April 25, 1956
Talk by Mao Zedong at an Enlarged Meeting of the
Chinese Communist Party Central Committee Politburo
(Excerpts)

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Summary:
Mao speaks to the Central Committee Politburo about the need to develop an atomic bomb to avoid being "bullied," but stresses that this can only happen if economic development increases simultaneously.

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Contents:
- English Translation
- Chinese Transcription
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25 April 1956

We still don’t have the atomic bomb. But in the past we didn’t have airplanes or artillery either. We relied on millet and rifles to defeat the Japanese imperialists and Chiang Kai-shek. Now we’re already stronger than we were in the past, and in the future we’ll be even stronger than now. Not only are we going to have more airplanes and artillery, but also the atomic bomb. In today’s world, if we don’t want to be bullied, we have to have this thing. What should we do? The reliable way would be to cut military expenditures by an appropriate amount and increase economic development spending. Only if the pace of economic development increases can there be greater strides in defense construction.

In 1950, at the Third Plenum of the Seventh Party Congress, we already raised the issue of retrenching state organizations and cutting military expenditures, believing that this is one of the three conditions [necessary] to achieve a fundamental turnaround in our country’s financial and economic condition. During the first five year plan, military spending constituted thirty percent of our total state budget. This proportion is too large. During the second five year plan, we need to reduce this to about twenty percent, so we can squeeze out more funds, open more factories, and produce more machinery. In time, not only will we have more airplanes and artillery, but we’ll also probably have our own atomic bomb.

This leads to a question. Do you really want an atomic bomb, are you totally committed to wanting it, or are you only partially committed to wanting it, and not totally committed to wanting it? If you really want it, if you are totally committed to wanting it, you’ll cut the proportion of military expenditures and concentrate more on economic development. If you really don’t want it, if you are not totally committed to wanting it, you’ll just continue along the same path, doing things as usual. This is an issue of strategic policy. I hope the [Central] Military Commission will discuss it.
我 在 中共中央政治局 大 上的（ ）

1956年4月25日

我 在 有原子 。但是， 去也 有 机和大炮，我 是用小米加步 打 了日本帝 主 和 介石的。我 在已 比 去强，以后 要比 在强，不但要有更多的 机和大炮，而且 要有原子 。在今天的世界上，我 要不受人家欺 ，就不能 有 西。怎么 呢 ？可靠的 法就是把 政 用降到 一 适 的比例，增加 建 用。只有 建 展得更快 了， 防建 才能 有更大的 步。

一九五○年，我 在党的七 三中全 上，已 提出精 家机构、少 政 用的 ， 是 取我 政 情 根本好 的 三 件之一。第一 五年 划期， 政 用占 家 算全部支出的百分之三十。 比重太大了。第二 五年 划期，要 使它降到百分之二十左右，以便抽出更多 的 金，多 些 工厂， 多造些机器。 一段 ，我 就不但 有很多 的 机 和大炮，而且 可能有自己的原子。

里也 生 么一 ， 你 原子 是真正要 想、十分要 想， 是只有几分想，有 十分想呢？你是真正要 想、十分要 想，你就 降低 政 用的比重，多搞 建 。你不是真正要 想、十分要 想，你就 是按章程 事。 是 略方 的 ，希望 委 一下。