

THE DUTY OF THE POLITICAL COMMISSAR OF A UNIT

Talk to the Political Commissar of a Unit of the Korean People's
Army
October 17, 1972

Since you have been appointed the political commissar of a unit, you should work as efficiently as possible in that unit.

The unit to which you have been assigned has an important task to guard the skies of Pyongyang. Defending the capital of the revolution is the unit's first and foremost task.

To defend the capital in a reliable way, you must not allow any enemy planes to fly over Pyongyang or to drop a single bomb on this city, which is a centre of great happiness for the people.

In the period of the war between the Soviet Union and Germany, the Soviet people did not allow enemy planes to fly over Moscow. We need to study their experience of defending the skies of Moscow during the war.

We must not forget the days of the Fatherland Liberation War. At that time the US imperialist aggressors reduced the whole northern half of Korea, including Pyongyang, to ashes, while bragging about their 'aerial superiority'. This should not, cannot, be repeated.

Today, our anti-aircraft force has been remarkably strengthened compared with that of the days of the Fatherland Liberation War. We have produced a great number of anti-aircraft weapons by ourselves and deployed them in all parts of the country. In order to effectively defend the sky over Pyongyang, we must make good use of these weapons while producing new ones.

If the unit is to carry out its duty efficiently, all the soldiers should first of all be prepared as revolutionary fighters unfailingly loyal to the Party and the leader.

Education in the Party's monolithic ideology and revolutionary traditions should be intensified among the soldiers so that they all think and act in line with the will and ideology of the leader. They need to learn the ennobling revolutionary spirit of the anti-Japanese guerrillas, in order to fight by laying down their youth and lives without hesitation for the Party and the leader. Teaching them the spirit of the anti-aircraft gunners, who fought bravely to defend the sky of Pyongyang in the period of the Fatherland Liberation War, should also be strengthened to ensure that in any kind of adversity our soldiers defend the capital of the revolution to the last man.

Next, training should be intensified.

An important thing in training is to improve marksmanship through efficient target practice. The main task of a gunner is to perfect his aim. However large the number of anti-aircraft weapons to be deployed, they will be useless if the marksmanship of their gunners is poor.

The main effort in firing practice should be to master the Juche-oriented method of shooting created by the leader. In order to fire efficiently, the unit should put the equipment in good order and do more drill in fire direction and observation.

In order for gunners to improve their marksmanship, they should get used to individual movements through firing practice and make their joint individual movements perfect.

You should also conduct target practice with mock equipment. The practice of firing at controlled model planes is the most effective training method. As the speed of enemy planes is high, you should fly high-speed model planes for target practice. If you practice firing at low-speed model planes, you cannot shoot down enemy planes in case of emergency.

You should enhance military discipline, otherwise you can neither improve combat efficiency of the unit nor carry out the task facing the unit with credit. Since the soldiers of the unit serve in the capital of our revolution, they must observe military discipline better than those of other units. In particular, they should be models in keeping their personal appearances neat and clean and observing the proprieties. Many foreigners visit Pyongyang, and if soldiers do not abide by discipline, they will bring shame on our country and our People's Army. You must educate them and regulate their behaviours to eliminate any violations of discipline.

For the unit to carry out its tasks as required, the political commissar should also work with efficiency.

The political commissar is a representative of the Party, delegated to the unit concerned. While the military commanding officer bears responsibility for the unit in military affairs, the political commissar takes responsibility for the unit in political affairs before the Party. Although the military rank of the political commissar is lower than that of the military commanding officer, he bears the same responsibility as the latter in work. You should bear in mind the importance of your position and duty as the political commissar and discharge your duty in a responsible manner.

The political commissar should persistently keep up the work of establishing the Party's monolithic ideological system in the unit. This is the first and foremost task of the political commissar. He should lay great stress on this work and not make any concession in this undertaking. You should conduct an uncompromising struggle among the soldiers against any practice detrimental to the Party's monolithic ideological system.

You should also pay great attention to enhancing the collective leadership of the Party committee. The Party committees at all levels in the People's Army are the supreme leadership bodies of the units concerned. It is only when the Party committee is strengthened and the collective leadership applied in the right manner that the subjective and arbitrary behaviour of individuals can be rooted out and all the tasks be carried out in line with Party policy. Prior to the enlarged meeting of the Fourth Plenum of the Fourth Party Committee of the People's Army, many instances were revealed of

the commanding officers dealing with immediate problems arbitrarily. This gave rise to bureaucratic warlordists and did great harm to implementing the Party's military line and policy. If the collective leadership of the Party committee is not consolidated, the bureaucratic warlordists may appear again. The political commissar should ensure that all matters arising in the unit, including those concerned with the military, politics and supply works, are discussed and decided in a collective fashion by the Party committee, and that its departments and commanding officers work in accordance with the decision.

In order to improve the collective-leadership function of the Party committee, the committee should be substantially built up.

Committee members should be elected according to their loyalty, not their duties. It is advisable to build the Party committee with the officers who, though lower in rank, are promising, thoroughly equipped with the ideology of our Party, and have strong Party spirit. Alongside this you must raise the role they are to play.

The Party committee should hold the meetings of the secretariat on a regular basis. It is only when tasks facing the unit are discussed at the meeting before being implemented that the practices of individual officers dealing with them subjectively and arbitrarily can be prevented.

The political commissar should also concentrate on making the commanding and staff officers play their roles efficiently. The role of a commanding officer should not be weakened on the excuse of strengthening the collective leadership of the Party committee. How the tasks facing the unit are implemented depends greatly on the role of commanding officers. The political commissar should make commanding officers prominent in the unit and ensure their authority in work. If their authority is not ensured, they cannot play their role as they should.

The political commissar should render active assistance to the commanding officers so that they carry out their tasks with credit by displaying a high sense of responsibility and creativity. He should give Party support to them to ensure that their orders and directives are thoroughly carried out in the unit; he should also wage a strong campaign against the failure to implement them. Nevertheless, when a commanding officer gives an order running counter to the Party's policies, the political commissar must check it.

The political commissar should work well with the senior officers of the unit. Making direct contacts with them is a good method of approach for the political commissar. He must always discuss work face to face with senior officers and help them so that they do their work properly.

He should also inform himself on the work being done by military administration departments on a regular basis and strengthen Party guidance over their correct implementation of the Party's military policy.

He should ensure that the cadres participate in Party life faithfully. Those who do not attend Party life faithfully and lead a life out of the

control of the Party organization will degenerate without exception. The bureaucratic warlordists, exposed and criticized at the enlarged meeting of the Fourth Plenum of the Fourth Party Committee of the People's Army, testify to this truth. He should always get acquainted with Party life of cadres and lead them so that they take an active part in Party life.

Enhancing the role of the Party cell is important in strengthening the Party life of cadres. Since cadres lead Party life in the cell, they can be trained as desired, if the role of the Party cell is improved.

An important thing in the Party life in a cell is to tolerate no dual discipline. If cadres are treated differently from others in the Party life in a cell, or if their mistakes are covered up because they are cadres, they cannot be educated. The ranks of Party cell secretaries should consist of officials with a high Party spirit and of upright people if they are to guide the Party life of cadres efficiently. Thus, you should ensure that all the cadres train their Party spirit and direct their wisdom and efforts to implementing the Party's line and policies. You have become a political commissar, thanks to the trust of the great leader; therefore, you should carry out the tasks facing the unit with a high sense of responsibility. You should go to the unit as quickly as possible and get down to work. If you face problems in your work in future, please call on me any time.

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