

# Mao Tsetung Thought Lights Up The Way for the Advance of China's Medical Science

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**U**NDER the guidance of Chairman Mao's proletarian revolutionary line and spurred by the tremendous victory of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, China's medical and health work is making vigorous progress. Many amazing achievements have been made in the field of medical science, opening up extremely bright vistas.

Great Mao Tsetung Thought lights up the way for the advance of China's medical science. It is very important to make further efforts at this time to study Chairman Mao's brilliant concepts on developing China's medical science and to sum up the experience gained in the implementation of Chairman Mao's instructions so as to deepen revolutionary mass criticism and ensure that struggle-criticism-transformation in the field of medical science is successful.

## To Serve Working People Wholeheartedly Is Fundamental Orientation in Developing China's Medical Science

The question of "for whom" is a question which determines the fundamental orientation in developing medical science which, in class society, invariably serves a given class.

In feudal society, the landlord class always bends every effort to make medical science serve its interest and help maintain its feudal rule. It uses the science to seek "longevity" of members of the feudal landlord class and the handful of emperors, kings, generals and ministers.

In capitalist society, the bourgeoisie monopolizes the fruits of medical science. In the eyes of the capitalists, it is a "commodity" for making profits and exploiting the people to batten themselves.

In the imperialist and social-imperialist countries, medical science has become a tool for the imperialists to push their policies of aggression and war.

Over thousands of years, all the exploiting classes have made medical science, which was created by the labouring people and should serve them, into a private possession of the few, depriving the labouring people of the right to medical treatment. It is only when the proletariat seizes political power that this reversal of history is reversed.

Medical science in great socialist China is the common property of the working people. Making it serve the people is the core of Chairman Mao's proletarian

line in health work, the basic requirement of the socialist system for medical science, and also the fundamental orientation in developing medical science.

Our great leader Chairman Mao has always paid great attention to the people's health service. As far back as the period of the new-democratic revolution, he pointed out: "**Vigorous action should be taken to prevent and cure endemic and other diseases among the people and to expand the people's medical and health services.**" He also pointed out: "**If the 360 million peasants are left out, do not . . . 'public health' become largely empty talk?**" During the period of the socialist revolution and socialist construction, Chairman Mao has issued a series of important instructions on health work, clearly indicating the line, principle and policy of such work and the direction for developing China's medical science. Guided by the brilliance of Chairman Mao's proletarian line in health work, China, shortly after liberation, swiftly brought under control and eliminated many kinds of endemic and infectious diseases which caused serious harm to the health of the people, thus changing the miserable scene in old China in which

**"Hundreds of villages choked with weeds, men  
wasted away;  
Thousands of homes decimated, phantoms sang  
with glee."**

However, "**correct political and military lines do not emerge and develop spontaneously and tranquilly.**" Since the founding of the People's Republic of China, there has been a long fierce struggle in the field of medical science between the two lines, centred on the question of "for whom." The renegade, hidden traitor and scab Liu Shao-chi, who had hidden in the Party, and his agents in the health departments frenziedly opposed Chairman Mao's proletarian line and obdurately implemented a counter-revolutionary revisionist line so that health work would serve only the few. They opposed health work serving the 500 million peasants and the masses of workers and other working people. They put the stress in medical and health work on serving a few people in the cities, in reality serving the bourgeoisie.

Our great leader Chairman Mao sharply criticized Liu Shao-chi's counter-revolutionary revisionist line in health work in 1965 and pointedly remarked: The Ministry of Health was the "**Ministry of Health for Urban Overlords.**" He issued a great call

to medical workers: **"In medical and health work, put the stress on the rural areas."**

The Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution has smashed Liu Shao-chi's bourgeois headquarters and rid the health departments of his tentacles. In their struggles, the medical workers have studied and applied Chairman Mao's works in a living way and raised their consciousness of class struggle and of the struggle between the two lines to an unprecedentedly high level. As a result they cherish deeper love for Chairman Mao's proletarian revolutionary line and bitter hatred for Liu Shao-chi's counter-revolutionary revisionist line. They have come to a profound understanding: Implementing Chairman Mao's great directive **"In medical and health work, put the stress on the rural areas"** means sticking to the fundamental orientation of medical science — serving the people. Taking with them the red treasured books, the masses of revolutionary medical workers went forth from their lofty mansions and magnificent hospitals to the countryside and basic units to take deep root among the workers, peasants and soldiers — to be re-educated by them and serve them.

Following Chairman Mao's instruction **"The mass movement is necessary in all work,"** they launched mass movements in health work, promoting the people's medical and health services in an all-round way. A contingent of new-type doctors — the "barefoot doctors" — is fast expanding and maturing. The poor and lower-middle peasants warmly welcome them. Tremendous revolutionary changes are taking place in the medical and health services in the vast rural areas. Armed with Mao Tsetung Thought, the medical workers and the workers, peasants and soldiers have made one remarkable achievement after another. With only the simple equipment they had, medical workers who had little experience successfully removed a 45-kilogramme tumour, which had been declared "incurable" by bourgeois "experts." Acupuncture with a silver needle has made it possible for deaf-mutes to shout "Long live Chairman Mao," the finest words of our era; it has also helped the blind see the red sun with great joy and the paralysed regain the use of their limbs. A simple, new treatment has effectively cured the chronic Keshan disease.\* An arm severed into three parts was successfully rejoined. A heroine who received burns on 98 per cent of her body in fighting a fire and a young Red Guard whose heart had stopped beating for 25 minutes were saved. All these new things of immense vitality and wonders unknown in history that have emerged on China's medical and health front are great victories of Chairman Mao's proletarian line in health work and of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution! They are also rich fruits produced by the medical workers who have kept to the funda-

\* A disease named after Keshan County, Heilungkiang Province in northeast China, where it was first discovered. This is a systemic disease manifested mainly by pathological changes of the heart muscle. It often results in heart failure caused by lesions of the heart muscle. The disease has existed for a long time in several provinces in northern China, seriously threatening the lives of the people residing there.

mental orientation of medical science — serving the people!

All these heart-stirring new achievements eloquently testify once again to the great incontrovertible truth of Chairman Mao's teaching **"This question of 'for whom?' is fundamental; it is a question of principle."** Only by sticking to the fundamental orientation of serving the workers, peasants and soldiers and the vast majority of the people, can the medical workers accept re-education by the workers, peasants and soldiers, remould their old ideology, work for neither fame nor gain, fear neither hardship nor death, struggle to protect the health of the people and thereby promote the development of medical science. Only in this way can the medical workers go deep among the masses, rely on them, develop medical science in close co-ordination with hundreds of millions of the people and solve the question of prevention and treatment of common and endemic diseases, a question the masses most urgently want solved. In this way the communist spirit of co-operation will be carried forward and the barriers in medical science surmounted. In this way the medical workers will do away with all fetishes and superstitions and emancipate their minds, dare to blaze new trails and scale unclimbed heights so that the medical science will advance in giant strides and help consolidate the dictatorship of the proletariat, strengthen preparedness against war, defend the motherland and defeat all aggressors.

Maintaining the correct orientation of serving the majority of people and opposing the wrong orientation of serving a minority involves a profound ideological revolution by the medical workers. From "reverend doctors" serving a minority of people in the cities to "barefoot doctors" serving the masses of poor and lower-middle peasants, from sitting in multi-storied hospitals waiting for patients to making house-to-house calls with a medical kit, from staying aloof from the masses to being an ordinary labourer, all this involves a drastic change in ideology, work style, occupation and habits and touches every medical worker to his innermost being. The masses of medical workers have been tempered in the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution. Being re-educated by the poor and lower-middle peasants, not a small number of them have transformed their thinking and feelings in the course of serving the poor and lower-middle peasants, and made outstanding achievements in work. The poor and lower-middle peasants warmly welcome them. Chinese medical workers sent abroad have followed Chairman Mao's teachings, displayed proletarian internationalism and served the people in various parts of the world wholeheartedly, fearing neither hardship nor fatigue. There are many moving incidents of their healing the wounded and rescuing the dying. They have won general praise from the people of these countries. All these are due to the fact that the medical workers have unwaveringly taken the revolutionary road indicated by Chairman Mao: **"Serve the people of China and the world."**

Chairman Mao teaches: **"This change in world outlook is something fundamental,"** and they must **"shift their stand; they must gradually move their feet over to the side of the workers, peasants and soldiers, to the side of the proletariat, through the process of going into their very midst and into the thick of practical struggles and through the process of studying Marxism and society."** These great teachings of Chairman Mao's act as a guide for the medical workers in transforming their world outlook and revolutionizing their ideology. They are also the fundamental direction to be followed in developing China's new medical science.

### **Materialist Dialectics — Powerful Ideological Weapon for Developing China's Medical Science**

Materialist dialectics and metaphysics have always contended with each other in the field of medical science. Metaphysics is the world outlook of the bourgeoisie and all other exploiting classes. It runs counter to social progress and is an obstacle to the development of medical science. Materialist dialectics is the world outlook of the proletariat. It is a powerful ideological weapon of the proletariat for knowing the world and changing it. It is also a powerful ideological weapon for developing medical science. The struggle between materialist dialectics and metaphysics in the field of medical science in essence reflects the struggle between the two classes, the two roads and the two lines.

Some bourgeois medical "authorities" who cling to their metaphysical viewpoint regard their limited experience in medical practice and medical literature as absolute and unalterable truth. They often arbitrarily declare that some diseases are "incurable." For example, when a patient has burns on more than 80 per cent of his body or third degree burns on more than 30 per cent of the body, their diagnosis is "death inevitable." If a limb has been severed from the body for six hours, they say that "recovery of function after rejoining is impossible." They also declare that it is "impossible to revive the patient" if his heart has stopped beating for six minutes, and so forth. To them all these are the "limits" in medical science.

Materialist dialectics tells us that all things in the world are in motion and change. Man's knowledge of things and his ability to transform them constantly develop. Chairman Mao teaches: **"The movement of change in the world of objective reality is never-ending and so is man's cognition of truth through practice."** Human knowledge of diseases also goes from non-knowing to knowing and from knowing little to knowing much. Thus medical science makes progress step by step. There is no disease in the world that is absolutely "incurable." Diseases that used to be considered "incurable" can be cured today, while "incurable" diseases today will be curable when we understand them and grasp the natural laws involved.

For example, all bourgeois medical "authorities" in China and abroad used to consider the after-effects of infantile paralysis "incurable." But ordinary medical

workers of our People's Liberation Army, who have armed their minds with Mao Tsetung Thought and are guided in their practice by materialist dialectics, have succeeded in finding a new treatment that is transforming this "incurable disease" into a "curable" one. In fact, the label "incurable disease" is often the pretext used by bourgeois medical "authorities" to hide their ignorance and incompetence and their refusal to serve the workers, peasants and soldiers.

Our great leader Chairman Mao teaches us: **"In the fields of the struggle for production and scientific experiment, mankind makes constant progress and nature undergoes constant change; they never remain at the same level."**

Medical theory makes constant progress in practice. All the "limits" described in medical literature take form under certain historical conditions and are not absolute. Provided we use Chairman Mao's philosophical thinking to guide our medical practice, we will certainly be able to discover new ways of treatment, develop new medical skills, blaze new paths and evolve new theories. We will certainly correct what is wrong and break through the "limits" of medical science.

Some bourgeois medical "authorities" often look on the occurrence and course of a disease as an isolated phenomenon. Therefore they are unable to make a comprehensive study and analysis, grasp the law of its occurrence and course, analyse concretely the contradictions and changes in the different aspects of the disease and diagnose and treat it dialectically.

Our great leader Chairman Mao teaches us: **"Marxist philosophy holds that the law of the unity of opposites is the fundamental law of the universe."**

The human body is always a unity of opposites. The different parts of the human body are linked; they are in opposition and at the same time interdependent; they are interlinked and interact. Pathological change in one part of the human body can affect the organs in other parts of the body or the body as a whole, and the condition of the body as a whole can affect pathological changes in certain parts of the body. Only by understanding and handling the overall relations between part and whole dialectically and correctly can we properly understand diseases and achieve our goal of curing them.

Take the treatment of bone fractures, for example. One school of medicine maintains that "complete rest and absolute immobilization" are the only way to treat a bone fracture. They consider only the fracture and ignore the limb or the body as a whole. This viewpoint only takes account of the unfavourable aspect of motion of the affected limb in relation to the union of the fracture, but does not consider the favourable aspect. It heeds only the favourable aspect of immobilization to promote the union of the fracture but does not recognize the unfavourable aspect affecting the union of the fracture and the recovery of function of the limb as a whole.

This method of paying attention only to the part in isolation and ignoring the whole is contrary to the law

of physiological activities of the limbs and hampers the activity of the limb or the body as a whole. This involves many shortcomings including the delay of the union of the fracture and prolongation of the period of treatment, which cause the affected limb to recover its function in a poor way, entailing many complications.

In the treatment of bone fractures, Chinese revolutionary medical workers, following Chairman Mao's teaching "**The law of the unity of opposites is the fundamental law of the universe,**" have assimilated the good features of Western medicine for correct surgical reduction and of traditional Chinese medicine in immobilizing the fracture with thin splints. This solves properly the relation of the unity of opposites between "passive" (immobilization of the fractured part) and "active" (motion of the affected limb in the early days after bone fracture) and between the part and the whole.

On the one hand, this treatment keeps the part relatively immobilized and effectively controls activity which is unfavourable to the ends of the fracture. On the other hand, this makes it possible to keep the whole limb and the whole body active. The limb can be exercised properly during the period of union to recover its function and this brings into full play the favourable effect of motion on the union of the fracture. As a consequence, union is rapid, the period of treatment short, recovery is good and there are few complications. This method is a victory for materialist dialectics over metaphysics.

In their approach to the relations between man and things, persons who have a metaphysical viewpoint often place blind faith in material conditions such as skill, medicine and equipment and overlook the factor of man and the strength of the masses. In treating diseases, they consider neither politics and ideology, nor the subjective activity of the patient in battling disease.

Our great leader Chairman Mao teaches us: "**Weapons are an important factor in war, but not the decisive factor; it is people, not things, that are decisive.**" In the struggle to conquer diseases, we must first of all stress the human factor and bring into full play man's subjective activity. Though skill, equipment and other conditions are important, they are not the decisive factors. We must put Mao Tsetung Thought in command of skill and equipment. Relying on invincible Mao Tsetung Thought, on the wisdom and strength of the masses and with profound proletarian feelings for the workers, peasants and soldiers, many medical teams that have gone to the countryside, mountains, highlands, islands and frontier areas have successfully performed complicated operations and cured many diseases considered difficult despite their simple equipment and limited experience. A medical team dispatched to the Chinghai Plateau by a P.L.A. hospital successfully removed a 15-kilogramme hydatidoma of the liver from an emancipated Tibetan woman serf on a snow-covered mountain 5,000 metres above sea level. Without bringing one's subjective activity into full play, this would have been impossible.

The fundamental cause for the development of a thing lies in its internal contradictoriness. Chairman Mao teaches us: "**External causes are the condition of change and internal causes are the basis of change, and that external causes become operative through internal causes.**" This teaching holds true as well in the curing of diseases. Medicine is important but it becomes operative only through the internal causes of the patient. Whether or not the efficacy of medicine is great and quick is closely related to the state of mind, physique, age and occupation of the patient. Therefore, in treatment, besides studying the disease and prescribing the necessary medicine, it is imperative, in the light of the patient's characteristics, to carry out meticulous ideological and political work, bring into full play the patient's subjective activity and strengthen his will in fighting the disease. This will help stimulate the function of the patient's organs and add to his ability to resist the disease.

With a high political consciousness and a strong revolutionary will, the broad masses of workers, peasants and soldiers actively co-operate with the doctors in overcoming serious diseases. Examples like this are many. A young woman worker suffered burns on 98 per cent of her body, with 88 per cent being of third and fourth degree. She triumphed over the burns which seriously threatened her life by studying and applying Mao Tsetung Thought in a living way and displaying a militant working class revolutionary spirit while under medical care. With boundless loyalty and firm determination to defend Chairman Mao and the socialist motherland, a pilot was able to defeat his cancer with the aid of an iron will and is again in the skies. In comparison, some people who had been influenced by Liu Shao-chi's philosophy of survival, when afflicted with even a minor illness either took a long rest or became dispirited, so overwhelmed were they by fear of disease. Hence their illnesses, though not serious, could not be overcome even after a long period of treatment. All this proves that the state of mind of the patient has much to do with the curing of a disease. It is impossible for medical science to develop when the metaphysical viewpoint of seeing only the things but not the people holds sway.

To promote materialist dialectics and oppose metaphysics is a long and arduous fighting task in the fields of medical science, ideology and culture. The most fundamental way for medical workers to rid themselves of the shackle of metaphysics and be really able to use materialist dialectics to guide their medical practice is to arm themselves with Mao Tsetung Thought and thoroughly remould their world outlook.

Our great leader Chairman Mao teaches us: "**Freedom means the recognition of necessity and the transformation of the objective world.**" In the field of medical science, the development from the realm of necessity to the realm of freedom necessarily depends on Chairman Mao's brilliant philosophical thinking. It is precisely in line with Chairman Mao's materialist dialectics that China's medical science is continuously ridding

itself of the metaphysical influence and advancing along the road of developing medical theory and scaling new heights.

### **Integrating Traditional Chinese Medicine and Western Medicine Is Correct Road for Developing China's Medical Science**

Traditional Chinese medicine and pharmacology are a great treasure-house. Our great leader Chairman Mao pointed out long ago that doctors of traditional Chinese medicine and of Western medicine should unite and cooperate in summing up and studying the experience of traditional Chinese medicine and pharmacology with the help of modern scientific knowledge and methods so as to create a unified new medical and pharmaceutical science. This is an arduous and glorious historic task for doctors of traditional Chinese medicine and of Western medicine. But the renegade, hidden traitor and scab Liu Shao-chi and his agents in health departments, taking the stand of reactionary national nihilism, stubbornly pushed the slavish comprador philosophy and the doctrine of trailing behind at a snail's pace. They discriminated against, rejected and totally negated Chinese medicine, desperately resisted Chairman Mao's proletarian line in health work and wantonly sabotaged the policies set forth by Chairman Mao for Chinese medicine. Their criminal plots aimed at undermining the integration of Chinese and Western medicine and obstructing the development of China's medical science along the correct line indicated by Chairman Mao.

During the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, the medical workers denounced Liu Shao-chi's towering crimes and came to understand profoundly that the integration of Chinese and Western medicine according to Chairman Mao's instructions is the correct road for developing China's medical science. Traditional Chinese medicine and pharmacology and Western medicine grew and developed under different historical conditions, each having its own advantages and shortcomings. In viewing Chinese and Western medicine, we must adhere to Chairman Mao's principles to "make the past serve the present and foreign things serve China" and "weed through the old to bring forth the new." We must assimilate the essence and reject the dross, draw upon the strong points of Chinese and Western medicine and overcome their weaknesses, and constantly sum up experience and raise the level in practice. This will lead to a qualitative leap and the creation of a unified medical science that is China's own. This conforms entirely to the law of the development of science.

Since liberation, and especially since the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, doctors of both Chinese and Western medicine have, through unity and cooperation, made many achievements in inheriting and carrying forward the essence of traditional Chinese medicine. The integration of the two forms of medicine has led to many new methods of treatment much better than either separately produced and has solved problems which neither one nor the other could settle independently.

Since the Cultural Revolution, the medical workers, under the guidance of Chairman Mao's proletarian line in health work, have carried forward and devised some new methods of treatment which only China has. These new methods will inevitably usher in a new leap forward in medical science and write a brilliant new chapter in the annals of modern medicine.

The achievements made by integrating Chinese and Western medicine fully testify to the brilliance and correctness of our great leader Chairman Mao's teaching on integrating Chinese and Western medicine and using modern scientific knowledge and methods to sum up and improve the experience of traditional Chinese medicine.

The mass movement now being unfolded in China's medical circles to use new methods of treatment and medicinal herbs to cure and prevent diseases is of tremendous and far-reaching significance. Using a needle or a sheaf of medicinal herbs to cure diseases according to local conditions is a simple, easy, economical and convenient method of treatment, which is highly efficacious for curing common and endemic diseases and is greatly welcomed by the working people. It is playing a tremendous role in protecting the health of the working people, enabling the poor and lower-middle peasants in general to receive quick, timely and effective treatment and consolidating the co-operative medical system which is warmly welcomed by the poor and lower-middle peasants. Medicinal herbs can be obtained and processed locally; they are inexhaustible and provide an indestructible natural pharmaceutical store-house in war time. This is of great significance in implementing Chairman Mao's great strategic principle "Be prepared against war, be prepared against natural disasters, and do everything for the people." Illuminated by Mao Tsetung Thought, a mass movement to explore the great treasure-trove of traditional Chinese medicine will develop ever more vigorously and Chinese medicine and pharmacology will shine ever more brightly.

With the wide vision of a great proletarian revolutionary and looking far ahead, Chairman Mao has pointed out the bright road for creating China's new medical science. With Mao Tsetung Thought as its theoretical basis, China's new medical science will wholeheartedly serve the Chinese people and the revolutionary people of the world. It is guided by materialist dialectics. It will be a new, unified medical science that integrates traditional Chinese medicine with Western medicine in its development. So long as we make further efforts to arm ourselves with Mao Tsetung Thought, firmly implement Chairman Mao's proletarian line in health work, have faith in the masses and rely on them and go on displaying the thoroughgoing revolutionary spirit of the proletariat, we will definitely fulfil this great historic task of creating China's new medical science as quickly as possible and make still greater contributions to humanity.

*(Abridged translation of an article published in "Hongqi" No. 3, 1970.)*