Quotations from Mao

NOTTINGHAM COMMUNIST GROUP
In approaching a problem a Marxist should see the whole as well as the parts. A frog in a well says, "The sky is no bigger than the mouth of the well." That is untrue, for the sky is not just the size of the mouth of the well. If it said, "A part of the sky is the size of the mouth of a well", that would be true, for it tallies with the facts.

Whoever wants to know a thing has no way of doing so except by coming into contact with it, that is, by living (practising) in its environment. . . . If you want knowledge, you must take part in the practice of changing reality. If you want to know the taste of a pear, you must change the pear by eating it yourself. . . . If you want to know the theory and methods of revolution, you must take part in revolution. All genuine knowledge originates in direct experience.

A revolution is not a dinner party, or writing an essay, or painting a picture, or doing embroidery; it cannot be so refined, so leisurely and gentle, so temperate, kind, courteous, restrained and magnanimous. A revolution is an insurrection, an act of violence by which one class overthrows another.

"Report on an Investigation of the Peasant Movement in Hunan" (March 1927), Selected Works, Vol. 1, p. 28."
Historically, all reactionary forces on the verge of extinction invariably conduct a last desperate struggle against the revolutionary forces, and some revolutionaries are apt to be deluded for a time by this phenomenon of outward strength but inner weakness, failing to grasp the essential fact that the enemy is nearing extinction while they themselves are approaching victory.

"The Turning Point in World War II" (October 12, 1942), Selected Works, Vol. III, p. 103.
We are advocates of the abolition of war, we do not want war; but war can only be abolished through war, and in order to get rid of the gun it is necessary to take up the gun.

"Problems of War and Strategy" (November 6, 1938), Selected Works, Vol. II, p. 223.
What is a true bastion of iron? It is the masses, the millions upon millions of people who genuinely and sincerely support the revolution. That is the real iron bastion which it is impossible, and absolutely impossible, for any force on earth to smash. The counter-revolution cannot smash us; on the contrary, we shall smash it.

"Be Concerned with the Well-Being of the Masses, Pay Attention to Methods of Work" (January 27, 1934), Selected Works, Vol. I, p. 150.
The enemy advances, we retreat;

The enemy camps, we harass;

The enemy tires, we attack;

The enemy retreats, we pursue.

Mao Tse-tung

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