

MAO – REVOLUTIONARY WARFARE

Mao's revolutionary warfare consisted of several stages:

- **Setting up base areas** – Mao planned to set up ‘*base areas*’ in which he would organize the peasants and educate them in communist ideology. They would then, it was hoped, accept new taxes and justice systems applied by the CPC, which would be better than those they had previously endured. These base areas would be remote and thus difficult for the GMD to interfere with during this “*education process*“. Part of the “*Eight rules of the Eighth Route Army*” was to treat everyone with respect, and this very powerful idea helped to gain the support and trust of the peasants.
- **The organization phase** – Once a base camp was set up, CPC leaders would be sent out to other villages to repeat the process. Mao called this the “*organization phase*“. The aim was slowly to take over the countryside, thereby isolating the cities to allow the CPC ultimately to take political control of China.
- **Defending the bases** – The next stage was to defend the base areas, which would not remain free from GMD attack, especially once GMD taxes were going to the CPC. Mao organized the peasants to use hit-and-run tactics, their advantage being knowledge of terrain and support of the local population. If the GMD attempted to hunt down the CPC units, they would be drawn into hostile areas, which would enable the guerrillas to attack them again and/or disappear into the local community. In this way, the enemy would become demoralized and worn down. Any attempt by the GMD to wipe out the CPC presence with massive attacks and looting of villages would only increase hostility to the nationalists and improve the position of the communists.
- **The guerrilla phase** – The communists could always survive by retreating, as they had in the Long March. Other bases could be set up as they retreated – these would then create more guerrilla fighters. This was the “*guerrilla phase*” of the war.
- **Protracted war** – Mao understood that his strategy would lead to a long war; indeed, the idea of a “*protracted war*” was central to his thinking. However, as the numbers of guerrillas grew, and in turn the number of attacks on the enemy increased, the balance would finally tilt in favour of the guerrillas.
- **Seizing power** – At this stage, the revolutionary war would go into the “*open or mobile phase*“, where guerrilla units joined together to form a conventional army. The CPC was in this last stage of guerrilla warfare when the second phase of the Civil War broke out in 1946. Once in power, a period of consolidation would be needed to rid China of the remnants of the “*old regime*“.

The eight rules of the Red Army:

Return and roll up the straw matting on which you sleep.

Be courteous and polite to the people and help them when you can.

Return all borrowed articles.

Replace all damaged articles.

Be honest in all transactions with the peasants.

Pay for all articles purchased.

Replace all doors when you leave a house.

Be sanitary, and, especially, establish latrines a safe distance from people's houses.