

# The bad advice



The thirty-fourth president of the United States, Dwight D. Eisenhower, famously stated, " You do not lead by hitting people over the head - that's assault not leadership." Although, in modern times this statement may seem quite logical, it is interesting to note that in today's world there are still nations that are lead by power hungry politicians who have no interest in the well being of the people that dwell in their impoverished nations. These dictators' main leadership tactic is simple: they rule by injecting fear into the masses. The Prince, written by Machiavelli, explores the complicated world of leaders and in the end comes to its main argument that says, "...it is much more safe to be feared than to be loved, when you have to choose between the two." (Machiavelli, The Prince) While in many cases this may be true, it shouldn't be overlooked that Machiavelli wrote this work hundreds of years ago and as Bob Dylan had so perfectly put it, " The times they are a-changin'." With modern advancements and the whole world trying to push itself in a new direction, Machiavelli's ideas may now become out-dated and flawed. Machiavelli believes that if a leader is loved too much, this allows for the people to have too much power which eventually will result in revolt. Nevertheless, in today's world where democracy in many nations is the norm, being loved by the people has more benefits than being feared; by analyzing recent history one will be able to prove that leading with a more open mind is significantly better then leading people through fear.

When referring to the word peace, a few instant political figures come to mind and one of these people is none other than Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi. Not only was Gandhi the political leader of his native nation India during the Independence Movement, but he was also regarded as the

spiritual leader. His famous nonviolence practices had inspired independence movements not only in India but in countries all over the world. Gandhi is hailed to be Father of India and his leading practices did not involve any form of force or violence. Instead of using his fist, Gandhi would use his calm personality and persuasive public speaking techniques in order to win over the hearts of the people and lead a nation that was on the course of total destruction to salvation. Machiavelli urged that a leader should have some sort of physical control over the people, but little did he know that hundreds of years later a man by the name of Gandhi would completely shatter the foundations of former leading principles. Gandhi, had famously stated, “When I despair, I remember that all through history the way of truth and love has always won. There have been tyrants and murderers and for a time they seem invincible, but in the end, they always fall- think of it, always.” This inspirational quote proves that societies created by tyrants will eventually crumble and democracy and peace will forever prosper. In addition, Gandhi was not the first person to introduce the theory of non-violence but he was the first to practice it on such a large scale. By advocating non-violence Gandhi directly contradicts Machiavelli’s beliefs through the following quote:

The science of war leads one to dictatorship, pure and simple. The science of non-violence alone can lead one to pure democracy...Power based on love is thousand times more effective and permanent than power derived from fear of punishment.... It is a blasphemy to say non-violence can be practiced only by individuals and never by nations which are composed of individuals.

Gandhi message to the world is clear and simple: love and peace are far stronger and more effective than fear. Although, Machiavelli wrote in a

<https://assignbuster.com/the-bad-advice/>

completely different time period it is clear how Gandhi disproves his theories. ([Http://www. mkgandhi-sarvodaya. org/bio\\_5000/bio5. htm.](http://www.mkgandhi-sarvodaya.org/bio_5000/bio5.htm))

If there was a man that was the complete anti- Christ of Gandhi that man would have been named Kim Jong-II. Kim Jong-II is the dictator of North Korea which was a country that was founded by his father in 1994. Although, his image inside the North Korean borders may be depicted as saintly, in reality it is the fear of the people he leads that actually give him his prestigious status. Many North Koreans officially refer to him as “ Great Leader”, but if they weren’t pressured by his tyrannical rule they would most likely come up with different names for him; some of which would not be as pleasant as the name he holds now. Due to his strong grasp and negative influence he holds over his people, his country will never be able to prosper like many powerful democracies around the world. If one were to take a look at some of the most powerful modern nations they would realize that all of them are held together by a strong democratic backbone. The only nation in the modern era that seemed to prosper even though it was ruled by a dictator was the Soviet Union, but like Gandhi had predicted it eventually collapsed just like all the other tyrannies that came before it. Once again, Machiavelli’s advice seems to have many flaws if it were to be used in the modern world. Kim Jong-II is tirelessly trying to create a more powerful nation but is failing to do so because of his corrupt leading techniques. ([http://asianhistory. about. com/od/profilesofasianleaders/p/BioKimJongil. htm](http://asianhistory.about.com/od/profilesofasianleaders/p/BioKimJongil.htm))

Machiavelli had mentioned that a leader can either implement harsh rule or be loved by the people but most likely he cannot be both, however the former ruler of China, Mao Zedong, may have disproved this theory. Mao <https://assignbuster.com/the-bad-advice/>

Zedong was a Chinese revolutionary and at the same time communist leader. With any communist nation, harsh rule and strict policy is a given which makes it difficult for a communist leader to be popular with the people, but Mao Zedong somehow was able to be adored by his followers. To this day Mao is regarded in China as an incredible revolutionary, political mastermind, military genius and overall the savior of China. Many people give Mao credit for taking China's mainly agricultural society and transforming it into the economic powerhouse that is today. Although, many people praise him for his revolutionary genius, Mao didn't achieve all his accomplishments through the love of the people. He was in fact still a dictator more interested in the prosperity of his nation rather than the prosperity of his people. Mao had implemented several political policies and purges which were now estimated to have caused the deaths of roughly sixty million people. Nevertheless, most Chinese people still hailed them as their hero because without him China would have ended up much worse without him. Mao again illustrates how Machiavelli's advice does not apply to the modern world. (<http://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/mao/>)

Many different leaders have their own leading styles, but what most modern and successful leaders have in common is that they lead democratic countries where the voice of the people is heard. Of course, there will always be exceptions to the norm such as Mao Zedong, but even he doesn't follow Machiavelli's advice. All three figures presented in the earlier paragraphs disprove the idea that Machiavelli created years ago.

### **Works Cited**

- Machiavelli, Niccolo. The Prince. Hertfordshire: Wordsworth Editions, 1997.
- “ Http://www. mkgandhi-sarvodaya. org/bio\_5000/bio5. htm.”  
MAHATMA GANDHI ONE SPOT COMPLETE INFORMATION WEBSITE. Web.  
24 Feb. 2010. .
- “ Kim Jong il Biography – North Korea.” Asian History – History of Asia.  
Web. 23 Feb. 2010. .
- “ Reference Archive: Mao Zedong.” Marxists Internet Archive. Web. 24  
Feb. 2010. .