion of the twenty-eighth anniversary of the founding of the Chinese Communist Party. He took the opportunity to reflect on the tasks that lay ahead and the approach that the Party would take in resolving China's problems and establishing the new socialist system. In the following excerpt from that speech on "The Dictatorship of the People's Democracy," Mao discusses "leaning to one side."

Document Excerpts with Questions (Longer selection follows this section)

From *Sources of Chinese Tradition: From 1600 Through the Twentieth Century*, compiled by Wm. Theodore de Bary and Richard Lufrano, 2nd ed., vol. 2 (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000), 452-453. © 2000 Columbia University Press. Reproduced with the permission of the publisher. All rights reserved.

**From "The Dictatorship of the People's Democracy":
On Leaning to One Side (Speech, July 1, 1949)
by Mao Zedong**

"You are leaning to one side." Exactly. The forty years' experience of Sun Yat-sen and the twenty eight years' experience of the Communist Party have taught us to lean to one side, and we are firmly convinced that in order to win victory and consolidate it we must lean to one side of socialism. Sitting on the fence will not do, nor is there a third road. ...

"Victory is possible even without international help." This is a mistaken idea. In the epoch in which imperialism exists, it is impossible for a genuine people's revolution to win victory in any country without various forms of help from the international revolutionary forces, and even if victory were won, it could not be consolidated. This was the case with the victory and consolidation of the Great October Revolution as Stalin told us long ago. This was also the case with the overthrow of the three imperialist powers in World War II and the establishment of the people's democracies. And this is also the case with the present and the future of People's China.

Primary Source Document, with Questions (DBQ) on

**FROM "THE DICTATORSHIP OF THE PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY": ON LEANING TO ONE SIDE
(SPEECH, JULY, 1, 1949), BY MAO ZEDONG**

Questions:

1. Explain more fully — what does Mao Zedong mean by "leaning to one side"?
2. Mao notes that one could lean either to the side of "imperialism" or to the side of "socialism." What about China's historical experience since the time of Sun Yat-sen would justify the argument that China must lean toward the side of socialism?