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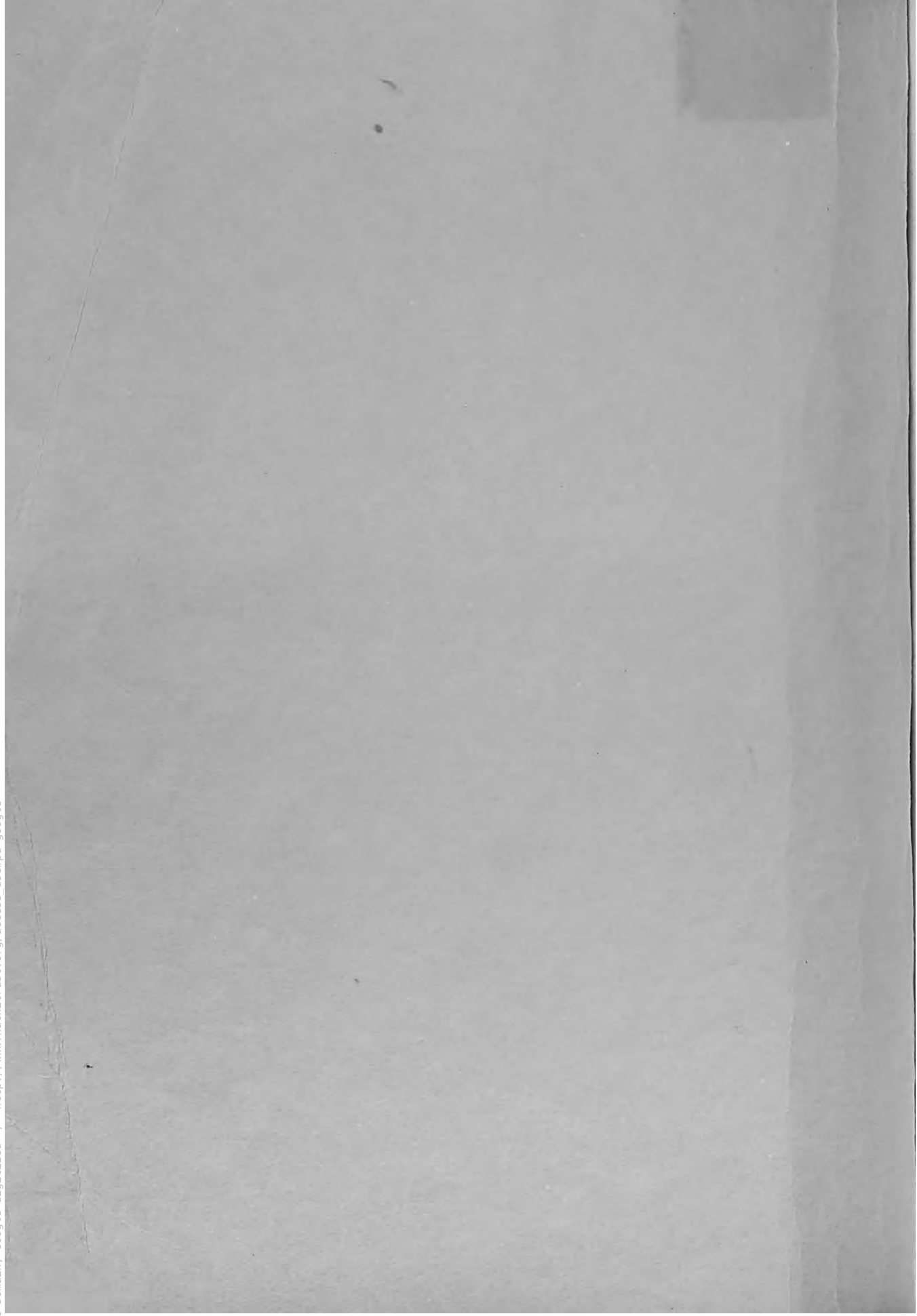


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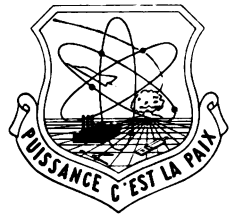
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The Chinese Communist Armed Forces

Kenneth R. Whiting



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INTRODUCTION

ALTHOUGH the history and present state of the Chinese Communist military forces are not as well covered as those of the Soviet Union, nevertheless, there is a relatively large number of books, articles, and source collections available in English. Then why this study? The answer is simply that this is an attempt to tell the story of the Chinese Red Army in as concise a form as possible without compressing the narrative to the point of distortion. The study may seem overstuffed with facts, or what pass for facts, but the author can assure the reader that he did his best to eliminate all but those he considered essential. The historical approach has been used for the simple reason that like any other organism the Chinese Red Army is a mélange of strengths and weaknesses rooted in its evolution.

On 1 August 1974, the Chinese Red Army, called the People's Liberation Army (PLA) since 1946, celebrated the 47th anniversary of the Nanch'ang uprising which is considered its birthday. In the years since 1927, the Chinese Red Army has grown from a scattering of rebel bands in southern China into a multimillion-man military organization with a nuclear capability.

In the spring of 1928, Mao Tse-tung and Chu Teh combined their tiny armed bands and began to build the Red Army. By the mid-1930s they had a large military force and were in control of extensive areas in southeast China. Then Chiang Kai-shek instituted a series of annihilation campaigns which eventually resulted in the 6,000-mile retreat of the Red Army, usually referred to euphemistically as the "Long March." At the end of the retreat, Mao's military punch had been drastically reduced and he had no choice but to remain holed up in Shensi Province in northwest China.

Mao and his Red Army might well have been merely a footnote in the long history of China had not the Japanese invasion of China proper occurred just at the nadir of his fortunes. Taking full advantage of the resultant chaos in northern China, Mao was able to attach his Communist cause to the rising peasant nationalism during the 1937-1945 period and to emerge from the war in control of a large army, an even larger militia, and a hundred million people. From that base the Communists were able to drive Chiang Kai-shek and his Kuomintang government off the mainland by late 1949. The PLA was no longer a rebel force, but was now the army of the government in power.

The new Communist regime in Peking intervened in the Korean War in late 1950 and with large-scale Soviet help managed to build up a modern army in the next two and a half years. By the mid-1950s, the PLA had most of the tools of a mid-twentieth century military force, but still lacked that essential ingredient of a great power, a nuclear arsenal. Finally, despairing of Soviet help in the procurement of a nuclear capability, the Chinese decided to go it alone in 1959, and, to the surprise of everyone, had an atomic bomb by October 1964 and a fusion device by mid-1967.

Several points need to be emphasized in this story of the development of the PLA. First, Mao, contrary to classic Marxist-Leninist doctrine, saw the peasant as the dynamic force in the Chinese revolution, and he built his strategy

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and tactics on that assumption. Second, Mao, like Tito, was able to put on the garments of nationalism to gain a mass following, and once in control of the masses, he insured obedience through the organizational mechanisms of Communism. Finally, the ability of the Peking regime to concentrate enough of its scarce resources and even scarcer skilled personnel to come up with a thermonuclear weapon in a relatively short time span is a vivid demonstration of its dedication to the task of becoming a great power.

Any description of the adventures of the PLA during the last decade is likely to be a demonstration of the China-watcher's somewhat foolhardy practice of writing history on the basis of dubious data, rumors, and rumors of rumors. Since late 1965 the People's Republic of China (PRC) has been engulfed first by the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, which bid fair to push the nation into chaos, then by the strange purge of Mao's "comrade-in-arms" and annointed successor, Lin Piao, and now is undergoing a sort of mini-Cultural Revolution. Just what role the PLA has played, is playing, and will play in this turmoil is impossible to say, but there is no doubt of its central position in the struggle. Whether the Party (Maoist or otherwise) will retain control of the PLA, or whether China will get another military regime, or regimes, are predictions beyond the ken of this author or, apparently, of even the professional China watchers.

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CHAPTER I

The Chinese Military Heritage

THE PLATITUDE, long held in the Western World, that the Chinese have a supreme contempt for all things military, hardly bears up under close scrutiny. The great dynasties in the history of China invariably gained power through military prowess, held it as long as they could defend the Middle Kingdom from outside attack and maintain a reasonable semblance of internal order, and lost out when a stronger group was able to fight its way to the throne. When the incumbent dynasty was unable to defend itself, it was assumed that it had lost the "Mandate of Heaven" and that it was time for it to go.

The story of the Manchu, or Ch'ing, dynasty is typical of the rise and fall of Chinese regimes. Coming to power in Peking in 1644 by force of arms, the Ch'ing rulers displayed remarkable military abilities for the first century and a half of their rule. But Manchu military vigor gradually eroded as the regime became Sinicized, as it allowed the administration of scholars to lord it over the military leaders. On the eve of the nineteenth century, the once vigorous Banner armies had lost much of their war-making capability. The prevalence of the scholarly view that one does not use good iron to hammer out nails nor good men to make soldiers had the effect of keeping "good men" out of the military forces. Any army in time will tend to reflect the attitude of the nation of which it is a part.

The nineteenth century was one long bitter experience for China as the West pushed it from one humiliating concession to another even more humiliating. The West became convinced that the Chinese were not only poor soldiers, but also even innately incapable of becoming efficient fighters. The effects of a temporary environment were mistaken for a genetic condition. Even in the twentieth century, the tendency of one warlord to gain a victory over another by the use of "silver bullets," i.e., bribery, bolstered the Western preconception that the Chinese were just not endowed by nature for serious military activities.

It is not surprising, therefore, that the West suffered a profound shock when the Chinese Red Army displayed discipline, tenacity, and fighting ability in defeating Chiang Kai-shek's Western-trained armies during the civil war. All this was so un-Chinese, in the light of Western prejudices.

At the present time, neither the regime on Taiwan nor the government of mainland China displays that "supreme contempt" for things military that was long supposed to be an innate characteristic of the Chinese. As a matter of fact, the leaders in Peking are now calling on all other sections of the population to emulate the People's Liberation Army (PLA). Most of the top echelon figures in the government of the People's Republic of China (PRC) were military leaders for several decades and are still imbued with a military outlook. To be even more specific, between 1928 and 1949, the military and political leadership of the Chinese Communist Party was almost identical. Mao Tse-tung's famous dictum that political power comes out of the barrel of a gun is still an axiom in Chinese thought on the mainland.

1. Deterioration of the Military in the First Half of the Nineteenth Century.—When the Western nations began to penetrate China in the early nineteenth century, the Manchu ruler exercised control over two types of military forces: the Manchu Banner Forces, distributed in garrisons throughout much of China, and the Army of the Green Standard, also stationed all over China in small units. The 300,000 or so Bannermen were the descendants of the original Manchu Banner Armies that conquered China in the seventeenth century, but in the ensuing century and a half they had come to look upon their job more as a vested interest than as a serious military duty. The Army of the Green Standard, more than a half million troops, was a Chinese force, as opposed to the purely Manchu makeup of the Bannermen. Various Green Standard units were under provincial commanders, who

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in turn assigned brigades, regiments, and battalions to various districts in their provinces. Actually, because of its distribution in small units, the Green Standard troops acted as a constabulary.[1]

As a fighting force, both the Bannermen and the Green Standard Army left a lot to be desired. The soldiers were poorly disciplined, intermittently paid, and were still armed with bows, spears, and swords. The officers were selected more for strength and riding skill than for brains or command ability. Because of the wide distribution of the Chinese armed forces in small units throughout the length and breadth of the land, it was impossible to assemble more than a relatively small force at any one point in a reasonable period of time. Travel over the little more than footpaths that passed for roads in China was a slow and difficult matter.

The Opium War (1839-1842) vividly demonstrated the shortcomings of the Chinese armies, which were so far behind in the technological means of waging war as to be noncompetitive with the West. The Bannerman archers were helpless in the face of British firearms. Furthermore, the British ships were able to transport troops from point to point along the coast much faster than the Chinese could move troops over the difficult terrain, not to speak of the effectiveness of naval bombardment of Chinese cities. The Treaty of Nanking in 1842 rubbed the Chinese nose into the dirt: the Chinese had to pay for the war and for the opium destroyed on the eve of the conflict; open up five cities to British traders; and cede Hongkong to the British in perpetuity. The prestige of the Ch'ing emperor had suffered a severe blow. The armies of the great Middle Kingdom proved almost worthless when pitted against a technologically advanced nation such as Great Britain.

In the years between the Opium War and the Taiping Rebellion, nothing was done to improve the Manchu military posture. The Bannermen continued to lounge about in their garrisons and the Green Standard units maintained their high degree of inefficiency. The bow-and-arrow mentality of the military leaders was scarcely dented by the fiasco of the Opium War. A far greater shock, however, was in the making for both the Throne and its armed forces, for it was during that period that a massive peasant revolt was building up, one that would shake the regime to its foundations.

2. The Taiping Rebellion and the Chinese Military.—The population of China, after a millenium of stability, began to grow prodigiously from the seventeenth century on, while the amount of land under cultivation remained relatively stable. The resulting pressure on the land led to smaller and smaller plots per family—in many cases the loss of even the tiny plot to the big landowners—and multitudes of peasants fell into clutches of the money lenders. By the 1840s, the situation was becoming unbearable, and peasant discontent was evolving into desperation. The country was ripe for a social explosion, and a religious sect led by a new prophet supplied the match to the powder keg of peasant frustration.

Hung Hsiu-ch'uan, a native of Kwangtung, was the third son of a poor family, but he was kept in school in his youth to prepare for the civil examinations. He failed the examinations repeatedly, however, and by 1837 was so upset that he fell ill and took to his bed. While an invalid, he had visions in which he was transported to heaven, instructed by God to cleanse China of demon-worshippers, and met his Elder Brother, Jesus. Hung, a son of God, was the third member of the trinity. Hung's religion, a weird mélange of bits and pieces of Christianity combined with a crude egalitarian socialism, appealed to the poverty-stricken peasants of Kwangsi. By the middle of 1850, the God Worshippers, 10,000 strong, took Yung-an and there declared Hung Hsiu-ch'uan the T'ien-wang, or Celestial King, of the "Heavenly Kingdom of Great Peace," (T'ai-p'ing T'ien-kuo), or Taiping, the Great Peace, in its usual abbreviated form.

The Taipings moved north through Hunan and, in early 1853, took the key city of Wuchang, after which, half a million strong, they moved eastward along the Yangtze. Nanking fell to them in March 1853, and Hung made it his Celestial Capital (T'ien-chung). He then dispatched an expedition to North China, which came within twenty miles of Tientsin before it was stopped in 1855. Another expedition to the west was very successful until it came into conflict with Tseng Kuo-fan's newly organized Hunan Army.

The Taiping military forces had high morale and the will to fight whenever they were not handicapped by poor generals. But the generals were of high caliber in the early years of the movement. Organization was very good for mid-century China. The major unit was the army (chun) of 12,500 men, about the size of a modern division. The army was made up of five brigades of 2,500 men each, which in turn were composed of five battalions of 500 men each. The primary unit was a company of 100 men.[2] By 1856, however, the Taiping leaders in Nanking began to murder each other, and Hung installed his own relatives in most of the high military

[1]Ralph L. Powell, *The Rise of Chinese Military Power, 1895-1912* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1955), pp. 9-13.

[2]Powell, *op. cit.*, p. 21.

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and civil offices. As a result, the situation grew so bad by 1859 that Hung had to create a number of new princes *(wang)* from men of talent, the outstanding one being Li Hsiu-ch'eng, who became commander-in-chief of the Taiping armies and probably kept the rebellion going for an additional five years.[3]

The successes of the Taipings in the early period of the rebellion, due largely to the miserable performance of the traditional imperial forces, led the regime in Peking to rely more and more on the local officials, especially the governors of the provinces. Tseng Kuo-fan, the governor of Hunan, was an outstanding example of what could be accomplished with indigenous manpower when a good man was allowed to go it alone. He recruited a militia in Hunan and organized it along semi-modern lines. He also saw to it that the troops got paid and that the officers did not shortchange them on their rations, an old Chinese custom. The new militia was organized into battalions of five officers and 500 men as the basic unit, which in turn was made up of four companies; two to ten battalions were grouped under a brigadier general, and two or more of these larger units made up an "army" *(chun)*. Tseng Kuo-fan enlisted only hill-country farmers, prohibited opium smoking and gambling, and made rape a capital offense. By 1856, his Hunan Army was an effective fighting force of 60,000 men.[4] The idea caught on, and the other governors created militia forces, the Anhwei Army of Li Hung-chang being an outstanding example. These militia armies, supplemented by the services of such Western commanders as Frederick Ward, an American, and "Chinese" Gordon, an Englishman, eventually overcame the Taiping rebels. In June 1864, Hung Hsui-ch'uan committed suicide by poison and the capital, Nanking, fell in July, although it was not until early 1866 that the last of the Taiping rebels were eliminated in Kwangtung.

The Taiping Rebellion had lasted 15 years and had ravaged 17 provinces, a social holocaust in which some 20 million people lost their lives, not to speak of the enormous destruction of property. The Ch'ing Dynasty survived, but it had lost much face—both at home and abroad. The Taipings were doomed to failure in all probability. They had no consistent program, were rent with internal dissensions, and succeeded in alienating both the Confucianist property-governing classes and the Westerners. The fact that the rebellion lasted so long and was so widespread, however, was irrefutable evidence of the depth of peasant discontent throughout China by the early nineteenth century, and the crushing of the Taiping Rebellion did nothing to eliminate the root causes of the discontent.

One result of the rebellion that was to have far-reaching consequences for the future was the growth in the provinces of militia armies modelled on Tseng Kuo-fan's Hunan Army. These armies were outside the regularly established imperial forces, owed their first allegiance to their provincial leader, and were supported by taxes raised by the latter. Peking had lost its absolute control over many areas, and for the rest of the dynasty's existence this changed relationship tended to weaken the central government. Furthermore, like the Bannermen and the Green Standard Army, the militia forces quickly lost their initial vitality and their fighting élan, and they degenerated into another useless military force living off the taxpayer, but incapable of providing genuine national defense.

In the three decades that elapsed between the defeat of the Taipings and the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese War, the Peking bureaucracy made only sporadic attempts at modernizing the armed forces. The Green Standard troops were organized in a somewhat more disciplined fashion, but the main defense force was the militia. Tseng Kuo-fan and Li Hung-chang urged the adoption of Western-type weapons and the use of European officers to train the troops, but they made little headway against the sluggish bureaucracy whose immediate reaction to all newfangled proposals was a reflexive opposition.

Even when the Chinese troops did receive Western arms, they were so varied that a logistic nightmare resulted, in addition to engendering a new source of graft for the military leaders. In a halfhearted attempt to insure themselves against dependence upon imported arms, especially when in conflict with the outside sources of supply, the Chinese established a number of arsenals. But these arsenals, equipped with modern machinery and capable of producing breech-loading rifles and guns, spent much of their effort in manufacturing outmoded muskets.[5]

The training of officers, the *sine qua non* of a modern military force, also got little more than lip service. Some of the more enlightened leaders did import Western officers to run officer training schools, but the total impact on the bulk of the Chinese officer corps was miniscule. Li Hung-chang, in 1885, did organize an up-to-date military academy at Tientsin and used German instructors, a step that was emulated by Chang Chih-tung in Canton. These were the forerunners of a myriad of

[3]Biography of Li Hsui-ch'eng by Teng SSu-yu in Arthur W. Hummel (ed.), *Eminent Chinese of the Ch'ing Period, 1644-1912*. 2 Vols. (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1943), Vol. I, pp. 459-63.

[4]Powell, *op. cit.*, p. 24.

[5]Powell, *op. cit.*, p. 42.

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schools, but it took the humiliation of a defeat at the hands of the Japanese to stimulate that proliferation.

The Chinese, realizing that their troops were no match for those of the industrialized nations, were inclined to accept the military gadgets of the West, but they wanted no part of the total industrial ethos of the outsiders. They were trying, in a rather desultory way, to superimpose the military hardware of the West upon the Chinese way of life, basically a rural society. But, as the Japanese were quick to grasp, a nation could not become a military power in the nineteenth century without first becoming an industrial power, and the Chinese were taking only faltering steps in that direction in the last half of the century.

Furthermore, the numerically large force (350,000 troops) which Peking did command was so decentralized that it was impossible to mobilize more than a small fraction of it on any front in any meaningful time period. Centralized command was lacking, logistics were a bad joke, and strategic and tactical concepts were primitive and even weird.

At the urging of Li Hung-chang and others, the Chinese began to build a navy by the 1880s. A naval office was created in 1885, and in 1888, the Pei-yang (Northern) fleet was organized, some 28 vessels. But the Dowager Empress, Tz'u-hsi, dipped into the naval funds in a big way in order to beautify her palace grounds, although she did concede the source of the loot by constructing a majestic marble boat in the lake in the garden. Like all the other steps in the buildup of military strength, the navy was only halfheartedly pushed. The Manchu dynasty seemed incapable of a serious attempt to attain military security for the nation. Like the Romanovs in Russia, the Manchus met the challenge of the new age by trying to withdraw into the past.

3. The Sino-Japanese War (1894-1895) and Its Aftermath.—By the 1880s the government in Peking was getting very touchy about outside raids upon what the Chinese regarded as their tributary areas. The French in Indo-China, the British in Burma, and the Russians from the Pamirs to the mouth of the Ussuri were all carving out colonies or just annexing territories. Thus when the Japanese began to show an interest in Korea, a Chinese tributary, Peking responded in a most antagonistic way. Li Hung-chang, sometimes called the "Chinese Bismarck," sent a protégé, one Yuan Shih-kai, to Seoul to restrain the increasing Japanese influence—but a more undiplomatic character than Yuan would have been hard to come by. The net result was open conflict in late July 1894 and the declaration of war on 1 August.

The Chinese felt confident of their ability to best the Japanese, a view that was shared by the Western powers. Li Hung-chang assured the Throne that the Chinese armies and fleet in North China were well prepared and capable of winning the war. After all, the Japanese were Asiatic, had a relatively small population, and were fundamentally imitators of the great Chinese culture. What Li Hung-chang and the Western powers did not seem to realize was that Japan, under the Meiji Restoration, had successfully aped the West between 1867 and 1894 and now had an industrial structure and a military force that made it an incipient great power in every sense of that term.

The Japanese defeated the Chinese at Pengyang in mid-September and then chased Li Hung-chang's troops across the Yalu and well into Manchuria. A month later, they carried out an amphibious operation on the Liaotung peninsula and, by November, had captured the important forts of Dairen and Port Arthur. As Lord Curzon put it, "The Chinese army, under Chinese officers, even with muskets in its hands and cartridges in its pouches, is an undisciplined rabble of tramps."[6] The Japanese commanders were not even forced to extend themselves. In early January of 1895, the Japanese moved into Shantung, attacked Weihaiwei, the main Chinese naval base, and began to move into China proper through southern Manchuria as well. At this point, little remained in the path of the two-pronged Japanese drive on Peking, and the Chinese threw in the sponge in early April.

China had been revealed as an impotent military power. The new navy had been duck soup for the Japanese fleet. The lack of a centralized command structure; poor officer material at all levels, but especially at the top; corruption throughout both government and army; and a shortage of modern weapons plus an inability to use what were available—all these pyramided into total defeat in record time. The fact that the defeat was at the hands of a relatively small Asiatic power made the cup of humiliation doubly bitter for the Chinese.

The Treaty of Shimonoseki on 17 April 1895 penalized the Chinese heavily. They were forced to acknowledge the independence of Korea, cede Taiwan and the Pescadores to Japan, hand over the Liaotung peninsula, open up four more ports, grant Japan most-favored-nation status, and pay a heavy indemnity. The Japanese, newcomers to the rugged game of power politics, allowed themselves to be euchered out of the Liaotung peninsula when Russia, France, and Germany sent a joint note of protest. When the Russians, three years later, "leased" the peninsula from the Chinese, great was the fury in Tokyo.

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[6]Quoted in W. L. Langer, *The Diplomacy of Imperialism* (New York: Knopf, 1965), p. 174.

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Even while the Chinese armies were being humiliated by the Japanese, an imperial official at Nanking, Chang Chih-tung, was organizing a new type of army, the Self-Strengthening Army, to defend the Yangtze area against a Japanese attack. By late 1895, he had 13 battalions (infantry, cavalry, artillery, and engineers), well-equipped with European weapons and being trained by more than 30 German officers and noncoms. The foreigners, moreover, held actual commands in Chang Chih-tung's new army. He also inaugurated another novelty for a Chinese army—high pay, good rations, and both honestly administered.

At the same time in the north, Yuan Shih-k'ai was beginning to create a "foreign-style" army near Tientsin, the so-called Newly Created Army, which later became the famous Pei-yang (Northern) Army. He too insisted on modern arms, hired two Germans and a Norwegian to instruct in staff work, and forced his troops to train under simulated combat conditions, carry out night maneuvers, and even use the telegraph in communications. Like Chang Chih-tung, he paid his soldiers regularly, fed them adequately, and provided decent uniforms.

Yuan Shih-k'ai's new army was pregnant with future possibilities. Its officer corps later provided China with five presidents, a premier, and most of the warlords of Northern China.[7] Eventually the brigade created in 1895 became the Pei-yang Army of six divisions, dominated Northern China in the 1912-1916 period, and in the early 1920s split up to form the nuclei of most of the warlord armies in North China. It is little wonder that Yuan Shih-k'ai came to be known as the "father of warlords."

The Empress-Dowager Tz'u-hsi, who had dominated politics since 1862 by ruling as regent for her son, then for a nephew, at last relinquished control when her nephew, Kuang-hsu, came of age in 1889. But Tz'u-hsi continued to lurk in the background and to keep her fingers in all kinds of activities. Finally, in 1898 Kuang-hsu, influenced by a group of liberal advisers, issued a series of decrees designed to bring China into the modern world in one great leap. Between 11 June and 21 September, the Hundred Days Reform, decrees were issued to modernize the examination system for the civil service, to reduce the overpopulated bureaucracy, to Westernize the schools, to rationalize the economy, and even to bring the armed forces up to date, including putting the Bannermen to work. All of this was on paper, however, and when the numerous vested interests being affected saw the enormity of the changes, they appealed to the old Empress-Dowager Tz'u-hsi.

Yuan Shih-k'ai, approached by the reformers to join a plot to seize Tz'u-hsi and thus insure the success of the reforms, blabbed the scheme to the old Dowager, and she went into action immediately. The emperor was seized and confined to a pavilion on an island in the Imperial Park, declared too ill to rule, and Tz'u-hsi was in the saddle again. The reforms were rescinded immediately and China returned to "normalcy," corruption and all.

But the old Empress-Dowager was seething with hatred against the reformers and foreigners who had approved Kuang-hsu's reforms. Thus when the Society of the Righteous and Harmonious Fists, better known as the Boxers, began their antiforeign campaign in the late 1890s, she was more than happy to latch onto the movement. Only blind hatred and advancing senility can account for her backing of a movement so obviously doomed as the Boxer attack on all foreigners. It meant war with eight major powers simultaneously, and only five years previously the Japanese alone had walked over the Chinese military forces with little or no effort. Insanity or not, the Boxers were allowed to attack the foreign legations in Peking in the summer of 1900 and a rescue force of Japanese, Russians, British, Americans, and French, 16,000 to 18,000 men in all, fought their way from Tientsin to Peking and relieved the besieged embassies there. Tz'u-hsi, with the hapless emperor in tow, fled to Sian in Shensi province, and the foreigners proceeded to loot Peking and to levy a heavy indemnity on China. The reputation of the Manchu dynasty was at an extremely low ebb.

Yuan Shih-k'ai in Shantung and most of the governors-general in South and Central China refused to be drawn into the conflict with the Western powers and some cases even purged their areas of Boxers. Thus the march from Tientsin to Peking was opposed by Chihli military forces only. Furthermore, there can be little doubt that some cooler heads at the Imperial Court saw to it that the foreign legations were not completely overrun. After all these caveats are taken into consideration, however, the Chinese military put on a rather sorry show in the Boxer period. If it had been possible to further tarnish the image of the Chinese soldier as a fighting man, the Boxer experience would have done it.

In the period between 1900 and the downfall of the Manchu dynasty in 1912, work on the improvement of the Chinese military forces continued, although hardly on a crash basis. Two factors favored the military reforms: first, old Tz'u-hsi's realization at long last that the dynasty was doomed if it did not take some steps to modernize China; and, second, the humiliation of having to stand by in 1904-05 while Russia and Japan fought over which one of them would control Manchuria, the homeland of the dynasty.

[7] Powell, *op. cit.*, p. 80.

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Yuan Shih-k'ai, still a favorite with the old Empress-Dowager, was given the funds and the authority to build up the Pei-yang Army to six divisions and to promote his officers to influential positions, thus creating the famous, or perhaps infamous, Pei-yang military clique. In the Hupeh-Hunan area, the governor-general, Chang Chih-tung, continued to improve and enlarge his new-style army also. Gradually, the example set by Yuan and Chang was emulated in other provinces and there was a tendency for other governors to modernize their military forces.

Military schools sprang up throughout China, most of them modelled on Yuan Shih-k'ai's at Paoting and Chang Chih-tung's at Wuchang, both greatly influenced by the Germans and Japanese. The Japanese became more and more influential for three reasons: a growing respect for Japanese military capabilities owing to their victories in the Sino-Japanese War of 1894-1895 and the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-1905, the relative cheapness of hiring Japanese instructors in comparison with the cost of Germans, and the influence of a large number of Chinese officers returning from Japanese military schools. For example, in 1908, there were around 700 students in Japanese military schools.[8] By October 1911, the date of the revolution, there were some 70 military educational institutions in China, ranging from basic schools to the rather sophisticated Officers' School at Paoting.[9]

Although these attempts to develop a modern Chinese military force were theoretically designed to come up with a capability to defend China from the rapaciousness of the Western powers and Japan, on the whole they were off target. In the first place, the new-style army, the *Luchun* as it was called, was not a centralized force directly controlled by the Throne. The Pei-yang Army, the most powerful military force in China by the early 1900s, was the personal creation of Yuan Shih-k'ai, and even after he had been sent into retirement "to nurse his sore feet," following the death of the old Empress-Dowager Tz'u-hsi in November 1908, the leaders of the Pei-yang Army remained wholly devoted to Yuan. The same was true of many of the military forces in other areas of China. The governor-general raised the forces, trained them, and financed them through his control of local funds, probably the biggest impediment to efficient control by Peking. This growth of local autonomy at the expense of central control had always been an element in the collapse of a dynasty, and was accepted as a sign that the "Mandate of Heaven" was no longer in favor of the Manchus. Furthermore, a large number of the young officers trained in Japan had been exposed to the anti-Manchu revolutionary teachings of Dr. Sun Yat-sen and his companions in the *T'ung-meng hui,* or Alliance Society. These officers helped spread Sun's revolutionary doctrines in the military schools and the army itself. Thus by the end of the first decade of the twentieth century, the anti-Manchu virus was spreading rapidly throughout the very military forces that were supposed to support the regime in Peking.

4. The "Double Ten" and Yuan Shih-k'ai.—On 9 October 1911, there was a premature explosion of a bomb in a revolutionary hideout in the Russian Concesson in Hankow, and the revolutionists who were in the army had little option but to go through with a revolt immediately as to stall further would be to invite the unmasking of their plot and the certainty of arrest. Thus the coup d'état began in Wuchang,[10] across the river from Hankow, on 10 October—thus its designation of "Double Ten," the 10th day of the tenth month, a holiday now celebrated in both Peking and Taipei. Apparently there were only two battalions involved at the outset, and the consensus of contemporary observers was that the Governor-General Jui Cheng and the military commander, General Chang Piao, could have put down the revolt if they had not panicked and fled to a gunboat in the Yangtze, thus making it easy for the rest of the troops stationed in the Wuhan area to join the revolutionists. The rebels, on the other hand, because of the ad hoc character of the revolt, were without adequate leadership, and they had to coerce one of their officers, General Li Yuan-hung, into the role of a revolutionary leader—a role that he showed little enthusiasm for in the beginning. The success of the uprising in Wuchang resulted in the snowballing of the movement, and soon the rebels also controlled Hanyang, with its arsenal, and Hankow; these successes in turn led to revolts throughout the Yangtze basin. The revolution was spreading like wildfire; the incident in Hankow had touched off a veritable social explosion.

The Regent in Peking, by now running scared, was forced into the embarrassing predicament of having to ask Yuan Shih-k'ai to overlook his "sore feet" (diagnosed by imperial decree) and take charge of the armed suppression of the revolution. The Pei-yang Army was the only firstrate military force available to Peking, but its first allegiance was to Yuan Shih-K'ai, and the Regent was well aware

[8]Powell, *op. cit.,* p. 299.
[9]Powell, *op. cit.,* p. 299.

[10]Wuchang, Hankow, and Hanyang form a close-knit group of three cities at the junction of the Han River and the Yangtze. They are often referred to collectively as Wuhan.

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of this disagreeable fact. But so was Yuan, and he continued to nurse his "sore feet" until he got the terms he wanted. By mid-November the Court yielded and he became not only supreme commander of the military forces, but also premier—in short, he was now in the driver's seat.

Yuan, for all intents and purposes, was facing a revolutionary mob, not an organized army, at Wuhan; and his troops quickly recovered Hankow and Hanyang, although Wuchang, across the Yangtze, continued to hold out. That Yuan could have crushed the revolt, at least in the Wuhan area, seems evident, but he temporized and stalled. Why? One scholar[11] suggests that he was in a personal dilemma: if he defeated the rebels, the Regent could retire him again; if he lost, the rebels would have given him short shrift indeed. Another authority[12] is of the opinion that Yuan and the rebels were caught in a real stalemate: Yuan could not reconquer all of Central and Southern China, while the revolutionists could not oust him from the North. Only a compromise was feasible if a long civil war was to be avoided. Furthermore, Yuan could scent the demise of the Manchu regime, and he had ambitions of his own for replacing the dynasty, so he began to manipulate events to make the abdication of the last Manchu emperor inevitable.

While Yuan was undercutting the dynasty in Peking, the revolutionists were having their own troubles in the South. Debates, conferences, and assemblies followed one upon the other in Nanking and Shanghai during November and December, all of which aimed at setting up a new republican government for all of China. Finally, on 25 December 1911, Dr. Sun Yat-sen, who had been abroad during the early phase of the revolution, arrived in Shanghai; the representatives of 17 provinces, meeting in Nanking, elected him provisional president of their new government by a vote of 16 to 1; and he was inaugurated on 1 January 1912. Li Yuan-hung was elected vice president.

Dr. Sun, however, was well aware that the new republic had little chance of survival unless it had a military underpinning, and only Yuan Shih-k'ai with his Pei-yang Army could supply that. Negotiations with Yuan picked up momentum and it was finally agreed that Dr. Sun would resign in favor of Yuan if the latter would agree to Nanking as the seat of the new government and abide by the constitution to be drafted by parliament as soon as it convened. Yuan agreed; Hsuan T'ung, the last Ch'ing emperor, abdicated on 12 February 1912, and three days later Yuan Shih-k'ai became Provisional President.

The period between 1912 and 1916 witnessed a struggle between Yuan Shih-k'ai, backed by his Northern militarists of the Pei-yang clique, and the Southern revolutionists, mostly members of the Kuomintang.[13] The Kuomintang leaders tried to use Yuan Shih-k'ai as the military support of a parliamentary-dominated republican government, but Yuan beat them to the punch by getting their support in eliminating the Manchu dynasty and then stealing the government from them.

When Dr. Sun formally stepped down from the presidency in favor of Yuan Shih-k'ai on 1 April 1912, the Parliament agreed to keep the capital in Peking, thus moving into Yuan's military bailiwick. As a gesture of compromise, Yuan appointed Huang Hsing, a leading revolutionist, military boss of the 50,000 troops stationed in Nanking, but Huang Hsing was unable to finance their upkeep and disbanded his force in May 1912. This was probably a mistake, in spite of the lack of funds from Peking, as it eliminated one of the military bulwarks of the Southern revolutionists and made it just that much harder to oppose Yuan Shih-k'ai. During the first year of his regime, Yuan managed to convince Dr. Sun and Huang Hsing of his good intentions—the honeymoon phase of the Yuan-Kuomintang relationship. But when the national elections, held between December 1912 and February 1913, resulted in a major victory for the Kuomintang, Yuan faced the disagreeable prospect of a National Assembly and a cabinet dominated by the opposition, and he began to fight back. The leading figure in the Kuomintang's success was Sung Chiao-jen, an exponent of parliamentary supremacy and a master politician, and just as he was about to board a train in Shanghai for Peking to attend the opening of the National Assembly in April, he was assassinated by some of Yuan's gunmen. The Kuomintang leaders were shocked, but they did not press the charges against Yuan to the point of an open break. But as soon as the Assembly had convened, Yuan's government negotiated a loan for $25 million from a consortium of international banks without consulting the legislature—a deliberate affront to its authority. The Kuomintang leaders realized that the loan was earmarked for a buildup of Yuan's military forces, and they fought tooth and nail to kill it, but Yuan was able to by-pass them successfully. The honeymoon was definitely over.

By July 1913, the Kuomintang leaders saw that Yuan could not be controlled by legal means, and they resorted to military force, the so-called "sec-

[11]Powell, *op. cit.*, p. 309

[12]H. F. MacNair, *China in Revolution* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1931), p. 31.

[13]The Kuomintang (National People's Party) was formed out of the T'ung Meng Hui and four other parties in August 1912.

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ond revolution," a civil war between the North and the South that lasted for exactly two months (12 July to 12 September). The South was decisively defeated. The southern revolutionists lacked adequate military forces, and there was not enough popular sentiment against Yuan Shih-k'ai to compensate for their military weakness. Yuan quickly consolidated his position: he pressured the National Assembly into electing him president in October 1913; on 4 November, he revoked the credentials of 483 Kuomintang members of the Assembly, thus preventing the calling of a quorum; on 10 January 1914, he dissolved the body, and on 1 May, he promulgated a new constitution which called for a powerful president with a ten-year term and the right of indefinite reelections. For all intents and purposes, Yuan now had dictatorial power with a lifetime tenure and also had the military power to back it.

Yuan Shih-k'ai was not satisfied with his new position and began to ease himself onto the vacant Manchu throne. In May 1915, a Peace Preservation Society began to propagandize the virtues of a monarchy for China and conducted "elections" in the provinces to elicit a mandate from the people for Yuan's ascent to the throne. Frank Goodnow, an American professor who was Yuan's constitutional adviser, produced a memorandum to the effect that a monarchy would be better for China than the republican form of government. In December, the council of state, having counted the ballots from the provinces, invited Yuan Shih-k'ai to become the emperor, and, after declining the honor thrice in Caesarean form, he ascended the throne on 1 January 1916, taking as his reign title the Chinese characters Hung Hsien ("Glorious Constitutionalism"). To his surprise, military governor after military governor in the southern and central provinces came out against this reinstitution of the dynastic form of government, and by March 1916, Yuan had the word. He backed off the throne and resumed the role of permanent president. He died on 6 June 1916, some say of a broken heart because of his failure to establish a dynasty—but it seems hard to believe that a hard-bitten old scoundrel of Yuan's type had it in him to die of a broken heart. He had, however, proved that even a character as strong as he was could not bring monarchy back to China. The concept had died with the dethronement of the Manchus.

Yuan Shih-k'ai's tenure of power had been founded on his control of the strongest military force in China—the Pei-yang Army and its clique of well-trained generals and officers. He had been able to sink the Manchus through his control of the Pei-yang soldiers plus help from the southern revolutionists and, in turn, had defeated them by his military strength alone. He demonstrated that, from 1911 on, a party or an individual had to have a strong armed backing to hold power in China. Legitimacy resided only in the power of arms. Yuan had taken advantage of what Powell refers to as "the dual heritage of semi-personal armies and the use of Western techniques arising out of the Taiping Rebellion . . ."[14] But in building up the military forces of his generals, mostly from the Pei-yang clique, Yuan was allowing them to create personal armies that led, after his strong hand was removed in 1916, to the scourge of China from 1916 to 1928—the age of warlordism, the rule of local *tuchuns.* Allegiance to the central power in Peking had disappeared, and each warlord was the law unto himself unless he met one with superior forces.

[14] *Op. cit.*, p. 339.

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CHAPTER II

Warlordism, the Kuomintang, and the Chinese Communist Party

PROVINCIAL autonomy, which had grown ever stronger after the creation of the Hunan and Anhwei Armies during the Taiping Rebellion, reached its apogee in the decade following Yuan Shih-k'ai's death. After him, no leader seemed capable of holding the country together. Local military leaders began to rule more or less contemptuous of the writ of Peking; in short, the curse of warlordism was visited upon the land. Rule in Peking was dependent upon putting together a combination of warlords, and when the coalition broke up, the rule in Peking changed hands. Some of the warlords, *tuchun,* were semiliterate; some were ex-bandits; and their troops were usually the offscouring of society. It is little wonder that the average man came to hate the sight of soldiers. Some warlords even taxed the peasants in their areas for years ahead; all lived off the land when campaigning, but they did precious little fighting as their soldiers were their capital and they had as much reluctance to the spending of their capital as the most died-in-the-wool New Englander. China was a kaleidoscope of big, medium, and little warlords with no concept of China as a unified nation. The warlords dealt with each other and with the foreigners with one purpose in mind: self-survival and self-enrichment.

New ideas, however, were gradually manifesting themselves in China during the decade after 1916, especially the concept of an independent, united China. While the warlords were bickering over how much booty each was entitled to and while control of the government in Peking was being seized by first one and then another warlord-politician gang, many Chinese were looking for something to which they could pledge their allegiance. The two main contenders by the early 1920s were the Kuomintang and the Chinese Communists, both of whom tried to latch onto the rising nationalism.

1. Rise of Chinese Nationalism.—World War I relieved China of the pressure of the Western European powers, since they were all too busy fighting their own "civil war" in Europe. Unfortunately, Japan was both willing and able to continue the exploitation of China single-handed. Having run China out of Korea in 1895, the Japanese continued their penetration of the Chinese sphere by defeating Russia in 1905, a victory that enabled them to gain a foothold in southern Manchuria. With the European powers absent from the Far East, the Japanese turned their attention to the consolidation of their gains in Manchuria and to the wresting of further concessions from the weak and corrupt regimes that followed each other in Peking. The Japanese declared war on Germany in August 1914 and then proceeded to take over the German leasehold in Shantung Province. In January 1915, the Japanese presented Yuan Shih-k'ai with the notorious Twenty-one Demands which demanded that China agree to all postwar Japanese-German agreements on the disposal of German holdings in the Far East; that Japan be granted a 99-year lease on Port Arthur Dairen; that Japan be allowed to hold territory in Manchuria and Inner Mongolia; that Japanese consent be obtained before China conceded any rights to foreigners to build railroads in China; and, finally, that China accept Japanese political, military, and financial advisers for the whole country. The Chinese were first stunned and then furious. Yuan Shih-k'ai, in the face of a Japanese ultimatum, accepted most of the demands but did reject the Japanese political, military, and financial advisers.

China, because of American pressure and in order to gain access to councils concerned with the distribution of German territories, declared war on Germany in August 1917 and supplied labor battalions in France. But these steps were futile, as Japan had insured favorable consideration of its claims by extracting secret agreements from France and Great Britian that they would support Japan's claims to the German leasehold in Shantung Province. When, in May 1919, the Chinese learned of

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the Japanese triumph at Versailles, the popular uproar was spontaneous and loud. University students in Peking paraded through the streets, burned down the house of one of the government leaders, and clashed violently with the police. The uproar spread to other cities and resulted in a nationwide boycott of Japanese goods. This May Fourth Movement, as it is called, was a manifestation of Chinese nationalism, a vivid demonstration that the Chinese did care about the alienation of Chinese territory. They had found an enemy and were united in the opposition. The Chinese, militarily impotent, might not be able to stop the foreigner from chopping off slices of their territory, but they were united in their anger at such treatment.

2. Origin and Early Development of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP).—Although Chinese intellectuals in the latter part of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries had been influenced by many Western ideas, Marxism was not one of them.[1] But the Bolshevik triumph in late 1917 jolted some of the intellectuals, for here was something new from the West: a Western movement that was anti-Western and was being worked out in Russia, a huge and backward country with some resemblance to China itself. Furthermore, Lenin's theory of organization, democratic centralism, appealed to some Chinese intellectuals. They liked the idea of a highly organized vanguard, the Party, made up of an intellectual elite possessing the key to the truth and governing by virtue of its knowledge. The concept fitted in well with the traditional Chinese system of an intellectual aristocracy, the scholar-gentry class, which held its position by virtue of its learning and was entrusted with the administration of the state.

Even more persuasive, however, was Lenin's theory of imperialism as expressed in his book, *Imperialism, the Highest and Last Stage of Capitalism,* in which he advanced the thesis that the capitalist nations owed their wealth and power mainly to their exploitation of the colonial and semicolonial regions of the globe. The humiliation that China had suffered at the hands of the Western powers and Japan could now be explained as part of the inevitable process of history. History, however, was now about to come to China's rescue, according to this theory, since imperialism, the hallmark of the fading capitalist system, was doomed to destruction. Therefore, the Chinese, instead of experiencing shame before Western "superiority" as manifested in their exploitation over the last century, should feel only hate for the imperialist exploiters and work assiduously at helping the historical process in its inevitable outcome.

The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) had its beginnings in the activities of a number of teachers and students in Peking University in the 1918-1919 period. Ch'en Tu-hsiu and Li Ta-chao, teachers at the university, founded the Society for the Study of Marxism in the spring of 1918, and among the student members was one Mao Tse-tung, a library assistant. The May Fourth Movement in 1919 gave the embryonic movement a leg up, and in early 1920 Voitinsky, a Comintern[2] representative, worked with Li Ta-chao and Ch'en Tu-hsiu to create a genuine Soviet-type Communist Party in place of the vague, debating-type society then in existence. In 1921, another emissary from Moscow, Maring,[3] helped prepare for the First Congress of the CCP which was convened in Shanghai in July 1921. The records of the First Congress are no longer extant, and just what took place is hard to ascertain; but it is known that Ch'en Tu-hsiu was elected Chairman of the Central Committee and the Congress did mark the official beginning of the CCP as a going concern.

The CCP was in many ways a creature of the Comintern, and Comintern advisers tutored, or rather directed, the infant organization for the next decade. Ch'en Tu-hsiu and his Chinese colleagues in the Central Committee were literally forced to follow the policies worked out at the Comintern headquarters in Moscow.

3. The Kuomintang.—The Soviets, moreover, were playing a number of angles in China. They sent one official representative after another to Peking in an attempt to establish correct relations with what passed for the "legal government" of China in the early 1920's. But Soviet activities in Outer Mongolia, namely, the establishment of a Communist regime in Urga (now Ulan Bator) and the Soviets' reluctance to give up Russian influence in the operation of the Chinese Eastern Railroad in Manchuria, resulted in strained relations between Moscow and Peking. As a result, the Soviets looked for insurance in the South and made overtures to Sun Yat-sen and his Kuomintang.

Lenin, at the Second Congress of the Comintern in 1920, advanced the thesis that in the struggle with the imperialists in the colonial and semicolonial regions of the world it would be advisable

[1]Benjamin I. Schwartz, *Chinese Communism and the Rise of Mao* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1951), pp. 7-8.

[2]The Communist International (Comintern) was established in 1919 in Moscow as the organization to further the spread of Communism throughout the world. It was controlled by the Russians from the very beginning.

[3]His real name was Sneevliet, a Dutchman who helped found the Communist Party of Indonesia and then moved on to work for the Comintern.

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for the newly fledged, weak, indigenous Communist parties to throw their support to the groups fighting for national liberation against their imperialist overlords. In the case of China, the Kuomintang seemed to be the main revolutionary organization in which several classes were united in a struggle to oust the warlords from Peking, to expel the imperialists, and to unify China. The CCP was obviously too small and weak to accomplish these basic tasks by itself; and as early as the Second Congress of the CCP, in August 1922, the Comintern instructed the Chinese comrades to cooperate with, and even to join, the Kuomintang.

Sun Yat-sen, in the midst of one of his periodic quarrels with the warlord of Kwangtung Province, was in Shanghai during the second half of 1922, and, with his fortunes at such a low ebb, he was receptive to the blandishments of Adolph Joffe, the Soviet envoy to Peking, who went south to see Sun in December. In January 1923, Sun and Joffe issued a joint declaration in which they agreed that conditions in China were not yet suitable for the Soviet-type of government and that the main goal should be the national unification of China. The two conferees never got around to spelling out a Chinese attitude on the Soviet position in Outer Mongolia and Manchuria. In short, Sun found nothing to prevent the Kuomintang from getting along nicely with the Soviet Union and the CCP.

Of course, the Comintern had no intention of allowing the Chinese Communists to lose their identity when they joined the Kuomintang. As Lin Jen-ch'ing put it at the Fourth Congress of the Comintern in 1922, the main reason for joining the Kuomintang was the necessity of using the petty bourgeoisie in accomplishing the democratic revolution and then the Communists could gather the masses around them and split the Kuomintang.

Sun's infatuation with the Soviet Union caused him to send his favorite, Chiang Kai-shek, to the USSR in August 1923, where he spent three months studying the Soviet political and military structures and becoming disillusioned in the process. At the same time, Michael Borodin arrived in China to help Sun reorganize the Kuomintang. The party was streamlined along the same democratic-centralist format as the Communist Party of the Soviet Union: the hierarchy of lower units pyramiding upward to the annual Congress, which was the final authority, and a Central Executive Committee to direct affairs between sessions of the Congress. Once the party line was established at the top, it was to be obeyed unquestioningly by the lower echelons. Of course, this meant that the few leaders at the top had control of the party. The reorganized Kuomintang held its First Congress in January 1924 and agreed upon a "united front" with the CCP with the provision that individual Communists could join the Kuomintang and still retain their membership in the CCP. Their allegiance to the Kuomintang, however, was to take precedence over that to the CCP—a somewhat naive assumption on the part of the Kuomintang leadership.

4. The Uneasy Alliance (1924-1927).—In early 1924, it was decided to establish a military academy at Whampoa, near Canton, to train an officer corps for an expanded Kuomintang army. Borodin and an outstanding Soviet officer, Vasily Blyukher, who used the *nom de guerre* of Galen while in China, were prime movers in this venture. Chiang Kai-shek, recently returned from the USSR, was to be the commandant of the new academy, but in February, while the academy was still in the planning stage, Chiang became so irritated at the attempts of the Soviet advisers to dominate that he resigned and went off to sulk in his native province of Chekiang. He was persuaded to return when the Soviets promised to behave more modestly, and in May 1924, the Whampoa Military Academy became a going concern. At the opening, Dr. Sun pointed out that up until then the Kuomintang had struggled only as a party, and the lack of a revolutionary army had allowed the republic to fall into the hands of militarists and bureaucrats. The new academy's purpose was to create a new revolutionary army.

The first class consisted of 499 cadets selected from 3,000 applicants.[4] Since the main objective was to train as many junior officers as possible in as short a time as possible, the course was for six months, extended to a year with the fourth class. Chiang was an ideal commandant. He instilled discipline, devotion to the goals of the Kuomintang, and an esprit de corps that lasted for a lifetime in many cases.

The faculty was made up mainly of Chinese officers but assisted by about thirty Soviet advisers, headed by Galen. The Chinese officers were mostly graduates of the Japanese military academy of Shikan Gakko, as was Chiang himself, or of the Chinese military schools at Paoting and Yunnan. Even the latter two were very Japanese in spirit. In October 1924, a Soviet vessel delivered 8,000 rifles with 500 rounds for each. This put the school in business, as it had been almost without rifles before the Soviet contribution. Later the Soviets sent more rifles, machine guns, and some artillery.

By November 1924, two regiments, officered by Whampoa graduates and totaling 3,000 officers and

[4]This account of the creation and development of the Whampoa Academy is largely based on F. F. Liu, *A Military History of Modern China, 1924-1949* (Princeton, N. J.: Princeton University Press, 1956), pp. 8-24.

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men, were created; by July 1925, this force had increased into a division, and six months later, it became the most powerful army corps in the Kuomintang military establishment. In June 1925, the National Government of China was set up in Canton, and the province of Kwangtung came under Kuomintang control. Using the Whampoa-led group as a nucleus, the new government was able to forge a national revolutionary army from scattered elements in the adjoining provinces. Apparently, the goal of a unified China under Kuomintang leadership appealed to military units leading an aimless life under petty local warlords. Furthermore, the shooting of Chinese demonstrators by the British in Shanghai on 30 May 1925 and the slaughter of 50 Chinese by British machine gunners in Canton on 23 June 1925 raised antiforeignism to a fever pitch in South China. The Kuomintang was a rallying point for those imbued with a desire to get the foreigner out of China and at least partially accounts for the rush to enlist in the Kuomintang armies in 1925 and 1926.

The Whampoa-trained officers were a new breed in China—they were not only trained in military skills, but they were also well indoctrinated in the principles and objectives of the Kuomintang. Chou En-lai, now Premier of the Chinese People's Republic, was one of those in charge of political work at Whampoa. The system was extended to the armed forces as a whole, more or less analagous to the commissar apparatus in the Red Army of the Soviet Union. The Chinese had one "political" soldier to every 100 fighting men. As heterogeneous units were gathered in from Hunan, Yunnan, Kwangsi, Chekiang, and other neighboring regions, the political commissars were turned loose on them in order to weld them into enthusiastic nationalists. Of course, just as in the Red Army, there was a good deal of friction between the political officers and the regular officers, especially when the political officer was a Communist.

The Kuomintang began to split into one wing, the Left Kuomintang, which desired to work closely with the Communists, and a Right Wing that objected to the rising influence of the Comintern-directed CCP. Things got so bad by 1925 that Borodin received the nickname of "Emperor of Canton." Chiang Kai-shek even took steps to see to it that Communist influence in his pet First Army Corps was kept at a minimum. On 20 March 1926, Chiang, as military commander of Canton, arrested a number of commissars, including some of the Soviet advisers at Whampoa, disarmed the semi-military Workers's Guard, which was Communist controlled, and asserted the superiority of the Kuomintang in decision making.[5] Borodin and Galen were away from Canton at the time of the coup, and when they returned there was little they could do but accept the fait accompli, especially in light of the fact that Stalin was adamant in his pro-Kuomintang position. The battle lines were drawn, however, for Chiang had publicly proclaimed his opposition to Communist influence on the executive levels of the Kuomintang. Although Chiang and Borodin patched things up on the surface, the former kept pushing for the removal of Soviet advisers from the upper echelons of the Kuomintang.

While Borodin and the Soviet advisers were temporarily a little bewildered, Chiang pushed hard on his demand for a northern expedition to overthrow the warlord-backed regime in Peking and to unify the nation. The top Soviet advisers on the scene, Borodin and Kisanka, a pseudonym for Andrei S. Bubnov,[6] were against Chiang's plan. Moscow, however, was finally convinced that there was no way of talking Chiang out of the campaign and gave its reluctant approval. In June 1926, Chiang was appointed commander in chief of the military forces of the National Government in Canton, and preparations were begun for the Northern Expedition.

5. The Northern Expedition and the Kuomintang-CCP Split.—China, on the eve of the Northern Expedition, was a badly divided country. In October 1924, as a result of an alliance between Feng Yu-hsiang (the Christian General) and Chang Tso-lin (the warlord of Manchuria), Wu Pei-fu was driven from Peking—the so-called Chihli-Mukden War of September-October 1924. But neither Feng nor Chang trusted each other, nor was either capable of ruling Peking alone. Thus in 1925, as Jerome Ch'en describes it,

> . . . the country was virtually divided into five parts under the rule of five power groups: General Chang Tso-lin controlled Manchuria, parts of Chihli, and Shantung; General Feng Yu-hsiang, parts of Chihli and the northwest; General Wu Pei-fu, central China; General Sun Ch'uan-fang, the east and south-east of China; and the KMT (Kuomintang), the south of China. Never before had a lack of unity among the warlords become so conspicuous . . .[7]

The four warlords *together,* however, controlled

[5]According to Chiang, the Communists had coaled-up a naval vessel, the *Chungshan,* intended to kidnap him and ship him to Russia via Vladivostok. With Chiang out of the way, they were then going to take over in Canton by means of their control of the Canton-Hongkong Strike Committee and their influence with Wang Ching-wei, leader of the Left Kuomintang. See Chiang Kai-shek, *Soviet Russia in China: A Summing Up at Seventy* (New York: Farrar, Straus, and Cudahy, 1958), pp. 42-45.

[6]Bubnov was head of the Soviet Red Army Political Administration and a member of the CPSU Central Committee; sent to China in 1926 as senior military adviser to the Kuomintang.

[7]Jerome Ch'en, *Mao and the Chinese Revolution* (London: Oxford University Press, 1965), p. 99.

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well over a half million soldiers,[8] better than five times the force available to the Kuomintang in the south. But the key word in the assessment is *together*—the quartet of super-*tuchuns* were constitutionally incapable of a really synchronized effort, thus derogating their combined military superiority considerably.

In addition to the distrust and mutual suspicions that characterized the relations between the warlords, there was also the fact that they were unable to count on much, if any, popular support. The wave of nationalism that had begun to build up in May 1919 was increasing prodigiously in the early 1920s, and the old warlords of the Chang Tso-lin and Wu Pei-fu stripe were widely regarded as hindrances to the national unification of China. They had been too closely allied with the politicians in Peking who had acted as practically foreign agents for the Japanese.

The National Revolutionary Army, put together in Kwangtung Province by the combined efforts of the Kuomintang and the Chinese Communists, had grown from three army corps in July 1925 to six by the end of the year, probably around 85,000 troops.[9] In early 1926, the Kwangsi armies commanded by Li Tsung-jen, Pai Chung-hsi, and Huang-Shao-hsung came over to the Nationalist side and were converted into the crack Seventh Army Corps. By July 1926, the National Revolutionary Army had eight army corps, about 100,000 men, many of whom were excellent soldiers.

Besides a rather respectable military prowess, moreover, the National Revolutionary Army had high morale, largely because of the emulation of the Soviet type of political indoctrination at all echelons. Political commissars were well trained, adept at instilling a new sense of nationalism in the soldiers and thus eliciting a patriotism that was altogether lacking in the warlord armies of Wu Pei-fu, Chang Tso-lin and Sun Ch'uan-fang. Furthermore, the political officers worked closely with the Communist and Kuomintang agents sent ahead of the armies to win over the populations in the prospective areas of combat. Thus the warlords found themselves operating in a hostile environment during the course of the conflict with the Nationalists.

Chiang Kai-shek was made commander in chief of the National Revolutionary Army and was given virtually dictatorial powers: military, political, and financial. He was responsible solely to the National Government and the Central Executive Committee of the Kuomintang. Needless to say, the Communists were very unhappy about this concentration of power in Chiang's hands, but since he had shown his teeth in the 20 March coup in Canton, the Communists were forced to go along—they were too weak to force a showdown with Chiang at this point.

The overall strategy of the Northern Expedition was relatively simple at the outset: The main body, spearheaded by Li Tsung-jen's Seventh Corps and Chang Fa-kuei's Fourth Corps, was to head directly north through Hunan province, capture Wuhan,[10] and then proceed through Hupeh province to link up with Feng Yu-hsiang's army, thought to be friendly to the Communists; another force, with part of Chiang Kai-shek's own First Corps as its backbone, was to smash through Fukien and Chekiang provinces with the capture of Shanghai and Nanking as its main objective. The drive on Wuhan was aimed at pushing Wu Pei-fu north of the Yangtze, while the First Corps was smashing into Sun Ch'uan-fang's territory (the Kiangsu, Anhwei, Chekiang, Fukien, and Kiangsi provinces); if all went well, the Nationalists, anchored at Wuhan and Shanghai, could then clear out all hostile forces south of the Yangtze.

The role of General Galen (Blyukher) and his Russian contingent of advisers in this strategy is a much debated one. The usual assumption is that it was a very important one, that the Soviets had a good deal to do with the planning of the strategy and tactics involved. But F. F. Liu[11] dismisses the Soviet advisers as a minor asset in the overall campaign. The Chinese generals, according to him, had assimilated the Soviet training and in 1926 used it in the formulation of their strategy. The military accomplishments were their own, not those of the Soviets. Galen did sit in on the formulation of operational plans and did constructively criticize them, but his chief role was in straightening out the confused mess so typical of Chinese logistics.

The campaign was launched on 9 July 1926, and a week later (17 July) Changsha, capital of Hunan province, fell to Chiang's forces. In the process, a large number of Hunanese troops came over to the Nationalists and were organized into an Eighth Corps. In August, Li Tsung-jen and Chang Fa-kuei

[8]O. Edmund Clubb, *Twentieth Century China* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1964), p. 133; Liu, *op. cit.*, p. 31, gives almost a million soldiers as controlled by *all* the warlords. Chiang, in his *Soviet Russia in China*, pp. 45-46, credits Wu Pei-fu with 250,000 men, Sun Ch'uan-fang with 200,000, and Chang Tso-lin with 500,000 men. He says that the northern warlords had him out-numbered by ten to one.

[9]Liu, *op. cit.*, p. 25.

[10]Wuhan is the name now given to two cities. Hankow and Hanyang, that lie on both sides the Han River where it enters the Yangtze, and a third city, Wuchang, located on the south bank of the Yangtze, opposite the mouth of the Han River. The three cities together make up one of the greatest urban concentrations in China, the Wuhan complex.

[11]Liu, *op. cit.*, pp. 33-34; for a contrary view, see Edgar O'Ballance, *The Red Army of China* (London: Faber and Faber, 1962), pp. 27-30. O'Ballance, however, is not a very reliable source.

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smashed Wu Pei-fu's armies south of the Yangtze, and the way was open to Wuhan. By early September, Hankow and Hanyang, arsenal and all, had been delivered to Chiang's forces by rebels within the cities. But Wuchang was a stickier problem, and a long siege ensued.

While Wuchang was under siege, Sun Ch'uan-fang was moving up the Yangtze, threatening the rear of the forces at Wuhan. Chiang Kai-shek decided to march in the direction of Nanchang, capital of Kiangsi province; link up with Li Tsung-jen's Seventh Corps, moving to his north; and smash Sun. The Communists and the Left Kuomintang group in Hankow protested—they were still aiming at linking up with Feng Yu-hsiang to the north and did not like this diversion. Galen, however, was enough of a military man to see the logic of Chiang's strategy.

Chiang's strategy was undoubtedly the better, but he had other than purely military reasons for insisting upon it. The Communists and the Left Kuomintang were in control of Hankow and Hanyang; they were carrying the social revolution far beyond a point which Chiang thought reasonable, and he felt the need of a base of his own to oppose their course of action. The capture of the arsenals in Nanking and Shanghai would provide this base. On the other hand, the Comintern-controlled Wuhan group did not like the idea of Chiang's building up a secure military base of his own. It was obvious that the uneasy alliance of the CCP and Kuomintang was coming apart at the seams. The Communists even went so far as to try to win over Li Tsung-jen to their side, but he stuck with Chiang.[12]

Chiang had a tough time with Sun's forces near Nanchang, but Li Tsung-jen's Seventh Corps broke through and enabled Chiang to take the city on 5 November. At this point, Chiang wanted to move the seat of government from Canton to Nanchang, but the Comintern-controlled group insisted on establishing it in Hankow, which was done in early December 1926. Chiang, in Nanchang, threw down the gauntlet: "Whoever goes against the aims and methods indicated by Sun Wen [Sun Yat-sen] will not be a comrade but an enemy who must remain among us."[13]

The situation in Shanghai in early 1927 was very confused indeed. The leftist element, relying on the labor unions and led by the Comintern agent Voitinsky, exhilerated by the misfortunes of Sun Ch'uan-fang and anticipating the arrival of Chiang's forces, which, on 17 February, had taken Hangchow, fifty miles south of Shanghai, rose in revolt on 21 February. But the uprising was premature; Chiang's troops stayed put in Hangchow; and the workers were slaughtered ruthlessly. In the meanwhile, Sun Ch'uan-fang turned in desperation to Chang Tsung-ch'ang, the rapacious *tuchun* of Shantung province, and the latter moved into Shanghai in early March. Chiang began to close in on Shanghai from the south and the west, and by 20 March his advance guard was in Lungha on the outskirts of the city. Chang Tsung-ch'ang's troops were demoralized, and on 21 March a new insurrection took place within the city. This time it was successful, and when the first Nationalist troops entered the city, the battle was over. Chiang Kai-shek got there on 26 March.

At the end of March 1927, the Wuhan group tried to clip Chiang's wings by putting all political and military power under committee control; the Communists felt that it would be easier to manipulate committees than Chiang. They also took away Chiang's authority to appoint personnel. Inasmuch as there were many generals from the other side deserting to Chiang, and many of them were old classmates from the Paoting Military Academy, Chiang was able to encourage this tendency by appointing them to fairly responsible positions. The Communists, however, felt that Chiang was building up an antileftist cadre of command personnel. Chiang refused to admit the legality of the actions taken in Wuhan, and on 7 April 1927 he held a secret meeting in Shanghai with Li Tsung-jen, Li Chi-shen, and other top generals, and the decision was made to purge the Communists from the armed forces. Five days later, on 12 April, Chiang struck, and the Communists and leftists in Shanghai were slaughtered without mercy.[14] This policy was extended to Kwangsi and Kwangtung shortly thereafter. There could no longer be any doubt about Chiang Kai-shek's position on the CCP Kuomintang collaboration.

Chiang's action put both the Wuhan group and their master in the Kremlin on the spot. Stalin's policy had been firmly tied to Chinese Communist cooperation with the Kuomintang in general and with Chiang Kai-shek in particular. To make matters worse, Stalin's main opponent in the USSR, Trotsky, had pointed out the asininity of such a policy. The Stalinist contention that the Communists could use the Kuomintang as long as they needed it and then discard it like a squeezed lemon struck Trotsky as the height of political

[12]Ironically, almost forty years later, in July 1965, Li Tsung-jen returned to China from his exile in the United States and announced his support of the Peking regime of Mao Tse-tung. *London Times*, 21 July 1965.

[13]Quoted in Harold R. Isacs, *The Tragedy of the Chinese Revolution* (2d rev. ed.; Stanford, Calif: Stanford University Press, 1961), p. 127.

[14]Chou En-lai, one of the leaders in the leftist take-over of Shanghai, escaped death by a whisker in the 12 April massacre. Isacs, *op. cit.*, p. 176.

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naivete—who was using whom seemed to be a question. Trotsky's strategy was to set up Soviets *a la Russe* in China, divorce the CCP from the bourgeois-dominated Kuomintang, and get on with the revolution. Actually, given the conditions then prevailing in China, Trotsky's program was as uninspired as that of Stalin.

The crux of the situation was the inability of the Chinese Communists to control a sizable military force. They tried to infiltrate the military forces through their control of the political commissars, directed by a brilliant young general named Ten Uen-ta, but when the chips were down in the spring and summer of 1927, most of the military commanders opted for Chiang, while the political commissars came out for the Communists. Stalin seems to have sensed this lack of military power as the prime defect in the Communist program, but his attempt to rectify this lacuna only augmented the disaster.

In Wuhan, the Chinese Communists, their Soviet advisers, now including M. N. Roy, an Indian member of the Comintern sent to Hankow by Stalin to keep track of Borodin, and the Left Kuomintang led by Wang Ching-wei, Chaing Kai-shek's chief rival for Dr. Sun's mantle, were all at their wits' end as to how to oust Chiang and bring the Kuomintang as a whole under their control. Roy appealed directly to Stalin, and on 1 June 1927, he received a telegram that reflected Moscow's version of a situation that just did not exist in China. In the telegram, Stalin advocated the following steps: more energetic efforts in pushing the agrarian revolution, which was already alarming even the Left Kuomintang; the replacement of some of the old Kuomintang leaders with young leaders from the peasant and working classes; the liquidation of dependence upon unreliable generals; the mobilization of about 20,000 Communists and about 50,000 revolutionary workers from Hunan and Hupeh to form several new army corps; and, finally, the organization of a revolutionary tribunal headed by prominent non-Communist members of the Kuomintang to punish officers maintaining contacts with Chiang Kai-shek.[15] As Borodin put it, the instructions were "ludicrous," given the situation then in existence, and the best thing to do was hide them. Several days later, however, Roy showed the telegram to Wang Ching-wei, the chief Kuomintang leader in Wuhan, and the latter realized immediately that the CCP-Kuomintang alliance was no longer feasible. To comply with Stalin's demands would be tantamount to making a puppet party out of the Kuomintang. Borodin, who wanted to restrain the agrarian revolution and cooperate fully with Wang Ching-wei, had been overridden by Stalin, and the cause in China was at least temporarily lost.

The only hope of the Chinese Communists, the Left Kuomintang, and the Soviet advisers at that point was to mount what they termed "the Second Northern Expedition"—to conquer North China before Chiang Kai-shek and thus to restore their lost prestige. Any such attempt, however, was dependent upon the support of Feng Yu-hsiang and his Soviet-armed *Kuominchun* (People's Army). Feng had "vacationed" in Outer Mongolia and the USSR during the first six months of 1926, and on his return to China he began to rejuvenate his *Kuominchun*, located in Northwest China, along pro-Soviet lines. When the Northern Expedition got under way, Feng opted for the Kuomintang, then allied with the Communists, and he received funds and materiel from the Kuomintang government.[16] Thus the Wuhan group felt confident of Feng's support in their deteriorating relations with Chiang Kai-shek. Furthermore, their own military forces plus Feng's *Kuominchun* made a drive on Peking feasible. On the other hand, by June 1927, Feng had driven across the main east-west railway line, holding it from Sian to Kaifeng, thereby blocking any northward advance from Wuhan without his cooperation. He had accomplished this while the Wuhan-directed forces were suffering severe losses in a push against the Northern warlords, weakening themselves badly in the process.

In early June, the Wuhan leaders met with Feng to make sure that he was on their side and to coordinate strategies with him. He managed, as was his wont, to convince them that he was their man, and they returned to Wuhan confident of his support. But Feng had only one cardinal principle, namely, to come up with the deal best for Feng. In the middle of June, he met with Chiang Kai-shek, who came up with better terms and more persuasive arguments. Feng then sent a telegram to Wang Ching-wei in which he urged Wang to rid the Wuhan government of radical elements, make peace with the Nanking government, and send Borodin and his Soviet crew packing.[17]

The ultimatum was a terrible shock to the Soviets; it also deprived the Left Kuomintang of any bargaining power in seeking a deal with the Nanking group. They had no alternative except to comply with Nanking's terms on the unification of the Kuomintang. As for the Soviet advisers, with

[15]A translation of Stalin's telegram to Roy is to be found in Robert C. North and Xenia J. Eudin, *M. N. Roy's Mission to China: The Communist-Kuomintang Split of 1927* Berkeley, Calif: University of California Press, 1963), pp. 106-107.

[16]James E. Sheridan, *Chinese Warlord: The Career of Feng Yu-hsiang* (Stanford, Calif: Stanford University Press, 1966), p. 216.

[17]*Ibid.*, p. 228.

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their last hope blasted, they packed up and left Hankow for the Soviet Union, Borodin on 27 July and Roy in early August. The Stalinist-Comintern intervention in the Chinese revolution was an absolute failure, and the Chinese Communist Party itself was in a shambles.

In Nanking on 18 April 1927, Chiang Kai-shek had created a new National Government, a government based on the moderate and right wings of the Kuomintang as well as the support of the foreign and Chinese business interests in Shanghai. Thus when the Wuhan group disintegrated, the Nanking government was the only nucleus around which the dissident Kuomintang members could rally. But even in Nanking there was so much bickering that Chiang found it expedient to step down in August 1927, probably fully aware that he would be recalled eventually on his own terms; he then went off to Japan. This at least made it easier for the time being for the Left Kuomintang leaders to participate in the Nanking government.

The new regime attempted to run the armed forces through a national military council of forty-six members, topped by a triumvirate of the Kuomintang's outstanding generals: Li Tsung-jen, Ho Ying-chin, and Pai Chung-hsi. In August, Sun Ch'uan-fang struck at Nanking with a 70,000-man army. The triumvirate were able to defeat him in the five-day battle at Lung-tan, but the casualties on the Nationalist side were heavy.

While confusion reigned at Nanking and Wuhan, the northern warlords, subordinating their commands to the overall direction of Chang Tso-lin, the Manchurian *tuchun* then in control of Peking, came up with a force of some 400,000 men, a definite threat to the fledgling government in Peking. Committees, triumvirates, and a tendency to keep authority fragmented were just not good enough to meet the threat gathering in the north. In early January 1928, Chiang Kai-shek was asked to take the helm again, and he did so on his own terms. He was made commander in chief of the armed forces, chairman of the national military council, and given a free hand to complete the Northern Expedition; i.e., to conquer Peking and destroy the northern warlords.

Chiang, ably assisted by such generals as Li Tsung-jen, Pai Chung-hsi, and Feng Yu-hsiang, struck Chang Tso-lin's forces along an 800-mile front and pushed rapidly in toward Peking from four directions. Chang Tso-lin's troops began to desert in droves, and on 4 June 1928 Peking fell to the Nationalists. Chang Tso-lin, a Japanese protegé, fled to Manchuria for protection, but the Japanese, finding his usefulness at an end, blew up his train near Mukden, hoping to manipulate his son and heir, Chang Hseuh-liang, the Young Marshal, more adeptly than they had the father.

Immediately after victory, the new government renamed Peking (which means "northern capital"), calling it Peip'ing ("northern peace") and transferred the capital to Nanking ("southern capital"). Following the Sun Yat-sen line that after the military unification there had to be a period of "political tutelage" before constitutional democracy could be attained, a one-party (Kuomintang) government was established. On 10 October 1928, the Central Executive Committee of the Kuomintang issued an Organic Law providing for a Council of State headed by a president, who was also the military chief. Chiang Kai-shek, of course, got the double-hat job, thus becoming undisputed boss of the new state.

Inasmuch as the victories over both the Communists and the northern warlords had been made possible by the military element of the Kuomintang, it is not surprising that the same group dominated the party after coming to power. During the 1924-1927 period, only the well-disciplined Whampoa clique of officers, devoted to Chiang Kai-shek, was capable of standing up to the "democratic-centralism" of the Communist Party which tried to steal the revolution. When the showdown came, Chiang Kai-shek had both organization (the officer corps) and military power, while the Communists had only organization. Military force won.

The *Wham-poa-ching-shen* (Whampoa spirit)was also the key factor in Chiang's victory over the northern warlords. The Whampoa-trained officers in the Kuomintang armies had an *espirit de corps* entirely lacking in the armies of Wu Pei-fu, Sun Ch'uan-fang, and Chang Tso-lin.

It is not surprising, therefore, that once in power, Chiang rewarded his Whampoa comrades with appointments to all the higher commands in the armed forces and also to administrative jobs in the government, including governorships. In other words, the military element of the Kuomintang had won the victory, and it got the lion's share of the spoils. Furthermore, Chiang felt that he could trust these men, which is more than could be said for his attitude toward many of the better-qualified civilians available.

With the capture of Peking and the destruction of the bulk of the military forces of the northern warlords, China was *nominally* unified for the first time since the death of Yuan Shih-k'ai. There were, however, several forces at work threatening the control of the new government. First, the Japanese had no intention of putting up with a strong, unified China. Second, there were still many warlords, especially in the remoter regions, who paid only lip service to the regime in Nanking. Finally, although the Communists had fallen upon evil days in the last

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half of 1927 and in 1928, they were still a force to be reckoned with.

Even during the advance on Peking, the Kuomintang forces had clashed with the Japanese in Shantung province. Chiang, however, had evaded any open test of arms, feeling that the successful completion of the Northern Expedition was more important. In Manchuria, the Japanese were busily engaged in digging in by controlling the local warlord and through economic domination of the region. Their assassination of Chang Tso-lin in order to manipulate his son, Chang Hsueh-liang, backfired when the Young Marshal decided to throw in his lot with Chiang Kai-shek in November 1928. However, as events were to demonstrate in the next few years, this only irritated the Japanese into a complete takeover of Manchuria.

One historian[18] estimates that in the 1930s, during the prime of the Nationalist regime, the government had actual control over no more than one-third of the nation. The other two-thirds was controlled by the Japanese, the Communists, and the local *tuchans*. The latter were given a semblance of legality by being named governors of various areas, namely those they were in control of anyway. Yen Hsi-shan, the "model governor" of Shansi since 1912, was a good example of the autonomous warlord paying nominal obeisance to the central government. Feng Yu-hsiang, the so-called Christian General, was as difficult for the Nanking government to control as he had been for Wu Pei-fu or the Communists. In other words, the writ of the Nanking government ran only as far as it had military control.

Taking advantage of the confusion created by the warlords and the Japanese, and aided by the logistical difficulties inherent in the geography of China, the Communists were able to set up Soviets in a number of rural areas, with which the next chapter will deal.

[18]Dun J. Li, *The Ageless Chinese: A History* (New York: Charles Scribner, 1965), p. 471.

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CHAPTER III

The First Decade of the Chinese Red Army, 1927-1936

THE Chinese Red Army, called the PLA (Peoples Liberation Army) today, celebrates its birthday on 1 August, the anniversary of the Nanchange Uprising which took place on that date in 1927. The contemporary observer has to make a mental effort, in the light of the multimillion-man PLA of today, to remember just what a ragtag, bobtail outfit this army was in the beginning. The disastrous ending of the Nanchang Uprising, the ephemeral nature of the occupation of Swatow, and the calamitous outcome of the Canton Commune made the last five months of 1927 seem more like the end of any viable Communist military force in China rather than a humble beginning. And only a prophet of supernatural genius could have predicted the brilliant future that lay in store for Chu Teh's bedraggled followers that merged with the ragged bunch of peasants that Mao Tse-tung led to the Chingkanshan region after the catastrophic denouement of the Autumn Crop Uprising in the fall of 1927. Even the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party itself was in a state of utter confusion, leaving the small Communist military units scattered about the country to their own devices.

The Comintern line, drawn up in Moscow, did little to help the struggling Soviets with their embryonic armies in the Hunan-Kiangsi area in the 1928-1931 period. On the contrary, it directed the CCP to foster the hegemony of the proletariat in the revolutionary movement and not the leadership of the peasants, who, nevertheless, made up the backbone of the only effective Communist military force in China during the period. Furthermore, Li Li-san, the leading figure in the CCP between 1928 and 1931, needed little urging from Moscow as his own penchant was toward urban uprisings and opposed to the buildup of a peasant-dominated Red Army based on the rural Soviets. Li did finally turn to the Red Army in the middle of 1930, but only to urge that it attack the cities on the theory that this would trigger off spontaneous proletarian explosions within the cities. But the first attempt, the capture in July 1930 of Changsha, capital of Hunan, turned into a fiasco, and the Red Army leaders balked at an attack on Wuhan. Li Li-san fell from grace in 1931, and the CCP began to manifest a more benevolent attitude toward the rural Soviets and the development of the Red Army in a rural environment.

Chiang Kai-shek, aware of the growing military strength of the Communists in the Soviet areas, especially in Hunan and Kiangsi, was unable to devote all his energies to the extirpation of the movement. In 1930, he had overcome the northern coalition of Feng Yu-hsiang, the so-called Christian General, and Yen Hsi-shan, the Model Governor of Shansi. In 1931, the uproar over the Japanese seizure of Manchuria again diverted Chiang's attention. Thus it was not until the middle 1930s that he was able to devote his full attention to the extermination of the Communist Soviets, and by late 1934 he was able to force the Red Army into its Long March. The Red Army, however, survived the traumatic experience of its year-long trek over some 6,000 miles from its southern bases to a new home in the northwest. It was again in business by 1936, and again the Japanese pressures on China were to force Chiang to let up in his efforts to rid China of the Communist threat.

1. The Origins of the Chinese Red Army.—After the fiasco of the CCP-Kuomintang split in June and July 1927, the Communists, now guided by Besso Lominadze, Stalin's man on the scene, decided upon an insurrectionary policy, using those elements within the Kuomintang armies over which they had some control and depending upon the support of the urban proletariat to keep the uprisings going once they had been triggered by the military actions. The first insurrection was to be engineered in Nanchang, capital of Kiangsi province, and the military forces for this coup came largely from Chang Fa-kuei's Second Army Group, the "Ironsides," probably the best fighting men in

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the Kuomintang forces engaged in the Northern Expedition.[1] Chang's Army Group was made up of the 4th, 11th, and 20th armies, about 50,000 men in all. The 20th Army, commanded by the Communist Ho Lung, the 24th Division of the 11th Army, led by Yeh T'ing, and two regiments of the 4th Army, some 25,000 men in all, made up the main forces involved in the so-called Nanchang Uprising on 1 August, an event still celebrated as the birthday of the Red Army.[2] Two men, destined for later fame, participated in the uprising: Chu Teh, commandant of the military Training School in Nanchang, who led his 700 cadets over to the Communist side, and Lin Piao, a 19-year-old colonel in Ho Lung's 20th Army.

The Reds were successful in disarming the Nanchang garrison and in occupying the city. They then created a Revolutionary Committee, including Madam Sun Yat-sen, widow of the famous Dr. Sun, but they received very little popular support. By 5 August, loyal Kuomintang forces were converging on the city, and the Communist forces found it necessary to evacuate Nan-chang and head south for Kwangtung.

The adventures of the various Communist military units after the failure of the Nanchang Uprising make an interesting, but extremely confusing, story. The main Communist force under Ho Lung, Yeh T'ing, and Chu Teh retreated to Kwangtung province, where it took the city of Swatow, a seaport on the South China coast, on 24 September, and again tried to set up a Communist regime. As at Nanchang, however, the attempt was a failure, and the defeated Communists dispersed in several directions. Some fled to the Hailufeng district in Kwangtung, where a Soviet had been created, and this group was soon totally annihilated. Another group, this one under Chu Teh, retreated to southern Hunan where it tried to foster agrarian revolts.

The Comintern, in the meanwhile, was continually urging the Chinese comrades to concentrate on urban uprisings and insisting that the revolutionary spirit among the proletariat was on the upswing. The truth of the matter seems to have been that Stalin needed some kind of a success in China, even if temporary, to offset the Trotsky ridicule of his China policy. In November 1927, the situation in Canton seemed to the Communists to be ideal for an urban insurrection and the establishment of a Soviet regime based on the proletariat. The Left Kuomintang leader, Wang Ching-wei, aided by General Chang Fai-kuei, had taken over the city and set up a Left Kuomintang regime. Heintz Neumann, the Comintern agent in the area, hoping to take advantage of the confusion engendered by the take-over, engineered a Communist coup on 11 December 1927. He was counting on the mass support of the workers in Canton and the help of the peasants in the rural Soviet of Hailufeng—a classic synchronization of proletariat-peasant cooperation on the Soviet model. But the cooperation was never forthcoming. Chang Fai-kuei crushed the so-called Canton Commune in three days. Some 6,000 Communists and alleged Communists were executed—a very costly attempt to save face for Stalin.[3]

While the Communists were going from disaster to disaster in Kwangtun, back in Hunan, in the Changsha area, Mao Tse-tung was attempting a peasant uprising in September 1927. Mao, a native of Hunan, became the CCP's expert on peasant matters in 1926. From August 1926 to May 1927, he worked among the peasants of Hunan and during this period came to see the revolutionary potential of the enormous rural masses of China, but he was unable to sell the idea to the leadership of the CCP and its Comintern advisers.

Nevertheless, in August 1927, he was given the task of directing the so-called Autumn Crop Uprising in Hunan and Kiangsi, with the main target of Changsha, the capital of Hunan. According to Mao Tse-tung's own version, which he told to Edgar Snow in 1936, his overall objectives were as follows:

> I was sent to Changsha to organize the movement which later became known as the Autumn Crop Uprising. My programme there called for the realization of five points: (1) complete severance of the Provincial Party from the Kuomintang, (2) organization of a peasant-worker revolutionary army, (3) confiscation of the property of small and middle, as well as great, landlords, (4) setting up the power of the Communist Party in Hunan, independent of the Kuomintang, and (5) organization of Soviets. The fifth point at that time was opposed by the Comintern, and not until later did it advance it as a slogan.[4]

The movement involved four regiments organized from various deserters, peasants, and miners, a military force that proved to be anything but effective and reliable in the crunch. By late September, the uprising was a catastrophe, Mao himself was captured and barely escaped execution, and there

[1] Robert C. North, *Moscow and Chinese Communists* (2nd ed. Stanford, California; Stanford University Press, 1963), pp. 113-114; Jerome Ch'en, *Mao and the Chinese Revolution* (London: Oxford University Press, 1965), pp. 129-30. Ch'en calls Chang's force the "Second Front Army." Nym Wales, *Inside Red China* (New York: Doubleday, Doran, 1939), pp. 242-44. Miss Wales refers to Chang's "Ironsides" as the "Fourth Route Army." To say that there is confusion among the various accounts of the Nanchang Uprising is a masterpiece of understatement.

[2] Nym Wales, *Inside Red China*, p. 242; Jerome Ch'en, op. cit., p. 129, says that the Communist forces totalled 20,000.

[3] A good account of this "playing" at insurrection can be found in Robert C. North, *Moscow and Chinese Communists*, p. 112-133.

[4] Edgar Snow, *Red Star Over China* (New York: Random House, 1938), p. 149.

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was nothing to do except salvage as much as possible and get out of the Changsha area of Hunan. Mao finally managed to round up the remnants of the four regiments, about a thousand men, organized them into the 1st Regiment of the 1st Division of the First Workers' and Peasants' Revolutionary Army, and then marched them to Chingkanshan, a mountainous area on the Hunan-Kiangsi border, about 75 miles north of Kwangtung province.

The various accounts of this Mao-directed peasant uprising differ considerably in detail, but all agree that it was temporarily a setback for Mao in the Party. He was dismissed from the Politburo of the CCP, in spite of the fact that he had only been carrying out Party orders. It was not until the middle 1930s that Mao came to dominate the CCP. In the meanwhile, he was forced to work out his own strategy and tactics without the support of the CCP leadership and the Comintern.

Chingkanshan, the cradle of the Red Army, was an ideal hideout in which Mao could lick his wounds and prepare for bigger things to come. A mountainous region, some 40 miles in diameter, and nestled in a triangle where the borders of Hunan, Kiangsi, and Kwangtung provinces come together, it had long been a lair for bandits. For a matter of fact, Mao himself admits that the first additions to his tiny army were two bandit leaders whom he converted, and their forces combined with his brought the Red Army's total strength to three regiments.[5] Mao's new domain contained five villages, all under 2,000 in population, which were capable of economic survival.

In May 1928, Chu Teh, accompanied by Ch'en Yi and Lin Piao, arrived in Chingkanshan and joined forces with Mao. Their combined army was organized as the Fourth Peasants' and Workers' Red Army, with three divisions (the 10th, 11th, and 12th), each with two regiments. Only two of the regiments were well equipped and trained: one of these had survived from the Nanchang Uprising, and the other was composed of deserters from the Kuomintang armies in southern Hunan.[6] Chu Teh became the commander of the Fourth Army, and Mao became the political commissar. Chu Teh's listing of the *four* main sources from which the original nucleus of the Fourth Red Army was derived is interesting; survivors of the Nanchang Uprising, remnants of the Autumn Crop Uprising, troops from the Canton Commune fiasco, and a steady trickle of deserters from the Kuomintang armies.[7] Thus the nucleus was not derived from raw peasant recruits, but from professional or semi-professional troops. For example, P'eng Teh-huai, who later became an outstanding Red Army commander and even Minister of National Defense in the Chinese People's Republic until replaced by Lin Piao in 1959, was a former Kuomintang commander who deserted to the Communists in Chingkanshan, bringing a sizable contingent of troops with him.

The Chingkanshan redoubt was attacked more or less continuously by Kuomintang forces during 1928, but the first two campaigns were not synchronized efforts. The attacks came from first one province and then another, thus giving Chu Teh an opportunity to defeat them piecemeal. Finally, in December 1928, a third campaign involving 18 regiments of Kuomintang troops forced Mao and Chu in January 1929 to break out of Chingkanshan with the bulk of their forces, leaving P'eng Teh-huai, with 700 men, to cover their retreat. The Fourth Red Army, according to Jerome Ch'en, "roamed from southern Kiangsi to western Fukien" in the next few months.[8] Mao in his narrative recorded by Snow, puts it somewhat differently, claiming a successful campaign in southern Kiangsi and a rapid increase in the size of the Red Army.[9] P'eng Teh-huai, having covered the retreat from Chingkanshan, joined Mao and Chu at Juichin in the spring of 1929. During 1929 the southern Kiangsi base was expanded and a satellite base in western Fukien established.

The Red Army was growing up during 1929. According to Mao, it was at this time that the First Army Corps was organized with Chu Teh as commander and Mao as commissar. The Corps was made up of the 3rd Army, the 4th Army under Lin Piao, and the 12th Army commanded by Lo P'ing-hui, a former Kuomintang commander. In all, the First Army Corps had ten divisions with a total personnel of around 10,000. In addition, there were some independent local regiments, Red Guards, and partisans.[10] According to Chu Teh, by mid-1930 the First Army Corps had expanded to 20,000 men and a Third Army Corps of 10,000 men was created from P'eng Teh-huai's 5th Army and a newly organized 8th Army. The expansion continued and Chu gives a figure of 50,000 fighters for the Red Army by late 1930.[11]

While the Mao-Chu team was establishing a Communist base in southern Kiangsi in the

[5]Snow, *op. cit.*, p. 152

[6]Nym Wales, *Inside Red China*, p. 246. Chu Teh gave an account of his early years in Chingkanshan, Kiangsi, and Fukien to Miss Wales. Jerome Ch'en, op. cit., p. 140, says that the Fourth Army had only four regiments at this time, although each division was *supposed* to have two regiments. He also says that Chu Teh commanded the 10th division, Mao the 11th, and Ch'en Yi the 12th.

[7]Nym Wales, *Inside Red China*, p. 245

[8]Ch'en, *op. cit.*, p. 150.

[9]Snow, *op. cit.*, p. 154.

[10]*Ibid.*, pp. 158-59.

[11]Nym Wales, *Inside Red China*, pp. 250-51.

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1928-30 period, other Communist guerrilla bases were being created in China. By the beginning of 1930, there were 15 Red bases, located all the way from Shensi in northwest China to Swatow on the southern coast.

A typical example of how these bases were created and developed is that of the Ouyuwan Soviet. Hsu Hsiang-ch'ien, who later became one of Mao's top military commanders, escaped from the debacle in the Hailufeng area in the spring of 1928 and eventually made his way to the Hupei-Honan-Anhwei border region by June 1929. Starting out with only 200 rifles, Hsu and his comrades expanded their base until, by December 1930, they controlled over a million people and had built up an army of 6,000 men. This was designated the 1st Red Army. The base was called the "Ouyuwan Soviet," a name derived from the ancient names of the three provinces of Hupei (Ou), Honan (Yu), and Anhwei (Wan). In December 1932, Hsu Hsiang-ch'ien, at the head of a newly created Fourth Front Red Army, entrusted the defense of the Ouyuwan Soviet to Hsu Hai-tung and his 25th Red Army, and moved into the Szechuan province where he created a new "Szechuan-Shensi Soviet." In the next couple of years, the new Fourth Front Red Army was expanded to 60,000 men.[12]

Other example of the mushrooming of Soviets can be seen in the creation of the western Hupei-Hunan base with its 2nd Red Army under Ho Lung or the Fukien-Chekiang-Anhwei base, the home of the 10th Red Army.

According to Mao Tse-tung, by 1934, the Central Soviet Government controlled some nine million people in South and Central China. The Kiangsi Soviet had a population of three million; there were about one million in each of the Soviets of Hunan-Kiangsi-Hupei, Kiangsi-Hunan, Chekiang-Fukien, and Hunan-Hupei; and there were two million in the Ouyuwan Soviet. In addition, the Szechuan-Shensi Soviet had one million people, and the Shensi-Kansu Soviet two million people.[13] A map of China showing the Soviets in the 1930s looks as though it were a case of measles.

2. The Comintern-CCP Line and Mao Tse-tung.—Between the autumn of 1927 and at least until late 1932, a period during which the rural Soviets were burgeoning and the Red Army was expanding in the countryside, the top leaders of the Chinese Communist Party and their Comintern mentors were anything but enthusiastic about this peasant-oriented line of development or, to use the jargon of the period, the deepening of the agrarian revolution. As a result, there was a dual process going on in the Chinese Communist movement during the period: A succession of CCP leaders, who obediently followed the strategy and tactics evolved in Moscow, went from failure to failure; on the other hand, the rural Soviets and the Red Army, based on them, grew in strength throughout the period. It eventually became obvious to even the Stalin-directed Comintern that the real strength of the Communist movement in China lay in the rural Soviets and that Mao's peasant-oriented strategy was the only one with any chance of success.

The Comintern-CCP line between August 1927 and November 1932 was based on the assumption that there was "a new rising wave in the Chinese revolution." The first action was to remove Ch'en Tu'hsiu as head of the CCP—after all, someone had to be the goat for the unsuccessful CCP-Kuomintang "united front" that came unstuck when Chiang Kai-shek smashed the Communist elements in the spring and summer of 1927. Ch'u Ch'iu-pai replaced Ch'en and immediately began to foster the "rising wave of revolution" line. The disastrous denouement of the Canton Commune in December 1927, however, ended Ch'u Ch'iu-pai's influence, and he, in turn, became the scapegoat for the failure of another Comintern-inspired action.

In July 1928, the CCP held its Sixth Party Congress *in Moscow* at the same time that the Sixth World Congress of the Comintern was in session, and it was, therefore, hardly strange that both groups came up with the same strategy for the furthering of the Chinese revolution. The necessity of deepening the agrarian revolution was admitted, but it was to proceed under the *hegemony of the proletariat.* The peasantry was to be an ally, but the main force of the revolution was to be the urban masses. Li Li-san, in the fall of 1928, returned from Moscow as head of the CCP to carry out the new policy; his chief lieutenant was Chou En-lai.[14]

Li Li-san advocated putting the main effort into the exploitation of the alleged revolutionary potential in such industrial and political centers as Shanghai, Wuhan, Nanking, etc. In Li Li-san's opinion, to quote Jerome Ch'en "the cities were the brains and heart of the ruling class whereas the villages were merely their limbs. Lethal blows should be dealt where the brains and heart lay."[15] There was, however, one big flaw in the strategy—the miniscule proletariat membership in the

[12]Nym Wales, *Inside Red China*, pp. 137-40; Jerome Ch'en, *op. cit.*, p. 153.

[13]Nym Wales, *Inside Red China*, p. 56.

[14]A more detailed account of the vagaries of the Comintern policy in China between 1927 and 1932 can be found in Benjamin Schwartz, *Chinese Communism and the Rise of Mao*, pp. 86-171, and Robert C. North, *Moscow and Chinese Communists*, pp. 113-146. Both are excellent, although Schwartz is more comprehensive.

[15]*Mao and the Chinese Revolution*, p. 155.

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CCP. In 1926, the Party membership was 66 percent proletarian, but by June 1929, no less an authority than Chou En-lai acknowledged that the proletarian content of the Party had dwindled to around three percent.[16]

Li Li-san, ignoring the weakness of the Party in the urban areas, urged the Red Army to attack the cities and thereby ignite worker revolts. Somewhat reluctantly, P'eng Teh-huai and his 5th Red Army attacked Changsha on 28 July 1930, but found little proletarian enthusiasm for the Communist cause. P'eng was able to hold the city only a few days, and when Li Li-san urged an attack on Wuhan, P'eng, backed by Chu Teh and Mao Tse-tung, refused. The failure at Changsha undermined Li Li-san's position, and in November 1930 he returned to Moscow where he shouldered the blame for the disasters that had befallen what came to be known as the "Li Li-san line." Chinese Communist leaders who carried out Moscow-directed policies seemed destined to end up as sacrificial lambs—the saving of Stalin's face was mandatory.

Li Li-san's place was taken by Wang Ming, leader of the "Returned Student Clique," sometimes called "The Twenty-Eight Bolsheviks," a group of students who had spent the years since 1926 at the Sun Yat-sen University in Moscow. The patron of the group was Pavel Mif, Stalin's "expert" on China, who became the Comintern delegate in China in early 1930. Mif and the Wang Ming group continued the "hegemony of the proletariat" during 1931 and 1932, but the steam had gone out of any strategy predicated on a strong Communist proletariat. The truth was that from the end of 1929 there were emerging "two new dynamic factors within the Communist movement: the Soviet areas and the Red Army."[17]

While the leadership of the CCP, with its headquarters in Shanghai, was playing the Comintern game with sorry results, Mao Tse-tung was gradually taking over the leadership of the rural Soviet movement, but probably not without a great deal of opposition from local leaders. Some idea of how the struggle was shaping up can be gleaned from the Fut'ien Incident in December 1930. Apparently a number of leading Party members in the Kiangsi province, resenting Mao's control, formed an anti-Maoist faction. Mao had seventy of them arrested and imprisoned at Fut'ien, near Chi-an (Kian) in southern Kiangsi. But a number of sympathizers from P'eng Teh-huai's 3rd Army, led by a commander named Liu Ti-ts'ao, attacked Fut'ien, liberated the prisoners, and called for the overthrow of Mao. The revolt was put down, but not without considerable bloodshed.[18] The seriousness of the event was admitted by Mao, who told Snow that "to many it must have seemed that the fate of the revolution depended on the outcome of this struggle."[19] Of course, the comment also points up Mao's ecocentric view of his own role in the Chinese Communist revolutionary movement.

It was also during 1930 that plans were laid for the convoking of a National Congress of Soviets for the purpose of setting up a central government for the scattered Soviet areas; the date was set for 11 December 1930, the anniversary of the ill-fated Canton Uprising. For a number of reasons, the Congress was postponed, and it was not until 7 November 1931 that the First All-China Soviet Congress finally opened in Juichin, Kiangsi province.

The convocation of the Congress at Juichin, the headquarters of the Mao-dominated Kiangsi Soviet, was a triumph for Mao. Schwartz goes so far as to state:

> The complete victory of the Mao-Chu leadership within the Chinese Communist movement can be said to have been achieved during the 1932-33 period when the Central Committee was finally forced to move its headquarters from Shanghai to Juichin.[20]

There can be little doubt that the most influential figure in the Provisional Central Government of the Chinese Soviet Republic, created by the Congress in November 1931, was Mao Tse-tung. One indication of this fact was another *volte-face* by Chou En-lai, formerly Li Li-san's strongest supporter against the deepening of the agrarian revolution, who now became Commissar for Military Affairs in the new regime at Juichin. Wang Ming returned to Moscow in 1932. The Chinese Communist leadership was no longer deriving its power "solely from the mandate of Moscow, but was solidly based on the control of a military force, a territorial base, and a governmental apparatus."[21]

3. Chiang Kai-shek's Extermination Campaigns, 1930-1934.—Chu Teh, in his account of the rise of the Red Army, as told to Nym Wales, divides the early history of the Red Army into three periods: (1) the Nanchang Uprising to the First Soviet Congress in December 1931; (2) the First Congress to the beginning of the Long March in October 1934; and (3) the Long March to the "Second United Front" in 1937.[22] Although Chiang Kai-shek's first three campaigns to eradicate the

[16]Schwartz, *op. cit.*, p. 129; North, *op. cit.*, p. 132.
[17]Schwartz, *op. cit.*, p. 129.
[18]*Ibid.*, pp. 175-77.
[19]Snow, *op. cit.*, pp. 162-63.
[20]Schwartz, *op. cit.*, p. 187.
[21]*Ibid.*, p. 187
[22]*Inside Red China*, p. 245.

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Soviet areas were between November 1930 and July 1931, his main effort was made during the second of Chu Teh's periods.[23]

Chiang, well aware of the growing menace of the Red Army in 1929-1931 period, had other, and more pressing problems to deal with at that time. The completion of the Northern Expedition in 1928 did not result in a genuinely unified nation. China was divided into five major groups of provinces: (1) Nanking controlled only Kiangsu, Kiangsi, Chekiang, Anhwei, and Fukien; (2) The Kwangsi faction, led by Li Tsung-jen, Li Chi-shen, and Pai Ch'ung-hsi, controlled Kwangtung, Kwangsi, Hunan, and Hupei; (3) Feng Yu-hsiang ruled Kansu, Shensi, and Honan; (4) Yen Hsi-shan held Shansi and Hopei; and (5) Chang Hsueh-liang held Manchuria. Nanking's big problem was to impose central authority upon the semi-independent warlords, which meant, in essence, Chiang's ability to defeat them with his Kuomintang military forces.[24]

In the spring of 1929, the Kwangsi clique clashed with Chiang Kai-shek over who was going to control Wuhan, especially its revenues. Chiang was victorious. Hardly, however, had he surmounted that hurdle when he was challenged by Feng Yu-hsiang who was trying to exert authority in Shantung. By late 1929, this dispute grew quite serious since Feng had persuaded Yen Hsi-shan to join with him in an anti-Chiang Kai-shek movement and bloody war ensued. Just to complicate matters still further, Wang Ching-wei, with the help of Chang Fa-k'uei, hit at Chiang's authority in the south. Finally, in September 1930, Chang Hsueh-liang, the "Young Marshall," warlord of Manchuria, came out for Chiang Kai-shek, and this was too much for the Feng and Yen combination. The war ended in Chiang's favor in early October 1930.

It is little wonder, then, that Chiang had little time and energy, not to mention troops, to devote to the problem of suppressing the emerging Red Army in the 1929-30 period. With the defeat of Feng Yu-hsiang, however, came the opportunity to deal with the Reds, and Chiang lost no time in launching the first of his so-called Encirclement, or Extermination, campaigns.

The first campaign, which began in December 1930, was directed partly at the Communist guerrilla forces in Hupei, in norther Hunan, but with the main punch aimed at the Central Soviet (the Mao-Chu forces) in Kiangsi. Three divisions of Nationalist troops, under General Chang Hui-tsan, attacked the Maoist stronghold; but in an effort to execute a wide pincer movement, the Nationalist forces were widely dispersed. This enabled the Red Army to pick off a large segment of the Nationalists once they had been sucked into the mountainous terrain. The action began on 27 December 1930 and was virtually over five days later. Although definite figures concerning military actions in China during this period are notorious for their inaccuracy, one estimate has the Communists capturing 10,000 Nationalists, 6,000 rifles, and General Chang Hui-Tsan himself. Chang was later executed by the Reds.

The second campaign began in February 1931. According to Chiang Kai-shek, three Nationalist divisions were engaged in this effort, but the Communists claim that 13 divisions, including 200 heavy guns and 100 aircraft, were used by Chiang. The encirclement proceeded slowly for a couple of months, and then in May, the Red Army went on the offensive: in two weeks it marched over 200 miles, won five battles in a row, and broke up the Nationalist attack. The Communists claim to have taken 20,000 prisoners and a like number of rifles.

Chiang Kai-shek, greatly disturbed by the failures of his commanders, personally directed the third campaign, which lasted from June to mid-September 1931. With overwhelming superiority in forces and armaments, Chiang gradually closed in on the Central Soviet, and by 13 September the capital of the Red area, Juichin, was in danger of being overrun by the Nationalists.

But the Communist luck held. The Japanese Kwantung Army perpetrated the Mukden Incident in Manchuria on 18 September 1931 and used the affair as a pretext to begin their occupation of all Manchuria; Chiang had no recourse but to call off the war against the Communists for the time being. A few months later Chiang himself was out of power.[25] It was not until the spring of 1932 that Chiang, back in power again, was able to return to his anti-Communist activities. The six months between October 1931 and April 1932 gave the Communists a chance not only to recover from the third campaign, but also to expand their area of control and to increase the size of the Red Army. One estimate gives the strength of the Red Army (in the whole of China) as 200,000 men by early 1932.[26]

Chiang Kai-shek, after the withdrawal of the Soviet military advisers in late 1927, turned to the

[23]Garavente, however, feels that the usual description of "five or six campaigns" by Chiang Kai-shek against the Central Soviet in the Kiangsi-Fukien region is stretching the definition of "campaign" too far. He divides the military action in that area into two campaigns: the first from December 1930 to September 1931, and the second from April 1933 to November 1934. Anthony Garvente, "The Long March," *China Quarterly*, No. 22 (April-June, 1965), p. 89.

[24]James E. Sheridan, *Chinese Warlord: The Career of Feng Yuhsiang*, pp. 240-41.

[25]An excellent account of the first three campaigns against the Central Soviet can be found in Jerome Ch'en, *Mao and the Chinese Revolution*, pp. 165-170.

[26]*Ibid.*, p. 175.

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Germans for his military guidance. A series of German officers, from Colonel Max Bauer in November 1927 to General von Seeckt and General von Falkenhausen in the mid-1930s, helped "Prussianize" the Nationalist military forces.[27] The German advisers advocated an improvement in the staff work of the Kuomintang armies and more attention to the industrial base necessary for the equipment of a modernized army. One might well argue that a highly centralized military organization dependent upon an improved industrial base was a step forward in the early 1930s, but in the late 1930s and during the 1940s, especially after the Japanese seizure of the Chinese industrial area (1937-1945), such a development was more of weakness than a strength for the Nationalists. There is little argument, however, about the fact that General von Falkenhausen was of immense assistance to Chiang in his drive against the Communists between 1932 and 1934.

The fourth campaign was directed against a number of Communist-held areas. From June to October 1932, Chiang launched the main blow against Ho Lung in the Hupei province and drove Ho out of the region. But the assault on the main Soviet, the Central Soviet in the Kaingsi-Fukien region, was less successful.

Chiang, in August 1933, moved 75 divisions into positions around the Central Soviet and its 100,000-man Red Army. The new strategy was to surround the Communist-held territory with a ring of blockhouses and fortifications, then steadily compress the ring until the combination of economic strangulation and shortage of territory in which to maneuver forced the Red Army to fight a positional war. At that point, Chiang's superiority in men and firepower would give him a decided advantage.

Mao later admitted that the Reds committed two major errors in the fifth campaign.[28] First, the Central Soviet refused to go to the rescue of an anti-Chiang Kai-shek movement in Fukien province, headed by Ts'ai T'ing-k'ai, in late 1933 and early 1934. Chiang was able to obliterate this group in January 1934, before turning his attention solely to Mao's stronghold. Second, the Red Army's decision to fight a more or less conventional war against the Nationalists during the fifth campaign, instead of reverting to guerrilla and highly mobile warfare, played into Chiang's hands. There is some question, however, as to whether the Communists really had the option of reverting to guerrilla warfare in 1934. Such a strategy would have left the population of the Central Soviet at the mercy of the Nationalists, and the fact that Communists did not make a fight to prevent such an eventuality would have been a disastrous loss of face for the Maoists.[29] Garavente even asks: "could a guerrilla force employing mobile tactics have effectively defended a *fixed geographical* region."[30] The truth of the matter seems to have been that once Chiang Kai-shek was temporarily free of competing war lords and Japanese pressures, he had the military force necessary to drive the Communists out of their fixed geographical positions in the area south of the Yangtze and he proceeded to do so. The result was a Red Army forced to fight a positional war, and this could not but be disastrous given the ratio of men and materiel on the two sides. Furthermore, an economic blockade was imposed by the Nationalists. It was so tight that outside supplies to the Communist area were reduced to a mere trickle, while exports from the Central Soviet were totally interdicted. This last was a catastrophe for the local civilian population that went a long way towards making the Communist position untenable. The most commonly cited example of the efficacy of the Nationalist blockade is the shortage of salt in the Red area, the price rising to over a dollar an ounce, when it was available at all.[31]

4. The Long March.—Apparently, quite early in 1934, the leadership of the Central Soviet, realizing that Chiang's latest offensive was bound to succeed, began to plan a retreat from the Kiangsi-Fukien area to western China in order to save as much of the Red Army as possible. Mao says the decision was made soon after the Second All-China Congress of Soviets which met in late January 1934.[32] Thus, much of the maneuvering of the Red forces during the spring and summer of 1934 was preparatory to the breakout from the Kiangsi-Fukien area that took place in October 1934. From October 1934 until October 1935, when Mao led the tired remnants of his followers into Pao-an in Shensi province in northwest China, the Chinese Red Army was engaged in a *Volkerwanderung,* a great migration of Communist military forces from the various Soviets, that has become the great epic of the Chinese Communist movement under the generic title of "The Long March." This is one of the watersheds in the history of the Communist

[27]For a more detailed description of the German influence on the Nationalist military forces see F. F. Liu, *A Military History of Modern China.*

[28]Snow, *Red Star Over China,* p. 166.

[29]O. E. Clubb, *20th Century China,* p 201.

[30]"The Long March," *China Quarterly,* No. 22, p. 93; Garavente's italics.

[31]Mao Tse-tung *Selected Works,* (New York: International Publishers, 1954) Vol. I, pp. 220-222 has some scathing remarks on the strategy adopted by the Communists in the fifth campaign in 1934. But inasmuch as Mao now controls the making of history in China, it is hard to say how much of this is *ex post facto* reasoning.

[32]Snow, *Red Star Over China,* p. 166.

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movement in China and deserves a far more complete treatment than space allows in the present study.[33]

There seems to be some evidence that quite a bit of maneuvering went on prior to the "breakout" in October. In July and August 1934, Lo P'ing-hui's 7th Red Army made a sweep to the Fukien coast just above Foochow; and while one element made a roundup of supplies, the other group moved north to join the 10th Red Army which had moved into northern Fukien. The combined force, called the "Resist Japan" Vanguard Red Army, then moved through western Chekiang into Anhwei, threatening to cross the Yangtze at Wuhu in December. Garavente[34] thinks that the mission was to divert Nationalist forces from the Kiangsi-Fukien Central Soviet area. In August 1934, the Sixth Red Army marched through Hunan into Kweichow and by late October joined up with Ho Lung's Second Front Red Army in northeast Kweichow, thus Ho Lung's force performed two services: first, it acted as a reconnoitering force over part of the proposed route for the Long March; and, second, it kept Nationalist forces in northern Hunan while Mao and the First Front Army passed through the southern end of the province.

On the night of 15 October 1934, the bulk of the First Front Red Army, some 90,000 men who had gradually assembled at Yutu, began the Long March. Ch'en Yi, with a force of 14,000 regular troops and a number of Red Guards, was left in the Kiangsi-Fukien area to confuse the Nationalists as long as possible. He was very successful since it was almost a month before Chiang Kai-shek realized the the main force had escaped.

On 21 October, the Red Army made contact with the Kwangtung forces at the border and the latter withdrew with little fighting. The First Front Army then divided into two columns, the main one, with Mao and the Soviet government, protected by a vanguard under Lin Piao and a rearguard under Lo P'ing-hui, made its way through southeastern Hunan to Linwu, where it was joined by the other column, which had marched more or less parallel to it to the south in order to fend off the Kwangtung forces. The reunited Force Front Army then proceeded through Kwangsi province to Tsunyi in Kweichow province where it arrived in the first week of January 1935. The first leg of the Long March had taken 80 days (15 October 1934 to 5 January 1935), and the situation now permitted a period of rest, resupply, and recruitment.

In spite of the ex post facto Communist accounts that tell of the "well-planned" Long March with Shensi province as the goal from the very beginning, it would seem that the real objective during the first three months was to enter Szechuan province and establish a large Soviet in that area.[35] Szechuan province had been a hotbed of warlordism since 1911 and was thus seething with peasant discontent—for example, taxes were collected 20 or 30 years in advance; Chang Kuo-t'ao and the Fourth Front Red Army, some 80,000 strong, held part of Szechuan only 200 miles north of the First Front Army when it got to Tsunyi; Ho Lung and the Second Front Red Army in northwestern Hunan could threaten the province; and, finally, Szechuan was self-sufficient economically and almost inaccessible, a perfect base for an enlarged Soviet with the combined First and Fourth Front Red armies to protect it. When contrasted with Shensi province, the ostensible objective, it looked extremely good. Shensi was poor, had relatively few people, and the Red Army in that area, under Kao Kang and Liu Tzu-tan, came to fewer than 10,000 men.

Chiang Kai-shek, however, fully aware of the danger of an enlarged Soviet well-rooted into Szechuan, moved energetically to thwart the plan. He managed to persuade the main Szechuan warlord, Liu Hsiang, to accept the services of General Ho Kuo-kuang and two hundred other Nationalist officers, who were able to put some zip into Liu's forces along the Yangtze. To the south, Chiang's man, General Hsueh Yueh, put together an army made up of Kwangtung and Kweichow forces that threatened the First Front Army from that direction. In mid-January, the First Front Army moved from Tsunyi toward the Yangtze to cross into Szechuan. They soon realized that Liu's armies were too formidable and then returned to the Tsunyi area. In the meanwhile, Chiang's Nationalists moved out of Shensi into Szechuan and hit the Fourth Front Army in the rear, thereby frustrating any joint action between the two main Communist forces.

The First Front Army, although winning two major engagements in Kweichow, had to retreat to Yunnan, crossing the border near Hsingyi, and by 1 May 1935, this army reached the Chin Sha Kiang (Golden Sand River),[36] which forms the border between Yunnan on the south and Hsikang and Szechuan in the north. By this time the First Front

[33]The main source in English is Mao Tse-tung's account told to Edgar Snow and set down in the latter's *Red Star Over China*, pp. 171-196; Garavente ("The Long March," *China Quarterly*, No. 22, April-June, 1965, pp. 89-124) gives the most detailed description, utilizing numerous sources, available in English; the account of Hsu Meng-ch'iu, "The History of the Long March," as told to Nym Wales (*Red Dust: Autobiographies of Chinese Communists*. Standford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1952, pp. 57-76), is also interesting.

[34]*Loc cit.*, p. 100.

[35]Garavente, *loc. cit.*, pp. 108-113, presents a cogent argument for this assumption.

[36]This is the name of the Yangtze River in Western China.

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Army, which was 90,000 strong when it left Yutu, was down to 45,000 men. The almost constant combat in Kweichow had cost it dearly. Jerome Ch'en[37] divides the Long March into two parts: the retreat from Yutu to the Chin Sha crossing during which casualties were largely the result of fighting, and the rest of the march to Shensi, with the severe losses coming from the almost unbelieveable harshness of the terrain that had to be crossed.

The epic of the Long March abounds in feats of heroism, at least in retrospect, and none matches the story of the "heroes of Tatu." Having crossed the Chin Sha River, the Red Army went north through western Szechuan, an area controlled by the aboriginal Lolos, a non-Chinese people who hated the Szechuanese warlords as much as the Communists did and turned out to be friendly to Mao's forces. Lin Piao's vanguard then came to the Tatu River and succeeded, by a ruse, in getting some men across at An Jen Ch'ang. But the operation was soon spotted by Chiang's recce aircraft, which began to direct the Nationalists toward the small group. The small force was too weak to make a fight of it and raced along the north bank of the Tatu in an attempt to seize the only available bridge, some 80 miles to the west. On the south bank, Lin Piao summoned a military conference, attended by Chu Teh, Mao, Chou En-lai, and P'eng Teh-huai, and it was decided to march as swiftly as possible for the same bridge, a chain affair that hung between two high cliffs where the river narrowed abruptly. When the Reds got to the bridge they found that the wooden planks had been removed and only the bare chains remained, while an enemy machine-gun nest faced them on the opposite side. Thirty men immediately volunteered to cross the river along the chains in the face of machine-gun fire and managed to make it within grenade range of the enemy. The bridge was taken, and the First Front Army was able to cross the Tatu, thus avoiding a long detour into Tibet.[38]

The First Front Army then climbed over the Great Snowy Mountains, the first of a series of ranges, some of which were over 16,000 feet in altitude. Most of the draft animals were lost during this stage of the journey. In mid-June, the tired Communist travelers reached Moukung where they met up with Chang Kuo-t'ao's Fourth Front Army, which had been forced to retreat westward from the Sungpan area in Szechuan.[39] The combined force then proceeded to Maoerhkai, where a conference was held in order to thrash out a decision as to where their ultimate destination was to be.

This brings us to the subject of politics during the Long March. Apparently, while at Tsunyi in early 1935, Mao Tse-tung insisted upon a conference, the upshot of which was the election of Mao as the Party Secretary, the first defininte proof of his leadership of the CCP. Thus, when he conferred with Chang Kuo-t'ao at Maoerhkai, he was the acknowledged head of the Chinese Communist movement. Although the evidence is conflicting in places, there seems to have been a deadlock in which Mao insisted that the whole force march to Shensi, while Chang Kuo-t'ao held out for Hsikang. Mao said he wanted to take advantage of Kao Kang's Soviet in Shensi and to be in a position to fight the Japanese; Chang wanted to be near Sinkiang, then closely connected with the Soviet Union. Garavente speculates that Chang's Fourth Army was made up largely of Szechuanese who did not like the idea of going to Shensi and thus his argument was largely a rationalizatioan of that fact. The conferees even telegraphed Moscow in an attempt to settle their dispute, but Moscow refused to take sides. The debate was finally resolved in Mao's favor and the combined force set off for Shensi province in August. Somehow, and the accounts really vary on this subject,[40] the Fourth Front Army and much of the First Front Army under Chu Teh ended up in Hsikang, while Mao, with only the 1st Corps of the First Front Army, pushed on through the Grasslands to Shensi.

The saga of the journey across the Grasslands from late August to mid-September is another high point in the "heroic" story of the Long March. The Grasslands is a vast swamp of stinking black mud with a coarse grass cover. According to the Communist accounts, the Long Marchers "had to sleep standing in pairs or groups of four back to back."[41] Needless to say, losses were heavy. When Mao got to Pao-an in Shensi province in October 1935, he had only 7,000 exhausted followers.

It was not until a year later, in October 1936, that Chu Teh, with his part of the First Front Army, Chang Kuo-t'ao, with his Fourth Front Army, and Ho Lung, with the Second Front Army, got to Shensi and joined forces with Mao's advance group, the 1st Corps of the First Front Army. It would

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[37] *Mao and the Chinese Revolution*, p. 185.

[38] This is an abridgement of Mao's account in Snow's *Red Star Over China*, pp. 182-188.

[39] Garavente, *loc. cit.*, p. 120; Mao, in his account in Snow's *Red Star Over China*, p. 189, says they met the Fourth Front Army in the Maoerhkai area on 20 July 1935.

[40] One account, Hsu Meng-ch'ui's, says that the Fourth Front Army entered the Grasslands, but was unable to get through; Edgar Snow says that Chiang Kai-shek split the forces and a river flood prevented them from reuniting; Agnes Smedley says that Chu Teh was forced at gun point to join Chang Kuo-t'ao's forces. A good discussion of the problem in Garavente, *loc. cit.*, p. 122.

[41] Jerome Ch'en, *Mao and the Chinese Revolution*, p. 194.

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seem, therefore, that the Long March, in its larger sense, actually lasted two years.

Although since hailed as a magnificant victory by the Chinese Communists, the Red Army was in a sorry state at the end of the Long March. In October 1936 Mao, himself, wrote the following analysis of the results of the Chiang Kai-shek fifth campaign of "encirclement and annihilation":

> . . . As a result, all the revolutionary bases were lost except the Shensi-Kansu border area, the Red Army was reduced from 300,000 to a few tens of thousands, the membership of the Chinese Communist Party was reduced from 300,000 to a few tens of thousands, and the Party organizations in Kuomintang areas were almost entirely wiped out. In short, we received an extremely great historical punishment.[42]

At least, in October 1936, Mao could hardly be accused of singing paeans of praise about a "great victory" in the move from Kiangsi to Shensi, the Long March.

During the next decade, 1936 to 1945, the Chinese Communists were able to establish a thriving Soviet area in Northwest China. The fortunes of Mao's followers, at such a low ebb in 1935 and 1936, brightened considerably from 1937 on, and again largely because of Japanese activities. But this is a story for the next chapter.

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[42] *Mao Tse-Tung: Selected Works*, Vol. I, p. 193.

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CHAPTER IV

Development of the Chinese Red Army During the Sino-Japanese War (1937-1945)

THIS chapter is mainly concerned with the growth of the Red Army from a relatively insignificant force battling for its very existence in northwest China in 1936 to a million-man organization by 1945. Within a decade it had been transformed from a nuisance to the Kuomintang government into an ominous threat to that government's viability. The Japanese invasion of China proper during the decade was an unmitigated disaster for Chiang Kai-shek and his Kuomintang followers; for the Chinese Communists, on the other hand, it was a glorious opportunity. They were able to garb themselves in the trappings of Chinese nationalism and, under the chaotic conditions engendered by the Japanese occupation, were able to gain local control throughout much of northern China.

The decade under discussion was an extremely confused period in both Chinese and world history. And the story of the KMT-CCP relations, the CCP-Japanese relations, the KMT-American relations, plus Soviet influence on the periphery, is complex indeed. It is only fair to warn the reader that much is unknown about who was doing what to whom, and what is known does not lend itself to crystal-clear narrative. But without some understanding of the complexities involved, it is impossible to comprehend why the Red Army was able to emerge victorious from the Civil War that tore China to shreds in the four years immediately after the conclusion of the Sino-Japanese War.

Aided and abetted by that inestimable boon granted to historians, 20-20 hindsight, this chapter will also focus on the creation by the Chinese Communists of those socio-political tools that enable them to win over a sizable following in the villages and even to influence in their favor large numbers of intellectuals throughout China. Much of this development was not obvious to contemporary observers, denied the asset of hindsight.

During the war with the Japanese, Mao Tse-tung's military doctrine came to fruition, and this seems to be the proper place to describe and evaluate it. Many of his ideas were developed earlier, but they crystallized in the late 1930s, and he put them down on paper at that time.

1. The Consolidation of Communist Power in Northwest China, 1935-1936.—The area of Shensi Province, which was the heart of the new Chicom home base at the end of the Long March, is a remarkable region of loess soil—aeolian dust, from a few feet to 250 feet in depth, blown in over the ages from the deserts to the north. It is a dry area, 15 to 20 inches of rain a year, when it is not suffering from drought, and it has a climate that varies from very cold in the winter to over 90 degrees F. in the summer. The precipitous nature of the valleys and ravines, due to the ease with which the loess erodes, enables the inhabitants to cut their homes directly into the vertical cliff faces. Often the farmer merely climbs up to the roof of his house to till his land, a unique feature of these *yao fang,* or "cave houses." It is a land of endless broken hills, and the peasants' fields are "patches laid on the serried landscape, between crevices and small streams,"[1] endangered by frequent landslides.

This region had long been one of the poorest parts of China, had long been overtaxed by warlords, had been victimized by periodic famines, and was thus ripe for revolution. A Whampoa cadet from Shensi, Liu Tzu-tan, joined the Communists while at the academy, and after the KMT-CCP split in 1927, he returned to his home province. Between 1929 and 1932, he led a checkered career of alternate attempts to set up a Communist regime and service with the *min-t'uan.*[2] He finally established a

[1] Snow, *Red Star Over China,* p. 57.

[2] The *min-t'uan,* or "people's corps," were local security forces in the service of the large landowners and merchants. When the Reds tried to take over an area, it was usually the *min-t'uan* that they had to fight. Throughout China as a whole, the *min-t'uan* numbered in the hundreds of thousands but were not always very good fighters.

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base area at Pao-an and set up the first Shensi Soviet in early 1933. In October 1934, Hsu Hai-tung arrived from the Ouyuwan Soviet with several thousand men and joined forces with Liu Tzu-tan.[3] By mid-1935, the 15th Red Army Corps, around 10,000 men, was created with Hsu Hai-tung as commander and Liu Tzu-tan as vice-commander.

Thus, when Mao Tse-tung arrived in Pao-an, Shensi Province, in October 1935, there was already a going Soviet in existence; and when Mao combined his First Front Army with the local Red troops, the combined army probably came to 30,000 men. A year later, October 1936, Ho Lung arrived with the Second Front Army, about 20,000 men, and Chu Teh brought in the Fourth Front Army of some 30,000 troops. Thus, by the end of 1936, the Red Army in the Shensi Soviet totaled around 80,000 men.[4]

Mao and his colleagues, in trying to set up a secure Soviet base in Shensi, faced two primary tasks: how to feed and equip the Red Army, and how to win over the peasantry. Obviously, the first was dependent upon the second. A land law, proclaimed in December 1935, called for the confiscation of all land which the large landlords and rich peasants were not themselves tilling. Snow says that in the autumn of 1936, the Commissar of Finance, Lin Pai-chu, told him that a good deal of the Soviet's funds came from the confiscation of the cash and the surplus goods of the "exploiting classes."[5] The economy of the Shensi Soviet was a weird melange of private capitalism, state-run enterprises, and cooperatives. The Reds even set up their own banking system and issued their own money. The whole program was aimed at winning over the poor peasants. When a new district was taken over by the Reds, all taxes were suspended for a year to give the peasants a breathing spell, then a light land tax was instituted, as well as a 5 to 10 percent tax on business. The land confiscated from the large landlords and rich peasants was distributed to the poor peasants, as was the confiscated livestock.

The structure of the Soviet government was relatively simple. The basic unit was the village Soviet, and above it was a hierarchical arrangement of district, county, and provincial Soviets. Authority ultimately centered in the Soviet Congress. As soon as the Reds took over a district, they set up a *revolutionary committee,* which in turn supervised elections for a district Soviet. The district Soviet then appointed committees for education, cooperatives, military training, political training, land distribution, public health, partisan training, etc.

The real authority, however, was the Communist Party leadership. But even it tried to permeate the population at all levels with such organizations as the Young Vanguards, the Children's Brigades, the Young Communist League (for young women), and the Poor People's Societies. As Snow puts it: "The aim of Soviet organization obviously was to make every man, woman, or child a member of something, with definite work assigned to him to perform."[6]

When the Red Army troops were not fighting, they either raised their own food or helped the peasants on their farms. Even Mao and Chu Teh tilled their own plots, Mao raising tobacco and Chu, lettuce. The idea of using soldiers to help the peasantry plant and harvest was a unique phenomenon in Chinese history and did much to win the peasants to the Communist side.

In the well-established Soviet districts, the policing and guarding were left to the peasant organizations such as the village defense corps, the peasant guards, and the partisans. The Red Army was rarely used as an instrument of exploitation, which made it very different from the warlord armies that the peasants were accustomed to. Furthermore, the system enabled the Red Army to devote its efforts entirely to serious combat and also facilitated its mobility since it was not tied to any particular local area.

Chiang Kai-shek, fully aware of the growing strength of the new Shensi Soviet, was determined to wipe it out in a "sixth extermination campaign." His commander in Shensi was Marshal Chang Hsueh-liang, who, having been driven out of Manchuria by the Japanese in 1931, had put his *Tungpei* (Northwest) Army under Chiang's control. Neither Marshal Chang nor his Manchurian troops, however, were very enthusiastic about fighting the Communists. They were more inclined to move toward Manchuria to attack the Japanese who had expelled them from their homeland. The Communists, who as early as 1932 had declared war on the Japanese invaders, worked assiduously to convert the Tungpei troops to their line, namely, let's stop this business of Chinese killing Chinese and unite against the Japanese. This was the Chinese Communist version of the new Comintern "united front" line promulgated at the Seventh Comintern Congress in Moscow in 1935.

On 7 December 1936, Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek arrived in Sian, the capital of Shensi and

[3]Snow, *Red Star Over China,* p. 202, says Hsu brought 8,000 men to Shensi; Snow's wife, Nym Wales, in her *Inside Red China,* p. 58, says 3,000 to 5,000. Both were in Shensi less than two years after the event, so that as early as that the statistics were already confused.

[4]C. A. Johnson, *Peasant Nationalism and Communist Power,* (Stanford, Calif: Stanford University Press, 1962) p. 73; Jerome Ch'en, *Mao and the Chinese Revolution,* p. 365, estimates the total Red forces in Shensi in late 1936 as low as 30,000, probably a gross underestimation of their strength.

[5]Snow, *Red Star Over China,* p. 225.

[6]Snow, *Red Star Over China,* p. 214.

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Marshal Chang Hsueh-liang's headquarters, to inform the Marshal that the "sixth extermination campaign" was to be launched on December 12th. But Marshal Chang and his division commanders arrested the Generalissimo on the night of December 11th and demanded an immediate cessation of the civil war in order to concentrate on fighting the Japanese. Chiang Kai-shek refused to bargain under duress, and a stalemate ensued. Marshal Chang's officers wanted to shoot the Generalissimo, to the horror of T. V. Soong and Madame Chiang Kai-shek who had by then flown in from Nanking.

A strange situation then developed. Mao Tse-tung, apparently on instructions from Moscow,[7] sent Chou En-lai and two other high ranking Communists leaders to obtain the Generalissimo's release if he would consider calling off the civil war and concentrate on the Japanese menace. Chiang Kai-shek was released on Christmas Day and accompanied by Marshal Chang Hsueh-liang, now his prisoner, returned to Nanking.[8]

Just what commitments Chiang made to the Communists in December 1936 is a matter of some controversy, but the campaign against the Communists in the Shensi Soviet was called off, and Mao was able to get a breathing spell in which to consolidate his regime. The Reds even moved into Yenan in late December and proclaimed it their new capital in January 1937.

The Japanese, however, looked upon the new detente between Mao and Chiang as a threat to their plans for eventual control of China, and they began to act accordingly.

2. The Japanese Drive Into China, 1931-1936.—Many Japanese leaders had long regarded any step toward the unification of China as a threat to their designs on the Asiatic mainland, especially their plans for the absorption of Manchuria. When they thought that Marshal Chang Tso-lin was jeopardizing their position in Manchuria in 1928, officers of the Kwantung Army[9] blew up his train in June of that year. The plan was to use the incident to expand Japanese control over all of Manchuria, but the plan went awry. It was, however, the first definite indication that the staff of the Kwantung Army was trying to make national policy by coming up with a *fait accompli*, a technique which was perfected after 1931. To make matters worse, from the Japanese point of view, Chang Tso-lin's son and successor, Chang Hsueh-liang, the "Young Marshal," decided to go along with Chiang Kai-shek and his Kuomintang. In addition, anti-Japanese feeling become so prevalent in China, leading to boycotts of Japanese-made goods, that the Japanese industrialists became seriously alarmed.

A great stimulus to Japanese expansion on the Asiatic mainland came from the rise of ultranationalist societies in Japan, both civilian and military. Even in the early 1920s, Kita Ikki advanced a program calling for all-out devotion to nationalism at home and expansion on the Asiatic mainland to support Asians against the "predatory" activities of Great Britain and the USSR, the bete noire of the 1920s. In 1930, a lieutenant colonel by the name of Hashimoto founded the Sakurakai, or Cherry Society, made up of fieldgrade or below officers. Hashimoto's society advocated a military dictatorship as the best way to organize the country economically and ideologically for war. This group, like several others, advocated assassination and terriorism as the best way to create the confusion and chaos needed to facilitate the military take-over.

The era of assassination began with the shooting of Prime Minister Hamaguchi in November 1930—he had pushed through ratification of the London Naval Treaty which put Japan on the short end of a 5:5:3 ratio for all major naval vessels. By 1936, any government official, civilian or military, or any legislator, who advocated policies at variance with those advanced by the ultranationalists, was very likely to be assassinated by a group of fanatical junior officers. These assassins invariably received light sentences, if any, in the courts-martial that followed.

The militarists were able to control Japanese policies through a very effective mechanism, not at all illegal, as were the assassinations. No government could be formed without a war and a Navy Minister in the Cabinet. But these ministers had to be officers on active duty, which meant that no Prime Minister could form a Cabinet without the cooperation of the military high command. If the military leaders disliked the line the government was taking, they could end the government by having the War and Navy Ministers resign and then refuse to sanction any service minister until they got a government to their liking. For all intents and purposes, the military were able to dictate policies.

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[7]Stalin, alarmed at the Japanese success in Manchuria and their drive into North China, wanted the strongest man possible in control of China in order to keep the Japanese occupied there and not in the direction of Outer Mongolia and Siberia itself. He felt that Chiang Kai-shek was the only leader with enough charisma to unite China against the Japanese invasion.

[8]Chang Hsueh-liang was condemned to a ten-year prison term in January 1937, pardoned, and placed in the custody of Chiang Kai-shek. When Chiang fled to Taiwan in 1949, he took Chang Hsueh-liang with him, where he may still be.

[9]Japanese Army in Manchuria which took its name from the Kwantung area of the Liaotung Peninsula. This region was obtained by the Japanese from the Russians at the Treaty of Portsmouth in 1905 and the Chinese were pressured into extending the lease on it for 99 years in 1915. The Kwantung Army grew in size and influence during the 1930s and early 1940s and even came to be a synonym for the whole administration of Manchuria.

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By 1931, the ultranationalists feared that Chinese disunity could not last forever and that it was high time to begin to exploit in a serious manner the chaotic situation in China. More to the point, the staff of the Kwantung Army and its industralist friends, confined by treaty to the Liaotung Peninsula and the guarding of rail lines, became obsessed with the desire to seize all of Manchuria before Nanking could consolidate its hold on the three provinces. On the night of 18-19 September 1931, a section of track was blown up near Mukden, and some Japanese troops immediately attacked some nearby Chinese soldiers. Within twenty-four hours, the Kwantung forces had seized Mukden, and within a few days, they had moved into Changchun, capital of Manchuria, and into the next largest city, Kirin. On 21 September, reinforcements arrived from Korea, and the staff of the Kwantung Army was all set to take over the rest of Manchuria.

Marshal Chang Hsueh-liang, whose Tungpei Army came to over 400,000 troops, some of whom were tied down in North China, was instructed by Chiang, on 23 September, stated that China was Japanese and to follow a policy of nonresistance. Chiang, on 23 September, stated the China was entrusting its case to the League of Nations, which turned out to be a weak reed upon which to lean. In the meanwhile, the Japanese, with the aid of some bought-and-paid-for politicians and military leaders native to Manchuria, secured control of the provinces of Liaoning and Kirin, and began their penetration of the huge province of Heilungkiang. The Chinese troops under General Ma Chan-shan put up some resistance at the Nonni River during October, but by 18 November, the Japanese had taken Tsitsihar, capital of Heilungkiang. Since Chang Hsueh-liang had already withdrawn south of the Great Wall, leaving Ma Chan-shan high and dry, the latter went over to the Japanese in February 1932, thereby insuring complete Japanese control of Manchuria.

On 18 February 1932, Manchuria was declared by the Japanese to be an independent state, and on 1 March the new state of Manchukuo (Kingdom of the Manchus) was proclaimed. P'u Yi, the last Manchu emperor, who had been dethroned in 1912, was persuaded by the Japanese to become the chief executive of the new state.[10] The conflict spread from Manchuria to Shanghai in January 1932, and the Japanese were forced to send sizable forces to the Yangtze area to overcome Chinese resistance. Hostilities ended in May 1932.

The events of late 1931 and early 1932 tipped the Japanese hand and revealed their two main objectives in China: the blocking of American economic influence in East Asia and a determination to keep China disunited to facilitate their advance into the mainland.[11] Neither Stimson's "Non-Recognition Doctrine" of 1932 nor a League of Nation's censure in 1933 could deter them. They ignored the first and answered the second by withdrawing from the League.

The occupation of Manchuria was only the first step in the Japanese plans for expansion into China. In January 1933, they occupied Shanhai-kuan, the key pass between Manchuria and North China. In February, they moved into the province of Jehol, taking the area in ten days. Chiang Kai-shek, after a token effort in Jehol, returned to his nonresistance policy and, on 31 May 1933, signed the Tangku Truce which called for the demilitarization of Hopei Province north of the Peiping-Liaoning and Peiping-Suiyuan railway lines. At this point, the Japanese began to exploit the restlessness of the Mongols in Inner Mongolia, especially in the province of Chahar. They also put pressure on the rest of Hopei. Their propaganda line by this time was that they were preventing the "Bolshevization" of Inner Mongolia, Manchuria, and North China.

By 1936, however, the Japanese military leaders were convinced that their piecemeal methods of gaining complete control of China were not working fast enough. When Chiang Kai-shek reached an agreement with the Communists at Sian in 1936, they became even more alarmed. Any unity of Chian for the purpose of resisting Japanese expansion was the ultimate nightmare of the Japanese military leaders in Manchuria.[12]

3. The Second KMT-CCP United Front.—Although the de facto truce in the civil war between the Nationalists and the Communists that followed the Sian affair was based only on oral commitments by Chiang Kai-shek, nevertheless, it brought the fighting to a halt. On 10 February 1937, the Communists sent a telegram to the KMT Central Executive Committee in which they urged all-out preparations for the struggle against the Japanese. In return they promised to do their share

[10]Henry P'u Yi had been in retirement since 1912, first in Peking and then in the Japanese concession in Tientsin. In 1928 he was greatly incensed when, shortly after the capture of Peking by the Nationalists, the mausoleums of the Manchu imperial family were rifled and the remains of Ch'ien Lung and Tz'u Hsi desecrated. In his autobiography, P'u Yi says that he thought he was going to be a real emperor in Manchuria and that this was only the first step toward a restoration of the Manchu dynasty in China proper. *See* Henry Pu Yi, *The Last Manchu*, (Edited by Kramer and translated by Kuo Ying Paul Tsai), (New York: Putnam, 1967). On 1 March 1934, Manchukuo was transferred into an empire and P'u Yi enthroned as Emperor K'ang Teh, but he admits that he was a manipulated stooge for the Japanese.

[11]O. E. Clubb, *op. cit.*, p. 171.

[12]For further details on Japanese activities in China during the 1930's, see the following works: Mamoru Shigemitsu, *Japan and Her Destiny* (New York: Dutton, 1958), pp. 32-125; O. E. Clubb, *op. cit.*, pp. 166-175; W. G. Beasley, *The Modern History of Japan* (New York: Praeger, 1963), pp. 236-265; and R. J. C. Butow, *Tojo and the Coming of the War* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1961), pp. 28-105.

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by suspending all armed attempts to overthrow the Nationalist regime, by changing the name of the Red Army to the Chinese National Revolutionary Army, and by promising to put it under the command of Nanking. Chou En-lai showed up at Chiang's summer residence in Juling to further the plans for joint action against the Japanese. Tension was mounting month by month during the first half of 1937, and everyone felt that something was going to happen soon.

On the night of 7 July 1937, some Japanese troops on maneuvers demanded entry into a small walled town, Wanping, near Peiping, in order to search for a missing comrade. Fire broke out between the Japanese and the Chinese soldiers and this, the so-called Lukouchiao, or Marco Polo Bridge, Incident, set off the Sino-Japanese War that was to last until the autumn of 1945. By 8 August, the Japanese had taken Peiping, and neither they nor Chiang Kai-shek seemed interested in trying to negotiate their way out of the impasse.

Needless to say, the hitherto desultory negotiations between Nanking and Yenan became serious after 7 July, and by September, Chou En-lai and Chiang Kai-shek could formally announce the creation of the second KMT-CCP united front. On 22 September, the Central Committee of the CCP issued a manifesto calling for a democracy based on the people's rights and the convocation of a National People's Congress to draw up a Constitution based on Sun Yat-sen's Three People's Principles (the *San Min Chu Yi*), or maybe it would be better to say the Communist version of Sun's doctrine. They also promised to discontinue the forcible confiscation of land. The Provisional Soviet Republic of China (Mao's regime in the northwest) became the Shensi-Kansu-Minghsia Frontier Government on 9 September 1937.

Even prior to the formal announcement of the new united front in August 1937, the Red Army was redesignated the Eighth Route Army with Chu Teh as commander in chief and P'eng Teh-huai as vice commander. The new army was made up of the following three divisions: the 115th Division commanded by Lin Piao and drawn largely from the old First Front Army and Liu Tzu-tan's Fifteenth Army Corps; the 120th Division under Ho Lung and derived from the old Second Front Army; and 129th Division with Liu Po-ch'eng as commander, really the old Fourth Front Army. The Eighth Route Army had about 45,000 men, the limit put on it by the regime in Nanking.[13] The Communists also had about the same number of troops in reserve in Shensi which were not assigned to the Eighth Route Army. The Army was immediately ordered to cross the Yellow River and to attack the Japanese forces in Shansi Province.

Beginning in July 1937, the Communists also began to mobilize another army, the so-called New Fourth Army, made up of scattered units that had been living a spartan existence in Central China ever since they were left there at the time of the Long March in 1934-1935. They were largely in isolated base areas, some thirteen of them, scattered throughout the provinces of Kiangsi, Hunan, Fukien, Kwangtung, Chekiang, Anhwei, and Hupeh. At first, from July to September, the Nationalists continued to harass these bases so that it was impossible to mobilize the troops at any central point to create the new army. But from the end of September 1937, Chiang Kai-shek went along with the plan and appointed Yeh T'ing commander and Hsiang Ying vice commander of what he designated as the National Revolutionary New Fourth Army." Since Yeh's Party membership had lapsed, he was that much more palatable to the Generalissimo.[14] Yeh established his headquarters at Nanch'ang in early 1938 and began to gather in the scattered units of Communist fighters. The New Fourth Army was divided into four Detachments, one of which, the First was commanded by Ch'en Yi, destined for an illustrious career over the next three decades. Estimates of the strength of the New Fourth Army in early 1938 vary from 4,000 to 12,000.[15]

Thus, in early 1938, the Communists had a total military force (Eighth Route Army, New Fourth Army, and reserves in Shensi) of something in the order of 100,000 men. This force was expanded during the course of the Sino-Japanese War until it numbered over 900,000 by 1945.

4. Communist Political-Military Activities During the War, 1937-1945. The campaign in the north stemming from the Lukouchiao Incident was only one aspect of the Japanese invasion of China. In early August 1937, on the charge that two Japanese naval personnel had been killed by the Chinese, two divisions were dispatched to the Shanghai area. The Japanese were no longer confining their efforts to North China, but were now determined to take over the Yangtze Basin as well.

In the north, the Japanese forces advanced along three major railway lines: one force moved west along the Peiping-Suiyuan line into Shansip; the along the Peiping-Suiyuan line into Shan-sip; the line; and the third, along the Tientsin-Pukow line

[13]C. A. Johnson, *op. cit.*, pp. 73-74; Jerome Ch'en, *op. cit.*, p. 365.

[14]C. A. Johnson, *op. cit.*, p. 75.

[15]Johnson, *op. cit.*, p. 76; Ch'en, *op. cit.*, p. 365.

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toward Nanking. Shansi was overrun rapidly, and the capital, T'aiyuan, fell on 9 November. The force moving toward Hankow got to the Yellow River by the end of 1937, and the Nanking-bound group was down to T'aian in Shantung province by late December.

The campaign in the Shanghai area was not an easy one, and the Nationalists held on until the Japanese Tenth Army landed at Hangchow Bay and outflanked them. After that the campaign moved rapidly. Nanking fell on 13 December and the Japanese soldiers committed atrocities so unbelievably hideous that the so called "rape of Nanking" gave the Japanese armed forces an unenviable reputation that lasted for the rest of the war.

In early 1938, the Japanese forces in the Yangtze Basin were quiet, awaiting the outcome of the drive from the north toward Hankow and Nanking. Between 1 and 5 April 1938, the Nationalist, under Sun Lien-chung and Li Tsung-jen, defeated the Japanese at T'aierchuang in Shantung. This was such a shock to the Japanese that it led to a major conference in Tokyo and the decision was made to go all-out in the war in China—the Japanese at this point went beyond the possibility of getting out of the war or of keeping it limited. By the end of October, the Japanese had taken Hankow, moved into the south by sea and seized Canton, and had begun a tight blockade of the China coast. The Nationalists were by now cooped up in Szeschwan Province, with their headquarters at Chungking, the new capital of free China. They stayed there for the rest of the war.

The Japanese, in less than two years, were able to drive the Nationalists into the hinterland, to take over the main cities and railroad lines, and, on the surface, to become masters of most of the Chinese mainland. To defeat Chinese Armies and capture cities, however, was far from defeating the Chinese people. The country was too large, too primitive, and, at long last, too filled with a nationalistic spirit, to be effectively controlled by the relatively sparse Japanese forces. All the Japanese could do was garrison the main cities and try to guard the rail lines. In addition, they would periodically send out punitive expeditions on "mopping up" operations—usually conducted with such brutality that they actually stimulated anti-Japanese patriotism in the Chinese peasants.

With the Nationalist armies driven out of North China, with the Japanese unable to control more than strategic points, and with the peasants seething with hatred for the invaders, a golden opportunity presented itself to the Communists. All they had to do was convince the peasants that they, the Communists, were the real defenders of China against the hated Japs, and they proceeded to do just that.

During the war, the Communists succeeded in establishing some 19 guerrilla bases behind the Japanese lines, the biggest and best ones in North China. Japanese intelligence reports of the time admit that the Communist-sponsored governments in these base areas were overwhelmingly supported by the local populations.[16] In short, the Communists were convincing enormous numbers of peasants that they were the real spokesmen for the nation.

Perhaps a brief description of one of these guerrilla base areas will give some idea of the effectiveness of this tool in the hands of the Communists. When the war broke out in 1937, the Eighth Route Army was assigned to the Second War Zone (in Shansi) under the command of that province's perennial governor, Yen Hsi-shan, with Chu Teh as vice-commander. Early in September, the Eighth Route Army crossed the Yellow River, the boundary between Shensi and Shansi, and its three divisons went off in different directions. Lin Piao's 115th Division advanced to Wut'aishan, a famous sacred mountain in north Shansi, and it was at this time that Lin Piao won his famous victory at P'ingshingkuan.[17] After the battle, Lin detached a relatively small force under his deputy-commander, Nieh Jung-chen to infiltrate the Wut'ai area of Shansi and the Foup'ing region of Hopei. Estimates vary as to the size of Nieh's force, from 800 to 2,000, depending upon the source. Lin Piao then returned to Yenan to head the Anti-Japanese Military-Political University.

Nieh Jung-chen at once cooperated with the Shansi Sacrifice League, a popular anti-Japanese organization, and in January 1938, the Chin-Ch'a-Chi Border Region government was established, the first of the Communist-sponsored rear-area governments.[18] The area controlled by the Chin-Ch'a-Chi Region government varied over time from 70 hsien (counties) to over a hundred, depending on how seriously the Japanese campaigned against it.[19]

The Nationalist government in Chungking soon became aware of the Communist penetration of the areas behind the Japanese lines and looking forward to the end of the war, was worried about this expansion of Communist political control. Given the attitudes at Chungking and Yenan, it was inevitable that cracks soon appeared in the united front, a *marriage de convenance* at least, and probably better expressed as a shotgun wedding, with the

[16] C. A. Johnson, *op. cit.*, p. 93.

[17] On 24 September 1937, Lin caught a Japanese unit in the Pinghsingkuan Pass, claims to have killed a thousand Japanese, and to have captured 70 truckloads of ammunition and supplies. This victory was loudly trumpeted throughout the Communist areas.

[18] Chin-Ch'a-Chi stood for the Shansi-Chahar-Hopei area, since the new government straddled parts of all three provinces.

[19] See C. A. Johnson, *op. cit.*, pp. 97-104, for the details concerning the Chin-Ch'a-Chi guerrilla base area.

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Japanese as the gun-toting parent. As early as December 1938, Ho Lung's 120th Division clashed with some Nationalist troops in Hopei. As the Communists expanded their activities into Shantung in early 1939, even more friction developed, and that same year the Nationalists began to try to contain the Communists within the Shensi-Kansu-Ninghsia Border Region. Things got so hot by December 1939 that the Communists accused the Nationalists of carrying on what was termed the "first anti-Communist upsurge."

In early 1940, Mao Tse-tung directed the New Fourth Army to attempt a grab for control of the area from Nanking to the sea and to the south as far as Hangchow, and also to expand the army to 100,000 men; the recruitment went along swimmingly and by the end of the year had reached the desired goal of 100,000. Chiang Kai-shek was seriously alarmed and demanded that the New Fourth Army relocate itself North of the Yellow River. In January 1941, the Nationalists surrounded and destroyed the headquarters detachment of the New Fourth Army which was still south of the Yangtze, killing some 9,000 men and capturing its commander.[20] On 17 January, Chiang ordered the New Fourth Army disbanded, an order which Yenan refused to consider. The Communists appointed a new commander, Ch'en Yi; and from the 90,000 men left after the "Incident" in January 1941, Ch'en Yi built up an army of 260,000 men by 1945. This was the most serious clash between the Communist and Nationalist troops during the war, and it was indicative of the depth of hostility between them.

The disagreement between the "partners" in the united front, however, was rapidly taking precedence over the war against the Japanese. By 1942, Chiang Kai-shek had 16 of his best divisions blockading the Shensi-Kansu-Ninghsia Border Region, and by 1943, according to the American attache in the embassy at Chungking, over 400,000 of the best Nationalist troops were engaged in manning the cordon around the Communist area. There was a well-founded suspicion in Chungking that Chiang Kai-shek was content, after Pearl Harbor, to let the Americans defeat the Japanese while he concentrated on shoring up his position for the inevitable postwar showdown with the Communists. While in the north at Yenan, Mao Tse-Tung and his colleagues had a vested interest in a protracted war against the Japanese, since it was the chaos engendered by the war that made their expansion in the countryside feasible—but this did not mean that they were expending too much effort on direct conflict with the enemy. They were expending most of their energies in exploiting the guerrilla base areas for political purposes.

5. Evolution of Mao Tse-tung's Military Doctrine. Mao Tse-tung's place in history is not for a contemporary observer to evaluate, especially in the year 1974: but as a theoretician on guerrilla-mobile warfare in predominantly rural societies, he has already made a colossal reputation. Some of Mao's observations on this peasant-based type of warfare date back as far as 1927, but his views between 1927 and 1936 were unsystematic—more *apercus* than developed theories. In December 1936, however, Mao delivered a series of lectures to the Red Army "War College" in northern Shensi and made a serious effort to put his views on "revolutionary war" into some kind of a logical order.[21] About a year and half later, in May 1938, he published two works on military doctrine and strategy in which he revealed the essence of his thinking on the military aspects of revolutionary warfare.[22] These three pieces of Maoist writing only come to about 280 pages in the English translation, but they represent the heart of Mao's military doctrine.

In this description of Mao's military doctrine, we shall proceed from the general to the particular; i.e., begin with Mao's discussion of strategic problems in general, as he saw them in his 1936 "Strategic Problems of China's Revolutionary War," then go on to his detailed analysis of guerrilla warfare) as discussed in his 1938 "Strategic Problems in the Anti-Japanese Guerrilla War") and, finally, consider his famous essay "On Protracted War," in which he not only describes the Red Amy's collective experience between 1928 and 1938, but also goes on to write a scenario for the events of the next decade.

Mao begins with some advice on how to study war: first the laws of war in general, then the laws of revolutionary war, and, finally, the laws governing China's revolutionary war. "War," says Mao, "is the highest form of struggle . . ." and like Lenin, he has not a pacifist bone in his body. Although the study of war is necessary to see China's struggle in its complete setting, nevertheless, the present war (1936) is being fought in China under peculiar circumstances and thus has its own special characteristics. To study war in general and then apply its laws mechanically to the Chinese revolutionary

[20]Yeh T'ing was held prisoner in Chungking until 15 March 1946 when he was released during the CCP-KMT "cease-fire" engineered by General G. C. Marshall. See L. M. Chassin, *The Communist Conquest of China* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1965), p. 78.

[21]"Strategic Problems of China's Revolutionary War," *Selected Works*, Vol. I, pp. 175-253.

[22]"Strategic Problems in the Anti-Japanese Guerrilla War," *Selected Works*, Vol II, pp. 119-156 and "On the Protracted War," *Selected Works*, Vol II, pp. 157-243.

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war, is like "whittling down the feet to fit the shoes."[23]

The strategist must always consider the "whole military situation," which may cover the entire world, a single country, or just an independent guerrilla base area. Strategic victory is not achieved by tactical successes alone, and there are instances in military history where, after a series of successful battles, a single defeat nullified all the previous achievements. The commander must do some hard thinking in order to see how his operational and tactical moves fit into the situation as a whole.

To Mao, the chief criterion of the good military commander is "to be good at learning." The process of learning is long and hard, as Mao himself describes it:

> This process of knowing is very important; without such a long period of experience it is difficult to understand and grasp the laws of an entire war. No truly able commander of a high rank can be made out of one who knows warfare only on paper; and to become such a commander one must learn through warfare.
>
> Reading books is learning, but application is also learning and the more important form of learning. To learn warfare through warfare—this is our chief method. A person who has had no opportunity to go to school can also learn warfare, which means learning it through warfare. As a revolutionary war is the concern of the masses of the people, it is often undertaken without previous learning but is learnt through undertaking it—undertaking is itself learning.[24]

The military commander must study both his own strengths and weaknesses as well as those of his enemy and, of course, Mao at this point cites Sun Wu Tzu's famous aphorism: "Know your enemy and know yourself, and you can fight a hundred battles without disaster." Mao goes on to say that wishful thinking, recklessness, and reliance on enthusiasm alone are not to be tolerated in a Red Army commander, or to put it in his own words:

> We do not allow any of our Red Army commanders to become rash and reckless hotheads and must encourage every one of them to become a hero, who, at once brave and wise, possesses not only the courage to override all obstacles but the ablity to control the changes and developments in an entire war.[25]

Mao then gets down to the peculiar characteristics of China's revolutionary war. He repeats his warning that the mechanical application of the laws of war in general or the laws of revolutionary war, e.g., those based entirely on the Russian experience in the 1918-1921 period, cannot lead to victory. One must examine closely the *four* peculiar characteristics of China's revolutionary war.

First, China is a vast semicolonial country, unevenly developed politically and economically, but it does have the advantage of having gone through the revolution of 1924-1927. This means that China has a frail capitalist economy and a preponderant stagnant semifeudal rural economy; i.e., a few million industrial workers and hundreds of millions of peasants. Since it is a semicolonial country, there is disunity among the imperialists and their lackeys, the ruling blocs within China, all of which can be exploited. China's vastness means that there is room enough to move around. Finally, the 1924-1927 revolution sowed the seeds for eventual victory—the Red Army and the CCP. This first characteristic "basically determines not only our political strategy and tactics, but also our military strategy and tactics."[26]

The second characteristic is the great strength of the enemy. He holds political control, has the support of the main imperialists, and has a large, well-armed standing army. This means that the Red Army has to wage a peculiar type of warfare.

The third characteristic is the smallness and weakness of the Red Army. It has a guerrilla heritage, has had to exist in a period of reaction in China, and has faced a relatively stable reactionary world. It is dispersed in remote areas with no outside help, short of arms and supplies, and lives under primitive conditions.

The fourth characteristic is the CCP leadership and the agrarian revolution. Even the strength of the enemy and the weakness of the Red Army are offset by the fact that the revolutionary war is being conducted by the CCP which, in turn, is supported by the peasantry. Thus the Communist bases, although small and primitive, possess great political power because they are part of the agrarian revolution. The enemy, opposed to the agrarian revolution, is deprived of peasant support.

Therefore, the first and fourth characteristics determine the possibility of the Red Army growing and eventually defeating the enemy, while the second and third determine the impossibility of the Red Army growing speedily or defeating the enemy quickly; i.e., determine the protracted nature of the war.

Most of Mao's attention in his 1936 lectures was devoted to what he calls the "strategic defensive." The failure of the united front in 1927 resulted in a ruthless class war between the CCP, with its scarce, guerrilla-type forces, and the mighty armies of the KMT, a KMT determined to obliterate the Communists in a series of "encirclement and annihilation" campaigns. Thus the CCP's first and most

[23] *Selected Works*, Vol. I, p. 177.
[24] *Ibid.*, pp. 186-87.
[25] *Ibid.*, p. 188.
[26] *Ibid.*, p. 195.

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serious problem was to conserve its military forces and to wait for an opportunity to defeat the enemy. This "strategic defensive is the most complicated and the most important problem in the Red Army's operation." says Mao.[27] Under the rubric of the "strategic defensive," he discusses the following nine problems:

1. Active defense and passive defense;
2. Preparations for a campaign against "encirclement and annihilation;"
3. Strategic retreat;
4. Strategic counteroffensive;
5. Problems of starting a counteroffensive;
6. Problems of troop concentration;
7. Mobile warfare;
8. War of quick decision; and
9. War of annihilation.

The problem of active or passive defense is no problem for Mao—he is all for active defense and says only a fool would consider purely passive defense. But even in active defense, there are two deviations that seem to have beset the Red Army: either an underestimate of the enemy or a cowering before the enemy. Both have led to disasters. If neither of these sins are committed, a rational active defensive is the optimum answer for the Red Army, especially since it has the support of the rural masses.

While the enemy prepares his "encirclement and annihilation" campaign, the Red Army should prepare a countercampaign. The big question is just when to begin preparations. Beginning too early may result in the stopping of an ongoing Red Army offensive, and beginning too late may lead to sloppy preparations. The latter include mobilization, recruitment, provision for supplies, and above all, arrangements for a skillful retreat.

This brings Mao to *strategic retreat,* one of the keys to his overall strategy. He defines the concept as follows:

> A strategic retreat is a planned strategic step which an inferior force, unable to smash quickly the offensive of a superior force, adopts in order to conserve its strength and wait for an opportune moment for beating the enemy.[28]

He also points out that this basic principle was being memorized in the Red Army as early as May 1928 in the well-known formula in sixteen words: "enemy advances, we retreat; enemy halts, we harrass; enemy tires, we attack; enemy retreats, we pursue."[29]

In dealing with the shift to a counteroffensive, Mao lists the following six conditions, at least two of which must obtain before this step is possible:

1. The people give active support to the Red Army;
2. The terrain is favorable for operations;
3. The main forces of the Red Army are completely concentrated;
4. The weak spots of the enemy are discovered;
5. The enemy is worn out both physically and morally; and
6. The enemy is induced to commit mistakes.

The first is the most important condition for the Red Army, and, if this condition exists, conditions four, five, and six can easily be created or discovered. Therefore, the Red Army invariably retreats from the White area into its own base area. Here, however, a problem arises: Should the terminus of retreat be at the front, in the center, or at the rear of the base area? If the enemy is far superior, then he must be drawn deeply into the base area, where he will become exhausted and demoralized in a hostile environment, while the Red Army contingents in their "retreat to the center" carry out a concentration of forces sufficient for the counteroffensive. "As to the loss of territory, it often happens that loss can be saved only through loss," says Mao in his best dialectic style. "If," he continues, "what we lose is territory and what we gain is victory over the enemy, plus recovery and even expansion of territory, then it is a profitable business."[30] He illustrates this point by referring to the disaster in 1934 that led to the Long March when the Reds tried to hold on to territory at the expense of flexibility.

A question that always arises is when to begin counteroffensive, i.e., the problem of the "first battle." He analyzes the five "encirclement and annihilation" campaigns conducted by the KMT between 1930 and 1935, and his conclusions are as follows: First, be sure to win the "first battle," thus strike only when absolutely positive that all the conditions are right for victory; second, the plan of the first battle must be the prelude to the plan for the rest of the campaign and an organic part of it; and, third, the utmost consideration must be given to the plan for the next strategic phase of the war. Mao sums up this long-range aspect of planning very succinctly in the following passage:

> In short, the phase of the counter-offensive must be taken into consideration when we are in the phase of retreat, the phase of the offensive must be taken into consideration when we are in the phase of counter-offensive; and the phase of retreat must be taken into consideration when we are in the phase of the offensive. To neglect all this and to be bound rigidly by the advantages and disadvantages of the moment is the way to disaster.[31]

In mounting a counteroffensive, the problems involving the concentration of troops must be

[27] *Ibid.*, p. 204.
[28] *Ibid.*, p. 210.
[29] *Ibid.*, p. 212.
[30] *Ibid.*, p. 221.
[31] *Ibid.*, p. 235.

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solved successfully. Mao, at this point, comes up with one of his favorite maxims:

> Our strategy is "to pit one against ten," while our tactic is "to pit ten against one"—this is one of the fundamental priniples on which we beat the enemy.[32]

This is his shorthand for a fundamental principle in his doctrine, namely, that given the enormous disparity between Chiang Kai-shek's forces and those of the Red Army, strategically the Red Army was facing ten-to-one odds, but tactically it should never attack unless it reversed the ratio, unless it had a great superiority of force locally.

According to Mao, the operational fronts should never be fixed. The word *fluidity* appears with monotonous regularity in this section of his writings. This fluidity is inevitable, given the conditions of the war. The fluidity of operational fronts results in the fluidity of the territory of the base areas and that territorial fluidity originates from the fluidity of the war itself. As a result the Red Army must stick to *mobile warfare.* Mao chides some of his colleagues who look down on this as guerrilla-ism, and points out that it is necessary to admit the guerrilla character of the Red Army. This guerrilla character is precisely its distinguishing feature, its strong point, its means of defeating the enemy. The Red Army spends more time in marching than in fighting, but all this "running away" is for the purpose of "fighting." When the Red Army reaches a higher stage, many of these guerrilla characteristics will be eliminated, but, of course, by then the environment will be very different.

In discussing *war of quick decision,* Mao has a good time indulging in one of his favorite pastimes, deriving truths from seeming contradictions. For example, he begins this section as follows:

> A strategically protracted war and a campaign of quick decision are two sides of the same thing, two principles to be emphasized simultaneously in the civil war, which are also applicable in the anti-imperialist war.[33]

He then goes on to explain the seeming contradiction. Because of the great strength of the reactionary forces and the support of the imperialists, the revolutionary forces grow slowly—thus the protracted nature of the war. But in operations and tactics the opposite is true—not protraction, but quick decision. The reasons for this are as follows: (1) The Red Army has extremely limited sources for the replenishment of arms and especially ammunition; (2) the limited number of Red Army detachments versus the large number of White units means that the Reds have to move quickly from one operation to another; (3) the Reds must also move quickly so that the attacked White group cannot get help from other White groups. This technique of quick decision requires thorough preparation, correct timing, concentration of preponderant forces, and skill in encirclement and outflanking the enemy.

Finally, Mao comes to his ninth problem, *war of annihilation.* The Red Army cannot afford a war of attrition and, furthermore, since the Red Army depends on the enemy for almost all of its supplies, the basic directive is war of annihilation. Mao waxes humorous on this business of Red Army supplies as can be seen in the following passage:

> We must not allow the establishment of our own war industry to foster in us a sense of exclusive reliance on it. Our basic directive is to rely on the war industries of the imperialist countries and of our enemy at home. We have a claim on the output of the arsenals of London as well as Hanyang, and, what is more, it is to be delivered to us by the enemy's own transport corps. This is the sober truth, not a joke.[34]

Only by annihilating the enemy's manpower can the Red Army smash his campaigns of "encirclement and annihilation" and expand the revolutionary base areas. A battle is not basically decisive that ends only in routing the enemy, for "to rout ten of the enemy's divisions is not so effective as to annihilate one of them.[35]

By 1938, the Red Army, with its name changed to the Eighth Route Army, was in a united front with Chiang Kai-shek's Nationalist forces and the enemy was now Japan. In his "Strategic Problems in the Anti-Japanese Guerrilla War,"[36] Mao concentrates on how best to fight the Japanese, but there is little he says that was not just as applicable to the civil war that followed in the 1945-49 period.

Mao begins by admitting that in the long haul regular warfare plays the main role and guerrilla warfare a supplementary one. In a big country like China, where the enemy has occupied extensive areas, and where the war is a protracted one, guerrilla warfare is most important. Furthermore such a guerrilla war is not just a matter of tactical problems but also involves such strategic problems as the strategic defensive, the security of base areas, the transition from guerrilla to mobile warfare, etc. Guerrilla warfare has its own characteristics and its strategic problems are peculiar and quite distinct from those of regular warfare. This being the case, Mao enumerates six specific problems in guerrilla warfare: (1) flexible offensive during the defensive; (2) co-ordination with regular warfare; (3)

[32] *Ibid.*, p. 239.
[33] *Ibid.*, p. 248.
[34] *Ibid.*, p. 253.
[35] *Ibid.*, p. 252.
[36] *Selected Works,* Vol. II, pp. 119-156.

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establishment of base areas; (4) mounting of strategic defensive and strategic offensive; (5) transition to mobile warfare; and (6) the correct relationship of commands.

Even though the Chinese are fighting a defensive war, they must fight numerous offensive actions, but the slogan for this type of activity is: "Gather a big force to strike a small enemy segment."[37] All such offensives must be launched on the commander's own initiative. He must keep his forces flexible—able to split up and yet able to concentrate swiftly. Above all, guerrilla warfare is not a haphazard matter; it must be fought according to as comprehensive a plan as possible.

Guerrilla actions must be coordinated with regular warfare activities. There are three levels of coordination: at the strategical level, in campaigns, and in battles. The guerrilla role in overall strategy is to disrupt supply lines, harass the enemy forces from the rear, and, in general, demoralize the opponent as much as possible. During a campaign, the guerrilla actions should be coordinated with those of the regular forces and with some accuracy. All large guerrilla units should have radios. In battles the guerrilla units should get their orders from the commander of the regular forces.

Because of the vastness of China, guerrilla operations should be spread over the whole of the enemy-occupied area in order to convert the enemy's rear into a front, in order to compel him to fight unceasingly. Base areas are an absolute necessity in this type of protracted conflict as even guerrillas cannot operate effectively without them. Roving peasant wars, e.g., the T'aiping Rebellion, have always failed, and the guerrilla commanders should not emulate them. Mao then lists the three types of base areas in order of preference: mountains, river-lake-estuary regions, and plains.

Mao evaluates guerrilla effectiveness according to the force's base area: most effective when the guerrillas control a central base; less effective in zones where the guerrillas operate without solid bases; and least effective in areas thoroughly in the grip of the enemy or his puppets. The strategic task of guerrilla warfare is to convert the last into the second, and the second into the first.

Mao is quite specific in how to go about establishing a base area. First, it is necessary to have an armed force and every effort must be made to increase its size to a guerrilla corps and eventually into a regular corps. Second, there must be coordination between the masses of the people and the guerrillas, and, to keep the people loyal, it is necessary to keep up the offensive and to expand the base area. And, third, to arouse the people, it is mandatory that mass organizations be created as the people cannot demonstrate their strength if they are unorganized. Thus the three basic conditions for establishing base areas are: the buildup of the armed forces, the defeat of the enemy, and the mobilization of the masses of the people.

Mao's discussion of "strategic defensive and strategic offensive" is much the same as in his 1936 lectures treated above. He does, however, summarize the inevitability of enemy attack in the following passage:

> After a guerrilla war has been started and considerably developed, especially when the enemy has ceased his strategic offensive against us on a nation-wide scale, and adopted instead a policy of defending the areas under his occupation, he will inevitably attack the guerrilla base areas. It is essential to recognize this inevitability, for otherwise the leaders in guerrilla war, caught unprepared by serious enemy assaults, will certainly fall into panic and confusion and their forces will be routed by the enemy.[38]

Since the enemy attacks on guerrilla bases are usually converging columns, four or five or more, the guerrillas should contain all except one column with supplementary forces and concentrate the main force on the one. Also it is necessary to keep strict controls over the people to avoid collaboratiors, the purveying of intelligence to the enemy, and the supplying of the enemy.

If the enemy's attack is smashed, then the initiative should be seized before he begins another offensive and our own offensive should begin at once. This is necessary to keep up popular enthusiasm, to enlarge base areas, to gain supplies and munitions, and to organize new guerrilla units. This is the time to give assistance to the regular army by large-scale destruction of enemy communications.

During a ruthless and protracted war, the guerilla forces gain experience and become steeled so that they can evolve into regular troops. When the guerrilla units become regular forces, then the war evolves from a guerrilla war into a mobile war. Even in 1938, Mao saw a great potential for this in the Chin-Ch'a-Chi Region and in Manchuria.[39]

Finally, guerrilla warfare is characterized by dispersed operations and a tight, centralized command would overly restrict that elasticity so necessary for success in such operations. Nevertheless, coordination of guerrilla and regular operations is also a necessity. Thus there must be compromise. Only unified strategy comes under the central command, while at the campaign and battle level there is a good deal of decentralization.

[37] *Ibid.*, p. 125.

[38] *Selected Works*, Vol II, p. 146.

[39] *Ibid.*, p. 151.

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In his essay "On the Protracted War,"[40] Mao tries to look at the course of the Sino-Japanese War as a whole. He visualizes the protracted war in three phases: (1) the enemy's strategic offensive and our strategic defensive; (2) the enemy's strategic defensive and our preparation for the counteroffensive; and (3) our strategic counteroffensive and the enemy's strategic retreat.

Mao assumes, quite correctly, that, in phase one, the enemy cannot occupy all of China. Thus the weaker force should avoid positional warfare, fight a mobile war with regular troops, and supplement this with guerrilla actions. The further the enemy penetrates, the more he has to disperse his offensive, and the bigger his rear becomes, thereby making guerrilla warfare more effective. Eventually the enemy has to stop his advance, try to consolidate his control of strategic points and his lines of logistics, and attempt to cope with the guerrillas. Mao continually stresses the following concept: never try to hold cities or real estate unless absolutely certain of victory. On the other hand, the strategic defensive must not degenerate into "fightism"; fight numerous engagements and annihilate as many enemy units as possible. But fight only engagements in which you have a temporary overwhelming superiority.

The second phase finds the enemy trying to pacify and consolidate the occupied area. He spends his energy holding on to big cities and protecting his lines of communications. Our main form of fighting in this phase is guerrilla warfare. This is the critical stage, says Mao, and it is the most painful period; it is in this stage that nation has to really exert itself.

In the third stage, mobile warfare is the main form of fighting and guerrilla actions again become supplementary. This is the stage of the counteroffensive, and, if we have built well in the second stage, we should be able to annihilate the enemy in this phase. But even in this stage we should avoid positional warfare as much as possible. Surround the cities by controlling the countryside and eventually the enemy's morale will break or he will be goaded into attacking at a strategic disadvantage.

MAO'S STRATEGY SCHEMATIZED

PHASE	TYPE OF WARFARE		
	MOBILE	GUERRILLA	POSITIONAL
1st: Strategic defensive	principle	auxiliary	auxiliary
2nd: Stalemate	auxiliary	principle	auxiliary
3rd: Strategic counter-offensive	principle	auxiliary	auxiliary

Mao's military doctrine, as set down in the 1936-1938 period, was tailored specifically to the conditions of a protracted war with a strong enemy, either the KMT or the Japanese, in a predominantly rural China. Lacking enough weapons and short of trained soldiers as well as an industrial base, he had to make do with three rather intangible assets: China's enormous area, time, and the peasant discontent. His primary problem was to gain the time necessary for the political mobilization of the discontented peasantry. Thus a protracted war was all in Mao's favor, but horribly costly to his industrialized opponent. Mao, on the whole, wanted to avoid a military decision in order to gain time for his army to carry out its political role: the agitation, organization, and political domination of the masses. As we shall see in the next chapter, the Japanese invasion and the resultant rise of nationalism among the Chinese peasants were made to order for Mao's policy of political mobilization of the rural masses.

[40] *Selected Works*, Vol. II, pp. 157-243.

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CHAPTER V

The Civil War and the Triumph of Mao Tse-tung, 1945-1949

THE Japanese surender in August 1945 ended the Sino-Japanese conflict, and Chiang Kai-shek moved out of Chungking to take over control of all China. The United States, USSR, and most of the world took it for granted that his government was, and would continue to be, the ruling regime. Mao Tse-tung and his colleagues in Yenan, on the other hand, insisted that Chiang broaden his government to include non-Kuomintang representation, especially Communists. Whether Mao's bid for a Communist role in a coalition government was anything more than a temporary expedient is hard to ascertain—the evidence is still confusing.

On paper, at least, the Nationalists had a conclusive superiority in military strength, estimates ranging from a five-to-one ratio to only three-to-one in Chiang's favor. Furthermore, the United States seemed committed to furnish him considerable military aid, especially in the provision of transport to enable him to move his forces rapidly throughout China. He also had a monopoly on the air power available in China.

The Communists, however, were in control of extensive areas in China, especially in the north, and had sold an enormous number of Chinese peasants on the idea that they, the Communists, had been the real leaders in the anti-Japanese fighting between 1937 and 1945. Their influence with the peasantry meant that the outnumbered Communists troops had the advantage of operating in friendly areas, an asset that they exploited to the utmost in the following four years.

In spite of American efforts to forestall a civil conflict, the mission of Gen George C. Marshall in particular, neither Chiang nor Mao was willing to concede enough to make a viable coalition government feasible. Both sides jockeyed for positions of strength—the Communists concentrating primarily in North China and in Manchuria, while the Nationalists raced to take over the main cities in Central China and along the coast. Manchuria, occupied by the Soviets after mid-August 1945, became a focal point of the conflict in late 1945 and during 1946. The Communists were able to infiltrate the countryside, to seize a good deal of the armaments of the Kwantung Army with the Soviets "looking through their fingers," and when the Nationalists finally did obtain control of the large cities, the Communists had a firm grip on the rural areas surrounding them.

By late 1947 and during 1948, the Communists were able to take the initiative in the civil war and the Nationalist rout began. Nationalist fortunes went from bad to worse in 1948, and during 1949, the Communist armies pushed forward everywhere so successfully that Chiang had no choice except to either go down with the ship or flee to Taiwan, and he chose to do the latter. Mao established a new regime for all mainland China in October 1949 and the civil war was all but over, although mopping-up operations extended into 1950.

This chapter is an attempt to account for the speed and completeness of the Communist victory, an upset in the world balance of power that stands out even in the kaleidoscopic twentieth century. Although the focus of this study is on the growth of the Chinese Red Army, in order to explain the Communist conquest of mainland China in the 1945-1949 period, it will be necessary to discuss many things not usually subsumed under the rubric of "military matters."

1. The KMT-CCP Military Balance on the Eve of the Civil War.—When the Japanese caved in, there were two claimants for control of a chaotic China: Chiang Kai-shek's Nationalist regime in Chungking in Szeschwan Province and Mao Tse-tung's Communist government with its headquarters in Yenan in Shensi Province. Both had large military forces, and while the Communists occupied more territory at the outset, the Nationalists were recognized by both the United States and the USSR as the legitimate government of China.

The Nationalists, according to their order of bat-

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tle on 31 August 1945, had 290 divisions totaling some 2,700,000 men.[1] General Stilwell, in 1944, appraised Chiang's forces as follows: 344 divisions, 60-odd brigades, and 89 guerrilla units of about 2,000 men each. But, said Stilwell, the average division had only 5,000 men instead of the 10,000 called for in its table of organization, or something on the order of 2 million men in all.[2] According to the official Nationalist figures, by the end of 1945 the government armed forces came to 89 infantry armies (239 divisions) and 2 cavalry armies (13 divisions), or a total of 3,800,000 men.[3] This total did not include the Communists of the 18th Group Army, the Nationalist designation of the Communist forces. Another authority, General Chassin, gives the Nationalist strength in late 1945 as 278 brigades with a total of 2,500,000 men.[4] In mid-1946, according to the *China White Paper* put out by the State Department in 1949, the Nationalists had around 3 million troops.[5] Some of the discrepancies in these estimates are probably because of the almost immediate incorporation of many of Wang Ching-wei's "puppet" troops into the Nationalist armies, an addition which was to prove a dubious asset.

The hard core of Chiang's military force was the contingent trained and equipped by the Americans, some 39 divisions, or 13 armies of 3 divisions each. Some of these troops had been trained in India and many others had been with Stilwell in his Burma campaign.[6] When Gen Albert Wedemeyer replaced Stilwell in November 1944, he continued the training program. The bulk of Chiang's armies, however, was made up of mediocre divisions—badly trained, poorly equipped, in dubious physical condition, and without motivation.

The Nationalists had a monopoly on the available air power in China. The old "Flying Tigers," a group of American volunteers under Claire Chennault which went to the aid of the Chinese before the United States entered the war, gradually became more and more Chinese and, in November 1943, was named the Chinese-American Composite Wing. This force was equipped with P-40s, B-25s, and C-47s, and by 1945 had over 500 aircraft (200 fighters, 60 medium bombers, 30 heavy bombers, 15 recce aircraft, and 120 transports).[7] After V-J Day, the United States continued to build up the Chinese air strength with the objective of 8 1/3 groups, regarded as enough to support the Nationalist armies.[8]

The Nationalists also had a navy of sorts. It consisted of a small core of warships, a number of gunboats, and 130 or so landing craft of various types obtained from the United States. The Americans established a training center at Tsing-tao in late 1945 and helped train 300 officers and 10,000 enlisted men. For reasons unknown to this writer, the Nationalist navy played an extremely minor role in the civil war.

If estimates of the size of the Nationalist forces are confused, those concerning the military forces available to the Communists are even more so. Few outside observers penetrated the Communist-controlled base areas, and even those who did, could do little more than repeat the figures supplied by the Communist leaders.

From the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese War in July 1937 until early in 1941, the Communists steadily penetrated the Japanese-occupied areas, setting up anti-Japanese bases behind the enemy lines. Vague estimates put the Communist-controlled population as high as 100 million at this time.[9] Then the Japanese shifted their attention from Chiang Kai-shek to concentrate on an all-out attack on the Communists, especially in North China. In 1941 and 1942, the Japanese "mopping up" campaigns reached their apogee in intensity and ferocity, and the Chinese population, under Communist control, dropped to below 50 million. Japanese enthusiasm for this type of warfare, however, petered out in the 1943-1945 period, and the Communists were able to recover their losses and even to expand their areas. By late 1944, the Communist-controlled areas, called "Liberated Areas" by the Communists, numbered 16: 6 in North China, 8 in Central China, and 2 in the south.[10] By mid-1945, the Communists had expanded to a total of 19 base areas covering a

[1] Romanus, C. F., and R. Sunderland, *Time Runs out in the CBI: U.S. Army in World War II, China-Burma-India Theater.* (Washington, D.C.: Office of the Chief of Military History, Dept. of the Army, 1958.) Table 7 on p. 383.

[2] Joseph Stilwell, *The Stilwell Papers.* (Arranged and Edited by T. H. White), (New York: Sloane Associates, 1948), pp. 316-317.

[3] *China Handbook,* 1937-1945, in the Supplement for 1946 section, p. 764.

[4] L. M. Chassin, *The Communist Conquest of China: A History of the Civil War, 1945-1949.* (Translated by T. Osato and L. Gelas), p. 44.

[5] *United States Relations with China: With Special Reference to the Period 1944-1949,* p. 313; referred to hereafter as the *White Paper.*

[6] Romanus and Sunderland, *op. cit.,* p. 372; Chassin, *op. cit.,* p. 44.

[7] Chassin, *op. cit.,* p. 48.

[8] *White Paper,* p. 312.

[9] Harrison Forman, *Report from Red China,* (New York: Holt, 1945) p. 121.

[10] *Ibid.,* p. 122; in North China the following areas: Shensi-Kansu-Ninghsia, Shansi-Chahar-Hopei, Shansi-Hopei-Honan, Shansi-Suiyuan, Hopei-Shantung-Honan, and Shantung; in Central China: Northern Kiangsu, Central Kiangsu, Southern Kiangsu, Eastern Chekiang, Hawainan (south of Hwai River), Hwaipei (north of Hwai River), Central Anhwei, and the Hupeh-Hunan-Anhwei Border Region; in South China: the Tungkiang guerrillas along the Canton-Kowloon Railroad and a base on Hainan Island.

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million square kilometers and inhabited by over a hundred million people.[11]

Mao Tse-tung, at the April Party Congress in 1945, gave the following figures on Communist strengths: 1,210,000 Party members, a population of 95,500,000 in the so-called "Liberated Areas," an army of 910,000 regular troops, and a militia of 2,200,000.[12] According to Clubb,[13] the official Communist paper in Chungking, the *Hsin Hua Jih Pao* (New China Daily News), broke down Mao's totals as follows:

Area	Regular Army	Militia
North China	470,286	1,615,000
Central China	343,982	580,000
South China	20,730	5,000
Shensi-Kansu-Ninghsia Border	80,540	- - - -
	915,538	2,200,000

Estimates by non-Communists tend to be more modest. For example, the US War Department estimate for October 1944 was 475,000 regular troops: 318,000 in the Eighth Route Army and 149,000 in the New Fourth Army, plus 8,000 in South China.[14] Jerome Ch'en estimates a total of 860,000 in 1945: 600,000 in the Eighth Route Army and 260,000 in the New Fourth.[15] In the *White Paper,* the State Department comments that in August 1945 the Nationalists possessed an estimated five-to-one superiority in combat troops and rifles and practically a monopoly of heavy equipment, transport, and aircraft.[16]

No matter whose figures are used, the ratio of regular forces between the Nationalists and the Communists was something between a high of five to one to a low of three to one. It is not strange, therefore, that Chiang, his American advisers, and probably even Stalin, took it for granted that in any military showdown Chiang could defeat his Communist rivals. The factor that seemed to escape most observers was the "militia" strength of the Communists. The two million or so armed peasants in the "Liberated Areas" were vital to Mao's strategy—it was this mass of peasant supporters that insured the Communist armed forces of excellent intelligence, provided a reservoir of manpower, and made it possible for them to move about with a minimum of logistical support. This militia, on the other hand, harassed the Nationalist troops incessantly, cut their communications, and kept them penned up in the cities of China.

2. Jockeying for Strategic Positions, 1945.— As soon as the first report of the Japanese intention to surrender got to Chungking on 10 August, Chiang Kai-shek ordered Chu Teh to keep his Communist troops in place and to refrain from accepting the surrender of any Japanese units. This order was made more official looking a few days later when General MacArthur, as SCAP (Supreme Commander of the Allied Powers), issued his Order No. 1 which designated Chiang Kai-shek as the agent to accept Japanese surrenders in all of China, with the exception of Manchuria, which was being occupied rapidly by the Soviet Armed Forces under Malinovsky. The combined authority of Chiang Kai-shek and MacArthur, however, left Yenan unimpressed, and Chu Teh's Red warriors went right ahead accepting the surrender, and the arms, from as many Japanese as they could get their hands on.

The United States agreed to provide Chiang Kai-shek with transport and the American Tenth Air Force used over 200 C-47s to airlift Chiang's troops to strategic points throughout China, thereby enabling him to offset the Communist advantage of being in control of large areas. The Nationalist New Sixth Army of Burma fame, for example, was able to enter Nanking by 25 August, and the 94th Army got to Shanghai in early September, and a forward element of Nationalist troops arrived in Peiping by 9 September. In a relatively short time, US aircraft and naval transport moved about half a million Nationalist troops. Furthermore, some 53,000 US Marines were moved into Peiping, Tientsin, and other vital points in North China.

This rapid deployment of Nationalist troops by Chiang Kai-shek thwarted the Communist strategy of holding a block of territory from Shensi through the Yellow Plain to Shantung and the sea, or the traditional "horizontal strategy," which would have cut North China off from the Yangtze area. The key element in the "horizontal strategy" was to control the Lunghai Railroad which goes from the ocean through Suchow, Kaifeng, Loyang, to Sian. In August 1945, Liu Poch'eng was straddling the Peiping-Hankow Railroad with 100,000 men, and Ch'en Yi's New Fourth Army, around 200,000 men, was heavily concentrated in Shantung and held a section of the Tientsin-Pukow Railroad. These were the only two rail lines between the Yangtze and the Peiping area. The "vertical strategy" with which Chiang was stuck called for control of those two north-south rail lines. As Chassin points out, for many centuries any Shensi-based

[11] Jerome Ch'en, *Mao and the Chinese Revolution,* p. 255.

[12] O. E. Clubb, *Twentieth Century China,* p. 253.

[13] *Ibid.,* p. 254.

[14] C. A. Johnson, *Peasant Nationalism and Communist Power,* p. 74; Johnson gives a rough estimate of 500,000 regular troops in 1945.

[15] *Op. cit.,* p. 365; in another place in his book (p. 252), however, Ch'en gives 600,000 and 300,000 respectively for 1945, thus a total of 900,000.

[16] *White Paper,* p. 311.

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regime in China was compelled to follow the "horizontal strategy," while any government in Nanking was just as compulsively pushed into the "vertical strategy."[17] Only the American transportation of Nationalist forces in the autumn of 1945 prevented the Communists from successfully implementing the "horizontal strategy" immediately.

While Chiang was seizing control of China up to the Lunghai Railroad and deploying his forces around Peiping, Lin Piao was busy, from early September, infiltrating Red troops in civilian clothes into Soviet-occupied Manchuria. Eighth Route Army soldiers moved in via Jehol and New Fourth Army troops were shipped from Chefoo in Shantung to the Manchurian ports on the Liaotung Peninsula. By November, Lin Piao had 130,000 Red troops in Manchuria and was busy recruiting from the underground and from the disbanded Manchukuo puppet troops. The pickings were good. Furthermore, the vast amounts of arms and equipment that the Soviets had taken from the Japanese Kwantung Army and the Manchukuo puppets were available to Lin Piao to some extent; the Soviets "looked through their fingers" while the Chinese Communists seized large quantities.[18] This bonanza solved Lin's recruiting problem as the lack of arms was a traditional limitation.

Chiang Kai-shek, well aware that Manchuria was being infiltrated by the Chinese Communists, was anxious to get his own forces into the region. When he tried to send them aboard American naval transports, he ran into two insurmountable obstacles: first, the Soviets in control of Dairen and Port Arthur refused to allow American ships to dock in those ports; second, when the American naval commander, Vice Admiral Barbey, tried to land the Nationalist troops at the smaller ports of Yingkow and Hulutao, he found the ports were under control of the Chinese Communists, who refused to deal with him. He finally had to deliver the troops at Chinhuangtao, just south of where the Great Wall meets the sea, an area controlled by US Marines. Thus Chiang had only one way of getting into Manchuria and that was along the Tientsin-Mukden Railroad, which runs through the narrow Liaosi corridor between the sea and the mountains and can be easily blocked. General Wedemeyer, Chiang's American adviser, warned Chiang against moving into Manchuria before he had completed the consolidation of his position below the Great Wall, but Chiang, on 15 November, ordered his forces to move along the Liaosi corridor and head for Mukden. His American-trained divisions with their superior equipment succeeded in pushing through the Communist resistance and took Hulutao by 24 November.

By the end of 1945, the Nationalists had gained control of the major cities below the Lunghai rail line, and held Peiping, Tientsin, Taiyuan, and Tatung in the north. They had still not completed the job of clearing the Communists from the Peiping-Hankow and Tientsin-Pukow railroads, thus their logistics between the Yangtze and the north were in shaky condition. They were on their way into Manchuria along the Teintsin-Mudken Railroad. The Communists, on the other hand, held the Shensi-Kansu-Nighsia Border Region; had powerful forces in Shansi, Hopei, Jehol, and Chahar; and were still strong in Kiangsu and Shantung. Their infiltration of Manchuria was going according to plan.

In the meanwhile, the United States was putting pressure on both Chiang and Mao to settle their differences in a more peaceful manner. As early as June 1944, Vice President Wallace had flown to Chungking to see if he could get the two rivals together in a joint effort against the Japanese. In August 1944, Gen Patrick Hurley was sent to Chungking as Roosevelt's personal emissary to accomplish the same task, and in January 1945, he replaced Gauss as Ambassador to China. Hurley managed to talk to the Communists, but by December 1945, he was so frustrated that he quit. On 23 December 1945, Gen George C. Marshall arrived in China with definite instructions to find some solution to the KMT-CCP problem short of war. On 31 December, pressured by Marshall, Chiang Kai-shek announced that a Political Consultative Conference (PCC) would be convoked at Chungking on 10 January 1946. Furthermore, a "Committee of Three" (Marshall, Chang Chih-chung of the KMT, and Chou En-lai of the CCP) met on 7 January and three days later agreed upon a cease-fire to begin on 13 January, the same day that the PCC held its first meeting. The cease-fire of 10 January called for a cessation of all hostilities, and, among other things, a Communist agreement that there would be no interference with the Nationalist occupation of Manchuria. On 25 February 1946, the PCC came up with a plan for a reduced and integrated Chinese Army which would, by July 1947, level off at 60 divisions: 50 Nationalist and 10 Communist. Marshall felt that he was getting somewhere in his role of mediator. There is no doubt, however, that neither side was doing anything more than stalling while jockeying for

[17] *Op. cit.*, pp. 58-59.

[18] The Soviets captured a total of 300,000 rifles, 4,836 machine guns, 1,226 pieces of artillery, 369 tanks, 2,300 motor vehicles, and 925 aircraft. *See* Tang Tsou, America's Failure in China, p. 331. Just how much of this Lin Piao's men got is unknown, but a considerable part. One Nationalist source says it came to "six hundred thousand tons." *See* Clubb, *op. cit.*, p. 266.

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strategic one-upmanship—an obvious bit of analysis to the observer today, but hardly so to Marshall in early 1946. While Marshall was in Washington between 11 March and 18 April, the whole KMT-CCP agreement came apart at the seams, largely because of events in Manchuria.

3. The Civil War: First Phase, 1946-1947.—During 1946, the Nationalists concentrated on gaining possession of Manchuria, the most industrialized part of China and, in Chiang Kai-shek's opinion, a necessary acquisition if China were ever to reconstruct its economy in any reasonable time span. The Treaty of Friendship and Alliance Between the Republic of China and the USSR,[19] signed on 14 August 1945, specified that the Three Eastern Provinces, i.e., Manchuria, were recognized by the Soviets as an integral part of China. Stalin had also assured the Nationalist government that the Soviets would evacuate Manchuria within two or three months, 15 November at the latest. Chiang Kai-shek appointed his number-one son, Chiang Ching-kuo, who had spent ten years in the Soviet Union, as negotiator to deal with Malinovsky, the Soviet commander in Manchuria. By early November 1945, it was obvious that the Nationalist troops were not going to be able to take over effective control of Manchuria by the November 15th deadline and the Nationalists requested the Soviets to delay their withdrawal—3 December was set as the new date. But even that proved overly optimistic, and a further delay was requested, moving the exodus to 3 January 1946. On 9 December, the withdrawal was further postponed until 1 February. These delays were at the request of Chiang Kai-shek.

When the Nationalists refused to agree to a joint Soviet-Chinese exploitation of the Manchurian industries, however, it was the Soviet turn to delay the withdrawal from that region. The proposed tentative date was established as 1 March. In the meanwhile, the Soviets proceeded to strip the Manchurian plants of everything moveable and to ship the booty to the Soviet Union. The Pauley Commission, which investigated the situation in May-June 1946, estimated that the Soviets had looted the area of $858 million in equipment, but that it would cost over $2 billion to replace it.[20]

Finally, by 15 March 1946, the Soviets withdrew from Mukden and the Nationalist 52nd Army occupied the city—seven months after V-J Day. In mid-March, the Nationalists had only 137,000 troops in Manchuria and Jehol, while as early as 13 February Yenan announced that the Northeastern Democratic Army (the Communist designation for its military forces in Manchuria) totaled nearly 300,000 troops, not counting the militia.[21] Lin Piao's forces were deployed in depth throughout the countryside.

On 17 March, the Chinese Communists seized Ssuping, a strategic railway junction halfway between Mukden and Changchun, the capital of Manchuria, thereby blocking the Nationalist advance on the capital city. Lin Piao's strategy was obvious: Malinovsky has informed the Nationalists that he would have his forces out of Manchuria by the end of April and Lin, by blocking the Nationalist advance at Ssuping, was able to grab off most of Manchuria as the Soviets moved out. The Chinese Communists held on to Ssuping until 20 May—the bloodiest battle of the postwar period up to that time.

The Soviet role in Manchuria was most helpful to the Chinese Communists. First, the Soviets checked the entry of Nationalist troops through the great harbors at Dairen and Port Arthur and supported the Communist control of the smaller ports such as Yingkow and Hulutao. This forced the Nationalists to bulldoze their way into Manchuria along the perilous Liaosi corridor. Second, the Soviets connived at the Chinese Communist looting of the stockpiles of Japanese arms and equipment. Third, the Soviets delayed their exit from Manchuria during 1946 until the Chinese Communists were in a position to fill in the vacuum left by their withdrawal. It is hard to see how the Chinese Communists could have secured their powerful position in Manchuria in 1945-1946 without Soviet help.

Once the Nationalists had pushed through the Communist defenses as Ssuping, they were able to seize Chungchun and Kirin in a few days. They even got as far as the Sungari River in a drive toward Harbin. The Chinese Communists, however, took advantage of the Nationalist concentration in the Changchun-Sungari-Kirin triangle and attacked in south Manchuria and in Jehol. It was in this campaign that the 184th Nationalist Division (from Yunnan) defected to the Communists—a practice that was to become widespread in the next three years.

Chiang Kai-shek, in June, asked for a truce, ostensibly to work out an agreement with the Communists. During the 30 days of the truce, General Marshall worked like a beaver in attempting to get both sides to agree upon a coalition government.

[19]*See* Appendix A in R. L. Garthoff (editor), *Sino-Soviet Military Relations*, pp. 203-213, for the text of the treaty.

[20]See Annex 60 in *White Paper*, pp. 596-604, for the Pauley report on the "War Booty" removals from Manchuria.

[21]Clubb, *op. cit.*, pp. 267-68.

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This was the last time Marshall saw any chance of preventing the civil war from escalating into a conflict with no outcome short of the absolute defeat of one of the rival powers. When the truce blew up in July, Marshall, although he stayed on in China until 6 January 1947, lost all hope of accomplishing any good as a mediator.

The civil war began in earnest in July 1946—the jockeying for position was now transformed into a do-or-die conflict, with neither side willing to negotiate meaningfully. A US estimate of the balance in mid-1946 gave the Nationalists 3 million troops to the Communists' 600,000 regulars and 400,000 irregulars,[22] probably a gross underestimation of the Communist military strength. It was at this time, in July 1946, that the Communists renamed their military forces the People's Liberation Army, or the PLA, which is still the name of the Communist armed forces on mainland China today.

In the second half of 1946, the Nationalist gains looked good on the surface. They had secured control of the valuable Lunghai Railroad and also controlled the Tsingtao-Tsinan line, thus enabling them to supply their troops in an east-west direction from coastal ports. By late autumn, they had captured Kalgan, the gateway to Inner Mongolia, and had cleared most of Jehol. In Manchuria, they held the large cities of Mudken, Changchun, and Kirin, and had a bridgehead on the Sungari, intended as a point of departure for a campaign against Harbin in the near future.

The Communists, however, following Mao's mobile warfare strategy and tactics, were doing little to prevent the Nationalists from seizing city after city. As the Nationalists fanned out over ever larger areas, their logistics got more and more fragile, and the Communists were busy penetrating their rear areas in much the same way they had infiltrated the Japanese rear in the 1937-1945 period.

In January 1947, Lin Piao launched the first of a series of offensives in Manchuria by sending three columns across the frozen Sungari toward Changchun. The Nationalists broke it up. A second probe in late February was on a larger scale, and was again checked by the Nationalists. Then, with hardly a decent pause, Lin Piao launched another offensive in early March. The net effect of these actions was to push the Nationalists below the Sungari and to cause them to postpone indefinitely any idea of an attack on Harbin. In May, Lin Piao put together a force of 270,000 men and during May and June succeeded in bottling the Nationalists up in the three cities of Mukden, Changchun, and Kirin, with very tenuous and intermittent communications among those cities and with North China.

Manchuria was now becoming a gigantic trap for the Nationalists and Chiang Kai-shek's chances of getting his best divisions out without enormous losses were getting slimmer and slimmer. But Chiang decided to play for all or nothing, and he dispatched reinforcements from North China, thereby weakening his position in that region and, as events would prove, doing no good in Manchuria.

In March 1947, for reasons of prestige, Chiang sent a large force charging into Shensi to take the Communist capital, Yenan. Ho Lung, deciding that there was nothing in Yenan worth making a do-or-die stand over, vacated the area and proceeded to consolidate the Communist hold on Shansi. As the perennial warlord of Shansi, Yen Hsi-shan, groaned: the Nationalists were trading a fat cow for a lean horse.[23] Mao Tse-tung, true to his military doctrine, was not interested in holding real estate for reasons of prestige.

In August 1947, Liu Po-ch'eng came racing out of his lair in Hopei and cut across the Lunghai rail line, while Ch'en Yi moved forces from Shantung to fill in the gap left by Liu Po-ch'eng. The two PLA commanders were now moving into position to execute the "horizontal strategy" in the not too distant future. By late 1947, the PLA had a solid grip on most of Hopei and Shansi and Liu Po-ch'eng had dug in below the Lunghai.

Lin Piao, after two months of rest, went on the offensive again in September. The PLA hit the Liaosi corridor on the 20th and by the end of the month had cut communications between North China and Mukden. Another Communist force wrecked the rail line between Mukden and Changchun. In December, Lin Piao's forces began the siege of Mukden. The PLA was now shifting from mobile warfare to positional warfare. An American estimate of the balance of forces at the end of 1947 gave the Nationalists 2,700,000 troops to 1,150,000 for the PLA.[24] But Mao Tse-tung, on 25 December 1947, claimed that the PLA had 2 million regular troops.[25] The balance was near enough to make positional warfare in some sectors feasible under the Maoist doctrine.

The Nationalist forces in Manchuria were now isolated from the rest of China and penned up in the cities of Mukden, Changchun, and Kirin. Four

[22] *White Paper*, p. 313.

[23] Clubb, *op. cit.*, p. 280.

[24] *White Paper*, p. 317.

[25] Clubb, *op. cit.*, p. 285; Chassin, *op. cit.*, pp. 158-59, gives the Nationalists some 1,250,000 to the Communists' 700,000 as of 1 January 1948.

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hundred eighteen thousand of Chiang Kai-shek's best troops were now surrounded and dependent entirely on airlift for supplies and reinforcements. Clubb compares their situation to that of the Germans at Stalingrad in early 1943.[26]

4. The Civil War: Second Phase, 1948-1949.—The year 1948 was the pivotal year in the civil war between the Nationalists and the Communists, the year in which the Communists successfully waged a number of major battles and campaigns, the year in which the Reds gained numerical, not to speak of qualitative, superiority over the Nationalists in both troops and materiel. At the end of 1947, Chiang Kai-shek's armies in Manchuria were in an extremely uncomfortable position, but his forces were still in control of most China outside of the three northern provinces. By the end of 1948, the Nationalists had been pushed back to the Yangtze, and there was little doubt in anyone's mind about the PLA's ability to push across that barrier in the next few months.

During January and February 1948, Lin Piao continued his strangulation of the Nationalist forces in Mukden and Changchun by closing off the rail line to the Liatung ports and by taking the cities of Kirin and Szepingkai. General David Barr, chief of the US Joint Military Advisory Group in China, urged Chiang repeatedly to evacuate his crack troops from Manchuria while he still had a chance to do so, but his impassioned pleas got nowhere with the Generalissimo. Between early 1948 and September of that year, Lin Piao was content to pull the noose tighter and tighter around the surrounded Nationalists in Mukden.

The first half of 1948 saw a rapid increase in Red activities in Northern China and the central provinces. Nieh Jung-chen[27] held most of Jehol and Chahar, while P'eng Teh-huai and Ho Lung were expanding their offensives in Shensi and Shansi, the former taking Yanan in April and even making a quick foray into Szeschuan province, thereby scaring the Nationalists badly. The Red commanders were also active in the central provinces, capturing Loyang on the all-important Lunghai railroad in April, while in Shantung province they held everything except the cities of Tsinan, Tsingtao, and Chefoo.

The Red activities in Central China around the Lunghai line culminated in the battle of Kaifeng in June; and, although the Nationalists held the city of Kaifeng (retaken from Ch'en Yi) at the end of the furious fighting, they lost 90,000 men and the Red commander-in-chief, Ch'en Yi, played rings around them strategically and tactically.

By late June, the Red armies were equal in numbers to the Nationalists for the first time. "The Nationalists now had no more than 2,180,000 men, 980,000 of them armed, and 21,000 artillery pieces. Opposing them now were 1,560,000 Red regulars and 700,000 guerrillas with a total of 970,000 rifles and 22,800 artillery pieces."[28] It was at this point that Mao and Chu Teh shifted strategy in many areas from the hit-and-run tactics of 1946-1947 to major operations in open country and the besieging of large cities. Furthermore, the war was rapidly being shifted southward: at the end of 1947 there were only 80,000 Red troops south of the Lunghai line, and by the end of June 1948 Ch'en Yi, Liu Po-ch'eng, and Ch'en Keng commanded a half million soldiers in Central China.[29]

The various Nationalist fronts began to disintegrate rapidly in September 1948. Ch'en Yi attacked Tsinan, the chief city in Shantung, in mid-September, and within ten days, the city capitulated with a loss of 50,000 rifles to the Nationalists. The American Consul General in Tsingtao stated at the time that the defeat was less military than psychological—defection, defeatism, and a mutual lack of trust among the Nationalist units.[30]

In Manchuria, Lin Piao began his final drive on 12 December. He now had 600,000 troops to 300,000 for the Nationalists. Lin began by attacking Chinchow, a key point between Mukden and Peking, and by 17 October, the Nationalists surrendered, thereby losing 100,000 men, complete with their equipment. There was then no alternative except to withdraw from Manchuria, but the slowness and awkwardness of the Nationalist generals and their lack of mutual support made even the long-delayed step ineffectual. The bulk of the Nationalist army was half way between Chinchow and Mukden by late October when Lin's troops hit its flank and destroyed it as a viable force. Mukden surrendered in November. The Nationalists lost 400,000 of their best troops in the Manchurian fiasco, not to speak of huge amounts of American-supplied materiel. Even Chiang Kai-shek, in restrospect, admitted that ". . . we made the mistake of commit-

[26] *Ibid.*, p. 286.

[27] At the present time (1967) in charge of Communist China's nuclear weapons program.

[28] Chassin, *op. cit.*, p. 177.

[29] *Ibid.*, pp. 181-82: Chassin gives the following order of battle for the Red forces in mid-1948; under Chu Teh, the supreme commander of the six field armies, were: the People's Liberation Army of Northwest China under P'eng Teh-huai; the People's Liberation Army of North China under Nieh Jung-chen; the United Democratic Army of Northeast China under Lin Piao; the Shansi-Suiyuan-Shenkanning Field Army under Ho Lung; the Liberation Army of the Central Plains under Liu Po-ch'eng; and the People's Liberation Army of East China under Ch'en Yi.

[30] U.S. *White Paper*, pp. 319-20.

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ting the best Government troops to the Northeast Provinces only to be bogged down there."[31]

The collapse of all Nationalist opposition in Manchuria left Lin Piao free to move south of the Great Wall, and he proceeded to attack Fu Tso-yi's forces in the Peking area almost immediately. Fu, an able general, held a rectangular area around Peking, protected by the cities of Chengteh, Kalgan, Paoting, and the port of Tangku. Between late October and early December, Fu allowed the Reds to take Paoting, Chengteh, and to move within 40 miles of Peking, where he sat with 25 excellent divisions. The reason for his weak defense was revealed in January 1949 when he signed an agreement with Lin Piao to hand over Peking without a fight.[32]

While Fu Tso-yi was being wooed with the traditional "silver bullet," the main Red drive was first against Suchow, a key city since it is the junction of the Lunghai and the Peking-Nanking railroads, and later Pengpu, on the Hwai River. These were the main bastions left between the Reds and the Yangtze River. Ch'en Yi, Liu Po-ch'eng, and Ch'en Keng had some 600,000 troops for this campaign, while the Nationalists had an equal number. Even though the Nationalists had complete control of the air, in open country at that, their generals were by now so defensively minded that they merely dug in to await the Red attacks. The battle of Suchow (or the Hwai-Hai Campaign in Chicom literature) began on 5 November 1948, lasted for 65 days, and by 10 January 1949 the Reds had pushed to the north bank of the Yangtze, eliminating 600,000 Nationalist troops in either casualties or prisoners as they pushed through.

By January 1949, there was near chaos in the Nationalist capital of Nanking. During the negotiations between Fu Tso-yi and the Communists, Vice President Li Tsung-jen tried to send an envoy to Fu in Peking, but his emissary was assassinated by the Kuomintang police under the direction of the Ch'en brothers. Li Tsung-jen, with no alternative, concurred in the Fu Tso-yi "compromise" with Lin Piao and this brought him into a head-on collision with ChiangKai-shek; the latter resigned as President on 21 January 1949 and Li Tsung-jen took over the reins of government. But the situation was not really as simple as all that: Chiang, although ostensibly out of office, still ahd a large degree of control because of his close relationships with most of the commanders of the Nationlist armies, and Li Tsung-jen was stymied at almost every step.

By February 1949, the Nationalists were down to 1,500,000 men, some 500,000 of whom were service troops; the Reds now had 1,622,000 regular troops, almost all of whom were combat effectives; thus the Reds had a one-and-a-half to one superiority over their opponents in combat troops. Furthermore, the Reds were better equipped, mostly with arms captured from the Nationalists.[33] The Nationalists still had air and naval superiority, but they never seemed able to use either to their advantage during the whole course of the civil war. The figures just cited, which are from US Army Intelligence, do not tell the whole story. The Reds controlled enormous guerrilla forces which enabled them to keep control of the countryside as they advanced, thus leaving the regular forces free of guard duty in the rear areas. The growing unpopularity of the Nationalist regime, on the other hand, meant that large numbers of Nationalist regulars had to be used for police and guard duty throughout the areas still nominally controlled by the Nanking regime.

Mao, now confident of victory, negotiated with Nanking from early February until the resumption of overt action on 20 April 1949. This gave the Reds a chance to absorb their conquests in Manchuria and Northern China and to regroup their forces for the next drive in Central China. Mao's "eight conditions for peace" were actually tantamount to an unconditional surrender, and Li Tsung-jen wasted almost three months trying to get less onerous terms, an attempt foredoomed to failure from the start as he had nothing to offer in exchange. Finally, on 2 April, the Nationalists in Peking were given an ultimatum—the acceptance of Mao's terms by 12 April or else. This was later extended to 20 April, and when Li tried to get a further extension of time, the Reds began to cross the Yangtze. The Nationalist government, or what was left of it, then retreated to Canton, while Chiang Kai-shek flew to Taiwan where he had "stockpiled" the Nationalist gold reserves, 300,000 troops, most of the navy (some 26 gunboats), and a sizeable portion of the remaining air force.

The US Department of the Army estimated that the Nationalists had some 750,000 to 800,000 troops scattered throughout China in April 1949. Three hundred fifteen thousand were in the Nanking-Shanghai area, 175,000 in the Sian pocket, 120,000 around Hankow, 120,000 in the northwest, and between 120,000 and 150,000 located in various small garrisons here and there. [34] In short, the various Nationalist armies were actually sitting ducks living on borrowed time.

[31]Chaing Kai-shek, *Soviet Russia in China: A Summing-Up at Seventy.* (Translation under the direction of Madam Chiang Kai-shek) (New York: Farrar, Straus, and Cudahy, 1958), p. 246.

[32]Fu Tso-yi has long held a seat on the National Defense Council of the Chicom government.

[33]*U.S. White Paper*, pp. 322-23.

[34]*U.S. White Paper*, p. 323.

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The campaigns of 1949 were a series of rapid triumphs for the Reds as they literally rolled over the opposition. On 20 April, Ch'en Yi crossed the Yangtze without firing a shot, took Nanking three days later, and pushed on toward Hangchow, thereby isolating Shanghai. Lin Piao headed for Hankow and took that city, or complex of cities, on 3 May. The defenders of Shanghai at this time were talking loudly about a fight-to-the-death resistance a la Stalingrad; but when the chips were down, the loud talk came to nothing—Ch'en Yi entered the city on 25 May with scarcely a token resistance being offered. Only floods in the lower Yangtze region in late May prevented an even speedier Red coup de grâce.

In the meanwhile, the Red armies were mopping up in other areas: Taiyuan, capital of Shansi, was taken on 24 April; P'eng Teh-huai took Sian, capital of Shensi, on 20 May, but ran into stout resistance by the Moslems when he overextended himself in a dash toward Kansu; but Nieh Jung-chen came to P'eng's assistance, and by August, the combined Red forces took Lanchow, thus wrecking Nationalist hopes for a stand in the Northwest.

In August, Lin Piao resumed his drive toward Canton, took Changsha on the 4th, and reached the Nationalist stronghold of Kwangtung province a week later. Floods in late August again held up the Red drive, this time for a month, and it was not until 15 October that Lin was able to capture Canton, also without much opposition. It was now all over except for the mopping up of scattered resistance, some guerrilla activities in Yunnan, scattered remnants in Sinkiang, and the taking of Hainan Island, which was not completed until April 1950.

The entire campaign of 1949 was almost unbelievable in its rapidity. The Communist armies seemed able to annihilate almost at will the few Nationalist armies that resisted. But most of the Nationalist forces capitulated with only token fighting, if that. The will to fight seems to have ended in the Kwai-Hai Campaign, and a general malaise prevailed throughout the Nationalist forces after 1948.

5. Analysis of the Civil War, 1946-1949.—In late 1945, Chiang Kai-shek looked like a lead-pipe cinch to win any all-out conflict with his Communist opponents, and, as late as the end of 1947, the only area in which the Communists seemed to have the upper hand was in Manchuria. Yet in 1948, the Nationalists literally came apart at the seams, and by January 1949, it was all over except for the tragic denouement. What had happened? Seldom in the history of warfare has the tide of battle turned so swiftly and so completely. The very speed of the Communist march from the Great Wall to Canton led to a variety of explanations, ranging from the reasonable to the wildest imaginable. They vary from the accusation that the United States sold Chiang Kai-shek down the river, through the "great aid from the Soviet Union," to the innate corruption of the Kuomintang regime and its effect on the population in general and the Nationalist military commanders in particular.

As for the "US betrayal" thesis, which reached its heights in the McCarthy era, there seems in retrospect to be little basis for it. As far back as the Stilwell mission to China, Chiang Kai-shek proved very adept at sabotaging American attempts to organize, discipline, and clean out the corruption in the Nationalist armies. He also showed a rare ability at getting the least possible mileage out of American supplies—almost as though he planned it that way. He disregarded the advice of his American advisers after V-J Day, especially in regard to the invasion of Manchuria and also rejected General Barr's advice to withdraw from Manchuria while he still had a chance in 1947. By 1948, many Nationalist generals were either capitulating with only a token resistance or making outright deals with the Communists, in both cases delivering large quantities of American-supplied arms and equipment intact to the enemy. To have radically increased American arms shipments to the Nationalists under those conditions would have been tantamount to supplying the Communists with US equipment, with the Nationalists acting as the logistic pipeline. By mid-1948, only large-scale American armed intervention could have saved the Chiang regime—and even that assumption is dubious.

The thesis that Mao's victory was based largely upon massive Soviet aid is equally fallacious. There can be no doubt that the Soviet occupation of Manchuria in late 1945 and the consequent policy of allowing the Chinese Communists to acquire much of the equipment of the defeated Kwantung Army plus the Soviet action in blocking the entrance of Kuomintang troops into Manchuria was definetely a leg-up for the Maoists. After that, however, there is no evidence of Soviet aid to the Chinese Communists and even some hints that Stalin was not too enthusiastic about a total Maoist victory on mainland China. Any comparison between the US aid to Chiang Kai-shek and Soviet aid to Mao puts the Nationalists far into the black and leaves the Communists with a large deficit.

The more fundamental reasons for Mao's victory on the positive side are the Communist image among the peasants as the real nationalists, which was created during the war with Japan, better strategy and tactics, superior military leadership, superb organization, and freedom from petty corruption in the Communist armed forces and in the civil regimes in the Communist-controlled areas. On the negative side, the Nationalist sins of omission and

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commission were corruption in civil and military administration, poor strategy and tactics, sorry performance of the Whampoa clique of generals, and Chiang Kai-shek's interference at all levels of command because of the lack of talent among his generals.

As early as the beginnings of the Japanese War (1937-1945), the Communists were busy creating an image that they alone were fighting wholeheartedly against the invaders while Chiang and his Kuomintang buddies were sitting the war out in Chung-King. Throughout large areas of northern China, the only soldiers the peasant saw were Communist, and by 1945 some 90 million peasants had come to associate the defense of China with the Communist regulars and guerrillas. True or not, the image was there.

From the very outset of the civil war, Mao and Chu Teh insisted upon a strategy of infiltrating the countryside, a reliance upon the support of the peasant, and a refusal of positional warfare unless the odds were overwhelmingly in favor of the Reds. The Nationalists gradually found themselves cooped up in the major cities and were using large numbers of troops to keep open the railroads upon which they were logistically dependent. Over time, the Nationalists developed a defensive outlook and left the initiative to the Communists, who in turn could pick and choose where they would concentrate their forces for attack. It was not until late in 1947 that the Reds felt strong enough to engage in large-scale combat in open country and to besiege the Nationalist-held cities.

The Red military leaders, steeled in combat from the mid-1920s, were, on the whole, a superior group of officers. Such leaders as Chu Teh, Lin Piao, Ho Lung, P'eng Teh-huai, Nieh Jung-chen, Ch'en Yi, Liu Po-ch'eng, and others[35] were both obedient to the overall direction of the Mao-Chu Teh team and yet capable of taking quick advantage of targets of opportunity as the combat situation changed from day to day. Furthermore, the relationship between these top commanders and their subordinate officers and men was excellent. All observers agree that morale in the Communist armies was high and devotion to the commanders outstanding.

The lack of corruption in both the Communist-controlled areas and in the armed forces has been described by countless observers as almost Puritanical. There was little chance for local officials or for army officers to take advantage of their authority as the Party organization, right down to the civilian grass roots and the squad in the army, was efficient and all encompassing. Ever since Lenin won his victory at the Second Party Congress in London in 1903, *centralized organization* has been the hallmark and the strongest weapon at the disposal of all Communist parties throughout the world, and the Chinese Communist Party was no exception. The so-called "democratic centralism," with the accent on "centralism," makes it possible for the policies and directives of the tiny group at the top of the Party to be implemented unquestioningly all down the line of authority to the individual cadre at the bottom—and deviation or disobedience is out of the question. It is hard to visualize a better system for directing a war in such a chaotic country as was China between 1937 and 1949 than the Leninist system of "democratic centralism." Strangely enough, the Kuomintang, as reorganized by Michael Borodin in 1923-24, had the same "democratic centralism." But under Chiang Kai-shek and the top Kuomintang leaders it never even approximated the efficiency of the Maoist organization.

The Nationalists seem to be a mirror image of the Communist strengths just enumerated. Their image by 1945 was that of a regime holed up in Szechuan awaiting a US victory over Japan and what military efforts they did put forth largely directed at fellow Chinese—the Communists. Although that image does not accurately conform with reality, it was accepted widely enough in China to be of inestimable value to the Communists. Furthermore, the American transport of the Nationalist troops in their reoccupation of the former Japanese-held areas and the flow of US supplies and weapons to the Nationalists only gave the Communists a chance to play up the xenophobic prejudices of the Chinese masses—only they, the Communists, were the true opponents of the Westerners.

The Kuomintang officials, when they took over the administration of areas freed from the Japanese, did little to endear themselves to the local populace. Corruption was rampant. Raging inflation followed soon and reached astronomic proportions by 1948-1949. Even the army commanders had an unhealthy tendency to exploit their positions for gain by padding the enrollment figures and by putting a "squeeze" on the rations of their troops. These abuses are confirmed not only by countless observers at the time, but also by the fact that Nationalist troops that fought so ineffectively against the Reds often became courageous soldiers after shifting sides. In short, there was nothing wrong with the Chinese soldier as such; if he had decent treatment and leadership, he could become an excellent soldier. This assumption is borne out by the experiences of both Stilwell and Mao.

[35]The reason for being specific about the Red Commanders and seldom naming the Nationalist generals in the narrative is simple: the top Red leaders will play an important role in the rest of our story, while the Nationalist generals fade out of the picture after 1949.

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By the time the civil war began in earnest in 1946, the generals who had graduated from Whampoa in the early classes of 1924-1925 formed the nucleus of the Nationalist high command, the so-called "Whampoa clique," which was absolutely devoted to Chiang Kai-shek but not necessarily composed of very good generals. Chiang's bitter experiences with the warlords during the 1930s, and even during the war, led him to be very suspicious of military commanders with too much local authority and, conversely, led him to put too much emphasis on personal loyalty to himself. Throughout the civil war, Chiang tended to rely on his personal followers in the top commands, both in the field and in the general staff; and in spite of monotonous failures on their part, he continued this practice to the very end. As a consequence of this poor leadership material, Chiang attempted to run the whole war himself, even to tactics at the divisional level in the far-flung corners of China. His orders had to be obeyed, even when they were obviously not correct in view of the local situation.

But not all the failures can be fobbed off on Chiang's subordinate commanders. His own strategy and tactics were too often fallacious: the attempt to take and hold Manchuria without consolidating his hold on the intervening area between Central China and the northeast, the inertia generated by the strategy of confining his forces to the holding of cities and defense of railroad lines, and the general tendency to ignore the basic truth that not the holding of real estate, but the destruction of the enemy's forces, was the only way to victory in an area as large and as undeveloped as China. His counterpart, Mao, although not adverse to enunciating overall strategy and tactics, seldom interfered at army or divisional level. Lin Piao, Ch'en Yi, P'eng Teh-huai, and others were allowed considerable flexibility at the local level and were thus able to take advantage of the inflexibility of their opposite numbers.

Of course, there is a well-known tendency on the part of historians to treat the winner as inevitably destined to victory and to augment the weaknesses of the loser, ex post facto. But in the case of the civil war in China, the strengths of the winner have been so clearly attested by both contemporary observers and by the actual course of events and the weaknesses of the Nationalists so well documented, that the historian can hardly be justly accused of kowtowing to "determinism" in his analysis. In retrospect, by the end of 1947, there seems little that Chiang Kai-shek could have done to win, and not much that he might have done would have greatly delayed the outcome. It may be that a well-thought-out and prepared-for strategy to hold China south of the Yangtze might have worked if he had decided upon this early enough, but, like all historical "ifs," it seems dependent upon changing the fundamental mental processes of the people involved and is, therefore, extremely dubious as a valid conjecture. Given the outlook of Chiang and the caliber of the Kuomintang regime and given the assets of Mao and his top comrades on the other side, the outcome was probably inevitable under the conditions that prevailed in the aftermath of World War II.

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CHAPTER VI

Development of the PLA from 1949 to the Cultural Revolution

WHEN Mao Tse-tung and his revolutionary colleagues established the People's Republic of China in Peking on 1 October 1949, they were launching the new ship of state upon some very troubled waters, and a quarter of a century later the vessel is still being tossed about violently. Perhaps the task seemed too easy in the first decade, a period in which they surprised the outside world by the speed with which they consolidated their authority throughout the length and breadth of China, or at least seemed to do so; and also, because there seemed to be little internecine fighting among the top leaders, the purge and subsequent suicide of Kao Kang in 1954-1955 being the exception. The economy was brought back to normal and was soon surpassing prewar levels of production, while Soviet influence in formerly semiautonomous Sinkiang was expunged and the wholly autonomous Tibet was integrated into the new China. It was altogether an amazing performance.

It was not until late in the decade of the 1950s that cracks began to appear in the seemingly monolithic regime. The sorry denouement of the Great Leap Forward, the purging of P'eng Teh-huai, the burgeoning split with the Soviet Union, the problem of "red versus expert" in the economic, educational, and military spheres of national life, all gave evidence of serious dissensions within the hitherto ostensibly harmonious elite, dissensions which eventually led to the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution of 1966-1968.

The military, which played such an important role in Communist politics in China between 1927 and 1949, has also been deeply immersed in politics since the creation of the new government in 1949. Up to 1954, the top military commanders, under the direction of the Peking leadership, actually governed the country. And few of the top government and Party leaders could be called real civilians since most had been most intimately connected with things military during the 1927-1949 period. Military adventures in Tibet and Korea, the nagging problem of Taiwan, the military clashes on the Indian border, the Vietnam war, and the development of a nuclear capability, all contributed to making the PLA a focal point in Chinese politics.

This chapter will be largely concerned with how the PLA developed between 1949 and 1965, how it endeavored to transform itself from a largely guerrilla-type army into a modern military force, and its role in the politics of the PRC during the first decade and a half of Communist rule in China.

1. The Role of the PLA in the Establishment of the People's Republic of China, 1949-1950.—On 1 October 1949, Mao Tse-tung, appearing before an enormous crowd in Peking, proclaimed the formation of the Central People's Government of the People's Republic of China (PRC). The basis for the new government had been worked out by a Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) of 622 delegates which met in Peking between 21 and 29 September 1949. Although there were representatives from other than the Communist Party among the delegates, the whole thing was tightly controlled by Mao and his colleagues. The CPPCC approved a Common Program for the so-called "joint revolution of four classes": workers, peasants, petty bourgeoisie, and national bourgeoisie. Under this program, about 90 percent of the Chinese people were eligible to aid in the building of the new China. This was Mao's early "soft-soap" approach as spelled out in his pamphlet *On People's Democratic Dictatorship* published 1 July 1949. The CPPCC also approved the Organic Law of the Central People's Government which prescribed the manner in which the government was to be organized. The CPPCC, the Common Program, and the Organic Law served as the national legislature and the constitution of the CPR until September 1954

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when a newly elected All-China People's Congress promulgated a Constitution.

Under the Organic Law, the top body in the government was the Central People's Government Council, headed by Mao Tse-tung. This Council executed policies through two lower organs: the Government Administration Council (or Cabinet), headed by Chou En-lai; and the People's Revolutionary Military Council (PRMC), a body of 22 members, with Mao as chairman.[1] The PRMC had great power as it controlled the PLA and under the Organic Law of the Great Administrative Area's Government (16 December 1949), the country was divided into six regional administrations with a military commander in charge of each one. Inasmuch as there was no Ministry of Defense at the time, the commander of each field army, who was also the chairman of the Military and Administrative Committee for the Great Administrative Area under his control, took his orders directly from the PRMC. The field army commander saw to it that directives were carried out in the echelons of control below him: the provinces, the counties, and the villages. Of course, behind the whole governmental structure was the Communist Party and the real authority resided in the Central Committee of the Party and its Politburo.

This arrangement was less an indication of untrammeled military control than a convenient method of consolidating the administration of a chaotic China divided and torn by more than a decade of war. At the end of 1948, Chu Teh had divided his forces into five semi-independent field armies: the 1st Field Army, under P'eng Teh-huai, who was also Chu Teh's deputy; the 2nd Field Army, under Liu Po-ch'eng; the 3rd Field Army, under Ch'en Yi; the 4th Field Army, under Lin Piao; and the 5th Field Army, under Nieh Jung-ch'en. By early 1950, these field armies occupied the following areas: The 1st Field Army in Northwest China; the 2nd in Southwest China; the 3rd in East China, along the coast opposite Taiwan; the 4th in Central and South China, with part of it in Manchuria; and the 5th, split into two parts, in Shantung and in North China, the latter with its headquarters in Peking. In each of the six huge regions, the top army commander served concurrently as the chairman of the Military and Administrative Committee which governed the area. maining Nationalist units and guerrillas associated with them, but also to prepare for the seizure and occupation of both Taiwan and Tibet, two high-priority targets on Mao's program of unifying China. Those troops not ticketed for anti-guerrilla work or for the forthcoming invasions of Tibet and Taiwan were to be used in rebuilding the war-torn land—the repair of railroads, bridges, and plants, aid to the farmers in getting in crops, and generally useful work in nonmilitary activities.

At the end of the civil war in early 1950, the PLA was an enormous horde of around 5 million troops plus a backup of well over that number in the militia. The defection of so many Nationalists in 1949 and 1950 accounts for the immense size of the PLA. The problem immediately facing the new government was how to whip this enormous mass of manpower into a well-organized standing army, to train it in the use of the weapons and equipment it had captured from the enemy during the war, and to work out a supply system to supplant the custom of living off the land—after all, it was not the enemy's land any longer. In addition, the newly acquired ex-Nationalist troops needed lots of indoctrination, the kind of political training that would insure their obedience to the new regime.

In early 1950, the armed forces were reduced to about 3½ million men through a rigorous weeding out of the ill-trained and unreliable elements. The paring continued throughout 1950, and by autumn of that year, the PLA was down to somewhat under 3 million.[2] In addition, in November 1950, the government claimed to have a militia of around 5½ million men. Rigg also adds an air force of 10,000 and a navy of 60,000.[3] The size of the division, averaging around 7,000 men, was smaller than a US division, but its logistical demands were lower and a good deal of civilian labor was used. The PLA General Headquarters, with Chu Teh as commander in chief, was divided into three main bureaus: a General Political Bureau, a General Staff, and the Rear Services. The General Political Bureau was charged with the ideological health of the whole PLA and given immense powers as well as a generous allotment of personnel; it reported directly to Chu Teh or his deputy, P'eng Teh-huai. The General Staff directed operations, intelligence, communications, and training. The Rear Services

[1]Actually there were two other organs, theoretically on the same level as the Government Administrative Council and the PRMC, namely, the People's Procurator-General's Office and the Supreme People's Court. But legal organs in Communist-controlled countries are so dominated by the Party central organs that their role is farcical. *See* Richard L. Walker, *China Under Communism: The First Five Years* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1955), pp. 29-30, for a detailed account of the formation of the government.

[2]Robert B. Rigg, *Red China's Fighting Hordes,* pp. 62-63, gives the following breakdown of the PLA in 1950:

1st Field Army. . . .	240,000 men	in 32 divisions
2nd Field Army. . . .	360,000 men	in 47 divisions
3rd Field Army. . . .	540,000 men	in 72 divisions
4th Field Army. . . .	450,000 men	in 60 divisions
5th Field Army. . . .	60,000 men	in 6 divisions
Total. . .	1,650,000	in 217 divisions

Plus 1,000,000 men in line-of-communications units, thus a grand total of 2,650,000 men in 239 divisions.

[3]*Ibid,* p. 64.

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had the job of supply, ordnance, finance, and health.

One of the crying needs of the PLA was a well-trained officer corps, especially officers capable of coping with complex weapon systems and mechanized equipment. Until the end of the civil war, the training of officers was pretty much an ad hoc matter, although there had been military schools in Yenan in the late 1930s and others established in the newly "liberated" areas as the Red tide flowed southward. In March 1949, 30 days after the occupation of Peking, the North China Military Administration University was set up to train 6,000 officers.[4] But it was not until after the Chinese entered the Korean conflict that the PRMC inaugurated a campaign for a massive recruitment of officer candidates, especially for "the Aviation School, the Naval School, and all other schools for specialized army branches . . ."[5] If the PLA was going to use the artillery (over 50,000 guns), tanks, armored vehicles, and aircraft newly acquired from the Nationalists, it was necessary to train the personnel to operate and maintain them. Another great need arose from the shortage of officers who understood how to use these modern implements of war in a rational tactical and strategic manner.

The modernization of the PLA was helped by the influx of Soviet military advisers, some 3,000 by April 1950. They were provided, apparently, as part of the agreement between Mao and Stalin, hammered out in Moscow between December 1949 and March 1950. This was the period when all Chinese were urged to learn from the Soviet way of doing things, and the PLA was especially eager to learn.

2. The PLA and Chinese Irredentism, 1949-1950.—Immediately after Lin Piao's 4th Field Army took the island of Hainan in an amphibious operation in April 1950, the leaders in Peking began to plan for the invasions of Taiwan and Tibet and, also, how best to lend Ho Chi-minh a helping hand in his struggle with the French in Indochina. Taiwan and Tibet were regarded as integral parts of China, a thesis with which even the Nationalists would agree, and their "re-acquisition" was, therefore, high on the list of things to be done immediately.

Nothing was closer to Mao's heart than the destruction of Chiang Kai-shek's remaining forces on Taiwan and the incorporation of that territory into the new Communist China. But the difficulties experienced in the amphibious assault on Hainan, which failed in March and had to be repeated in April, plus the disastrous attempt to take Chinmen Island (Quemoy) in October 1949, when 20,000 Red soldiers were either drowned or taken prisoner,[6] made Mao realize that an amphibious operation over the 100 miles of water separating the island from the mainland would be a monumental task indeed. The successful attack on the Chusan Islands lying off the mouth of the Yangtze in May, however, did encourage the military leaders a little.

The job of taking Taiwan was assigned to the 3rd Field Army under Ch'en Yi and training in amphibious warfare began in the spring of 1950. But the 3rd Field Army had only a few LCIs and almost no modern naval vessels to cover the transports; it was forced to work mostly with motorized junks. Ch'en Yi also hoped that, as in the case of Hainan, there would be a sizeable fifth column on Taiwan to facilitate the invasion. But even Nature seemed to be conspiring to thwart the Reds when "tens of thousands" of northern troops, training for amphibious operations in the streams of Chekiang and Fukien provinces, were afflicted with a serious epidemic of schistosomiasis (a disease caused by a liver fluke).[7] Preparations, nevertheless, continued unabated, especially the building of transport craft, and by June 1950, the 3rd Field Army was set to go. The main impediment to the attack, US intervention, had been eliminated in January 1950 when President Truman let it be known that the United States had no intention of intervening further in the Chinese civil war. Then came the attack on South Korea, and everything held.

The invasion of Tibet, while more in line with the land-warfare capabilities of the PLA, was, nevertheless, a difficult proposition. It involved the movement of troops and supplies over some of the roughest terrain in the world, including the penetration of the Himalayas and the crossing of swift-flowing rivers and streams. To get supplies in by truck, the troops had to build roads and bridges, all time-consuming operations. The invasion began in early October 1950, just at the onset of the winter season, a timing which gives some idea of the eagerness of Peking to seize the area. The attack was carried out by two columns: the first one, five divisions from the 2nd Field Army, moved westward from Szechuan, while the second column, two divisions from the 1st Field Army, proceeded southward from Tsinghai province. Both had to cover over

[4]Ellis Joffe, *Party and Army: Professionalism and Political Control in the Chinese Officer Corps, 1949-1964* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard East Asia Research Center, 1965), pp. 14-18. Joffe's study is the best in this area.

[5]Joffe, *op. cit.*, p. 18.

[6]R. B. Rigg, *op. cit.*, p. 314.

[7]*See* Frank A. Kiernan, Jr., *The Fluke That Saved Formosa* (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Center for International Studies, 1954), for details.

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700 miles before converging on the capital of Tibet, the city of Lhasa.

The invasion forces pushed on during the winter in spite of severe losses, some 10,000 men according to one report,[8] and by May 1951, the Tibetans capitulated. The Dalai Lama, spiritual leader of the nation, fled to India. Actually, according to Rigg, the Tibetans, with the exception of the fierce Kham tribe, did little fighting—the surrender was the result of Tibetan awe of the potential of the PLA poised on the border.[9] As later events were to demonstrate, Peking's elation at the relatively easy conquest of Tibet was a bit premature and there lay ahead years of "bandit suppression" campaigns to keep the country pacified.

Peking's policy in Indochina was to be more ambiguous in its objectives than it was in the case of both Tibet and Taiwan. As early as 16 October 1949, the Vietminh leader, Ho Chi-minh, sent a telegram to Mao Tse-tung congratulating him on the formation of the Chinese People's Republic and received a somewhat cool acknowledgement from Mao some five weeks later.[10] But the presence of the Chinese Communist troops on the very border of Indochina was bound to have its effect on both Ho Chi-minh and the French. The capture of Hainan by the PLA in April 1950, an island some 200 miles southeast of Hanoi, also gave the Chinese Communists the capability of supplying the Vietminh by sea as well as by land. It was about this time that the Vietminh transferred their main bases to the mountainous area near the Chinese border and soon afterward sent some 20,000 men across the border to receive arms and training.[11] In short, the Communist victory in China changed the situation drastically in Indochina for both Ho Chi-minh and for the French. Furthermore, the United States, after the start of the Korean conflict, began to see the French struggle in Vietnam as part of the general conflict against communism throughout the world; and the Soviet leaders also felt it necessary to get into the melee, if only to keep Mao Tse-tung from being the sole arbiter of Communist policies in Southeast Asia.[12] On the other hand, although the Chicom victory meant both sanctuary and assistance for Ho Chi-minh, he was hardly likely to invite a wholesale influx of Chinese soldiers. Over the centuries it had always been difficult to get the Chinese out once they were in Indochina.

3. Chinese Intervention in the Korean Conflict, 1950-1953.—On 25 June 1950, the armies of the Korean People's Republic (North Korea) launched an attack across the 38th parallel against the Republic of Korea, and the world was involved in the most serious confrontation between Communism and the free world since 1945. Since the United States was the more or less acknowledged guardian of the Republic of Korea (South Korea) and the Soviet Union the sponsor of the Communist-ruled North Korea, tensions mounted quickly.

Soviet military forces had been in direct charge of North Korea from 15 August 1945 until their withdrawal on 26 December 1948, while American troops had occupied South Korea after V-J Day. The Soviets had insured the authority of their man in Pyongyang, Kim Il-sung, and had also seen to it that the "Yenan group" of pro-Chinese returnees were relegated to a secondary role.[13] Whether Stalin triggered the North Korean attack, whether Kim Il-sung jumped the gun, and just how much Mao Tse-tung knew about the plans for the assault, are all debatable questions. But there is no doubt about the fact that Soviet military equipment had flowed into North Korea, largely through Manchuria, in early 1950, thus allowing a reasonable assumption that Stalin was behind the attack and that Mao knew about it in advance.[14] Furthermore, both Stalin and Kim Il-sung had some reason to believe that the United States would abstain from intervention since Secretary of State Dean Acheson, in a speech on 12 January 1950, had defined the US defense perimeter in the Pacific as running through Japan, the Ryukyus, and the Philippines, leaving everything west of that line to the protection of the United Nations.

The North Korean attack caught the South asleep, and by early August, the South Korean forces had been driven down to the Naktong River in the southeastern corner of the country. Jubilant as Moscow and Peking were over the successes of their fellow Communists in Korea, a serious complication had arisen to dampen their jubilation—the United States had almost instantly decided that South Korea was within the US defense perimeter in the Pacific after all and had begun to act accordingly. By moving quickly in the United Nations Security Council, which the Soviets were boycotting at the time, ostensibly because of the defeat of their motion for the replacement of the Republic of China by a delegation from the Chinese

[8]Rigg, *op. cit.*, p. 308, quoting an account by H. R. Lieberman, a *New York Times* correspondent in Hong Kong, who interviewed a Chinese defector.

[9]Rigg, *op. cit.*, p. 308.

[10]Philippe Devillers, *Histoire du Viet-Nam de 1940 a 1952* (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1952), p. 452.

[11]Harold C. Hinton, *Communist China in World Politics* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1966), p. 240.

[12]Devillers, *op. cit.*, pp. 454-55.

[13]*See* Kim Ch'ang-sun, *Fifteen-Year History of North Korea* (Seoul: Chin Mun-gak Publishing House, 1961), for details.

[14]Harold C. Hinton, *Communist China in World Politics* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1966), pp. 209-10.

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People's Republic, the United States was able to intervene in Korea with the blessings of, and some help from, the United Nations. Furthermore, on 27 June 1950, President Truman also interposed the US Seventh Fleet between Taiwan and the mainland, thus making Ch'en Yi's projected invasion an unrealizable dream.

The dispatch of some 30,000 American troops from Japan to Korea during the first three weeks of the conflict, plus the valiant work of the US Air Force and Navy, was definite proof that the Americans were committed, seriously committed. The remnants of the ROK forces and the new American contingents established a defensive zone, which was called the Pusan Perimeter, and were able to hold out against the North Korean forces during July and August. In the first two weeks in September, the North Koreans made a furious attempt to smash the UN forces below the Naktong, but rapidly ran out of steam. Then, on 15 September, MacArthur pulled off one of the greatest leapfrog maneuvers of his career, the Inchon Landing, which confronted the North Korean forces with a completely new strategical situation—their logistics were in danger of being sliced, they were facing large forces in their rear as well as their front, and as a consequence, the People's Army came apart under the pressure. By 26 September, the US 1st Cavalry from the south linked up with the 7th Infantry driving in from Inchon, thus surrounding large segments of the fleeing North Korean forces and Seoul was re-taken the next day.

MacArthur was then allowed to send his forces north of the 38th parallel in order to destroy the remnants of the North Korean forces and it was generally felt in both Washington and at the UN that Korea could be unified once the Kim Il-sung regime had been thrown out. On 1 October 1950, ROK troops crossed the parallel at its east end and the push into North Korea was underway. The first patrols of the US Eighth Army crossed the parallel in the Kaesong area on 8 October, and a general movement over the new "Rubicon" followed the next day.

The question arose, naturally, as to what the reaction of Peking would be if the UN forces, especially the American units, pushed on to the Yalu and reunited Korea as a non-Communist country. MacArthur, however, assured the President in their famous meeting on 15 October on Wake Island that there was very little chance of Chinese or Soviet intervention, and although the Chinese had 300,000 men in Manchuria, only 50 or 60 thousand could be gotten across the Yalu. Furthermore, without an adequate air force to provide cover, they would be slaughtered.[15] Ironically enough, at the very time that MacArthur was calming the President's legitimate worries about Chinese intervention, the PLA leaders were slipping four armies, each with three divisions, some 120,000 men in all, over the river into North Korea.

Peking had been building up its military forces in Manchuria all during early months of the Korean conflict. Between mid-May and early July, more than 60,000 troops, elements of Lin Piao's 4th Field Army, were transferred from South China and Hainan to Manchuria, giving Lin a total of around 180,000 men in that area.[16] In late June and early July, undoubtedly as a result of the interposition of the Seventh Fleet in the Taiwan Straits, 30,000 of Ch'en Yi's 3rd Field Army, joined by an equal number of Lin's 4th Field Army men from the south, proceeded to Shantung, and were, therefore, in a position to be used in either Korea or against Taiwan if the United States should withdraw from the Straits.[17] In September-October, another 120,000 troops were moved into Manchuria so that by mid-October there were at least 7 armies (21 divisions) in that area.[18]

In the meanwhile, the Chinese were making ever more ominous threats that if the US forces were to cross the 38th parallel, they would take action in support of the North Korean regime. On 30 September 1950, in a speech to the Central People's Government Council, Chou En-lai stated that the Chinese people "absolutely will not tolerate foreign aggression, nor will they supinely tolerate seeing their neighbors being savagely invaded by the imperialists."[19] On 2 October, Chou En-lai summoned K. M. Panikkar, the Indian Ambassador to Peking, to a conference at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and informed him that should American troops enter North Korea, China would enter the war,[20] and the Indians informed the United States of Chou's statement. But all these threats from Peking were discounted as Peking blustering in chagrin over the disaster then engulfing the fraternal armies of Kim Il-sung.

MacArthur, confident of an early victory, was busy planning the strategy for the final push to the Yalu. The Eighth Army, under General Walker, was along the Ch'ongch'on River by 24 October, and it was to push up through east and central North Korea to the Yalu, while the X Corps, under

[15]David Rees, *Korea: The Limited War* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1964), p. 119.

[16]Allen S. Whiting, *China Crosses the Yalu: The Decision to Enter the Korean War* (Santa Monica: Rand, 1960), p. 23.

[17]*Ibid.*, pp. 64-65.

[18]*Ibid.*, pp. 118-123.

[19]*Ibid.*, p. 108

[20]Rees, *op. cit.*, p. 107.

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General Almond, would mop up the western part of Korea below the Yalu. Unfortunately, the two forces were not only separated by a 50-mile gap, but they were not even under a unified command as Almond was directly under MacArthur's GHQ and not under Walker's command. Furthermore, half of Walker's Eighth Army was composed of South Korean soldiers, and his right flank, abutting the gap in the center, was protected only by the ROK II Corps.[21]

By the time the big offensive was set to go, the Communist Chinese Forces (CCF) were in a position to wreck MacArthur's strategy. Between 14 and 20 October four CCF armies crossed the Yalu: the 39th and 40th over the bridge between An-tung and Sinuiju, and the 38th and 42nd from Chi-an to Manp'ojin. These were all crack troops from Lin Piao's 4th Field Army and were redesignated the XIII Army Group in Korea.[22] On 25 October, a ROK battalion reached the Yalu but was destroyed by the CCF, and the Chinese intervention was revealed. Some vicious fighting went on for the next few days, both against the ROK troops in the Eighth Army and some Marine contingents in X Corps to the west. But the UN Command, unaware of the size of the Chinese interventionary forces, went ahead with its plan to finish off the drive to the Yalu by Christmas. During the first half of November, five more CCF armies crossed into Korea: the 50th and 66th joined the XIII Army Group facing the Eighth Army; and the 20th, 26th, and 27th, each having four divisions, were combined into the IX Army Group, which was opposite and around the X Corps. Altogether, the CCF now had 300,000 men in Korea poised to hit the UN forces.[23]

Between the first attack in the last days of October and the all-out explosion on 25 November, the Chinese forces remained hidden in the mountainous areas to the north of the UN forces. This pause has been explained in many ways, all of which probably have some truth in them. First, the Chinese needed more time to build up their forces and deploy them for maximum surprise; second, Peking may have been holding off to see just what the reaction of the United States would be to the first attacks; and, third, in the period of the pause, the UN forces continued to overextend themselves, thus becoming more and more vulnerable to the coming attack.

Each of the CCF armies was made up of either three or four divisions, which in turn were triangular in organization with three regiments plus an artillery battalion. The nominal strength of a CCF division was 10,000 men.[24] The army group was the largest unit encountered in the Korean War, made up of from two to six armies; thus the CCF army was the equivalent of a US corps and the Chinese army group similar to a US army. The Chinese army groups were controlled by Field Army GHQ, which in turn reported directly to the commander in chief of the PLA, Chu Teh. During the early days of the Korean intervention, the headquarters was in Mukden under the direction of P'eng Teh-huai and could, and did, override Kim Il-sung and his Soviet advisers. During the whole intervention, the Chinese maintained the fiction that their troops in Korea were all "volunteers," the Chinese People's Volunteers (CPV); but in this account, the term Chinese Communist Forces (CCF) is used as it is the fairly standard designation used by most Western historians.

One of the puzzling questions is how did the Chinese manage to move some 300,000 troops over the Yalu, deploy them along the entire UN front, all under the handicap of complete UN control of the air? For one thing, the indigenous intelligence network in Korea was demolished during the precipitous retreat to the south after 25 June and was still only partially rebuilt by October-November 1950; second, the CCF troops, without heavy equipment, found it relatively easy to move at night and keep under cover during the daylight hours when they might have been detected by air surveillance; and, third, the UN forces were too weak to send out patrols to the depth necessary to uncover the well-concealed Chinese.[25]

On the morning of 25 November, the advance intended to end the war in Korea by Christmas began. Baker Company of the 9th Infantry Regiment of the 2nd Division set out to take Hill 219 in a routine manner and ran into an entrenched CCF unit. The Battle of the Ch'ongch'on River was on, and during the next few weeks, the whole strategic situation in Korea would be again reversed.[26] Although the US 2nd, 24th, 25th, and 1st Cavalry Divisions, along with the British Commonwealth Brigade and the Turkish Brigade, put up a stubborn resistance to the Chinese attacks, the ROK II Corps on the right flank disintegrated under an

[21]For a detailed account of the events in October and early November, *see* Roy E. Appleman, *South to the Naktong, North to the Yalu* (Washington, D.C.: Office of the Chief of Military History, Department of the Army, 1961), pp. 607-776.

[22]*Ibid.*, p. 766.

[23]Appleman, *op. cit.*, pp. 767-768

[24]Rees, *op. cit.*, p. 138; there is some disagreement among authorities as to whether the CCF divisions in Korea were up to strength, and Rigg, for example, puts them at 7 to 8 thousand men. But Appleman says that if you count the ancillary units attached to most divisions, the figure 10,000 is a solid one to use.

[25]*See* S.L.A. Marshall, *The River and the Gauntlet* (New York: William Morrow, 1953), pp. 2-10, for a detailed description of the shortcomings of the US intelligence in Korea in late 1950.

[26]The most vivid account of the Battle of the Ch'ongch'on River can be found in S.L.A. Marshall's work cited above.

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overwhelming Chinese attack. The Eighth Army had no alternative except a rapid retreat to the narrow waist of the peninsula, and even that was an extremely difficult job since the Chinese, striking through the gap between the Eighth Army and the X Corps as well as through the hole left by the destroyed ROK II Corps, were able to cut across the UN line of retreat and bottle up units in the passes they had to go through. Even the defense of Pyongyang was impossible and it was abandoned on 5 December, the first and last Communist capital to be held by the West.[27]

While the Eighth Army was executing its "bug out" from North Korea, Almond's X Corps was trying desperately to avoid being trapped and annihilated by the CCF IX Army Group in the area of the Chosin Reservoir. Between 27 November and 11 December, the X Corps made a fighting retreat *through* the Chinese to the sea in the Hamhung-Hungnam area where it was completely evacuated by ship by Christmas Eve—hardly the "home by Christmas" envisaged by MacArthur in late October.[28]

On 23 December, General Walker was killed in a jeep accident and General Ridgeway took over command. The retreat continued, and Seoul was evacuated in early January 1951. The Eighth Army had set a new record as its 275-mile retreat from the Ch'ongch'on River was the longest in US military history. Needless to say, the Chinese were in a delirium of ecstasy and proclaimed their determination to push the Anglo-American interventionists into the sea. All now hinged on whether Ridgeway could pull his forces together and hold back the Chinese onslaught. By 20 January, Ridgeway, who now commanded the X Corps as well as the Eighth Army (made up of I and IX Corps), managed to stabilize a front across the peninsula just below Wonju, some 60 miles south of the 38th parallel. The CCF New Year offensive had petered out, and a war of attrition was beginning. In the relatively narrow part of Korean peninsula, about 130 miles in width, the CCF now faced a stabilized front manned by a force capable of delivering devastating firepower. Nothing in the sacrosanct Maoist military doctrine was really applicable to such a situation. In the 300-mile-wide front which existed in November and December, the UN units were widely scattered, dependent upon narrow roads through mountain passes along which they were extremely vulnerable, and, all in all, it had been a situation dear to the heart of the PLA strategists. Now the lightly armed CCF troops were compelled to assault an enemy who was dug in on a much narrower front and armed with much more powerful weapons than those available to the Chinese at that time. Furthermore, the Chinese found it difficult to mount a sustained offensive because of their extremely inadequate logistics—units had to pull out of the line periodically in order to replenish such essentials as food.

During late January and throughout February, Ridgeway made maximum use of his superior firepower in a strategy dubbed by the GIs as "the meatgrinder": he was much more interested in the annihilation of the enemy than in any spectacular territorial gains—a strategy that Mao had long advocated and was now being victimized by. By this time, the CCF totaled over half a million men, but not even that horde could be fed into "the meatgrinder" indefinitely without morale collapsing entirely.

P'eng Teh-huai, now the undisputed commander of the CCF since the retirement of Lin Piao in early 1951, continued to hit the UN front with massive attacks in February and March, but his casualties were horrendous. Furthermore, as each Chinese offensive petered out, Ridgeway counterattacked while the Chinese were in their most vulnerable attitude. By April, the UN line had moved up the peninsula well above the 38th parallel, and Seoul was again retaken—the fourth time it had changed hands in nine months. By mid-April, P'eng had 19 CCF armies in Korea, around 600,000 men, but he lacked space to utilize his superiority in numbers in the traditional PLA maneuvers. It was at this time, 11 April, that MacArthur was fired, and Ridgeway replaced him as SCAP. Ridgeway had taken over a badly demoralized army and in 15 weeks had transformed it into a fighting force with high morale.

The Chinese, successful in their First Phase (November) and Second Phase (December) offensives, to use their terminology, and unsuccessful in the Third (January) and Fourth (February) Phases, were now set, in late April, for their Fifth Phase, "Communism's single greatest military effort of the Korean War."[29] P'eng, with some 700,000 men under his command, began his offensive on 22 April, and for a week he hit General Van Fleet's forces with everything he had. Van Fleet, who had replaced Ridgeway, gradually withdrew to a new line anchored on Seoul and the Han River, and by 29 April, the Chinese offensive faded, P'eng having suffered over 70,000 casualties to 7,000 for the UN forces. On 16 May, P'eng renewed his offensive, this time against the east end of the UN line, and

[27] For a relatively succinct account of the retreat of the Eighth Army, *see* Rees, *op. cit.*, pp. 155-161.

[28] *Ibid.*, pp. 161-166.

[29] Rees, *op. cit.*, p. 243.

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again the UN forces were pushed back in a fighting withdrawal. By 23 May, the "Second Step, Fifth Phase" offensive collapsed, this time costing the Chinese 90,000 casualties. P'eng Teh-huai had vividly demonstrated that great masses of poorly equipped infantry were no match for a moderate-sized army equipped with modern weapons and with control of the air. And, as we shall see later, P'eng learned his lesson so well that it would bring him into conflict with Mao Tse-tung in 1958-59.

Van Fleet now counterattacked and drove the Chinese back over the 38th parallel, and by early June, the front was stabilized. For the next two years, two hard defensive lines, more or less along the parallel, faced each other in a "stalemated" war, while both sides indulged in marathon negotiations at Panmunjom. The Communists were no longer hopeful that they could drive the UN forces into the sea and were now bargaining bitterly for as much as they could get out of the nasty mess they had engendered.

Negotiations, however, did not stop the Chinese buildup in Korea, and the CCF soon had over a million troops in the area. Furthermore, Soviet materiel, especially heavy artillery and tanks, began to arrive in sizeable quantities thus enabling P'eng not only to reequip the divisional artillery battalions but also organize a number of artillery divisions.

The UN forces had quickly destroyed the North Korean air force in early 1950 and soon had absolute control of the air. But, simultaneously with the Chinese entry into the Korean War, there was a new situation in the air war—the Soviets began to supply the Chinese with the makings for a good air force. The new MIG-15s immediately made the US Mustangs and F-80Cs obsolete and turned the B-29 milk runs into hairy operations.[30] By December 1950, the Chinese had received around 650 combat aircraft from the Soviets. Fortunately, the Chinese were not well enough trained nor skilled in air strategy and tactics to make good use of their air power in late November and early December 1950; otherwise, the long retreat of the Eighth Army and the X Corps would have been much more disastrous than it was. By mid-December, however, the US Air Force in Korea received its first F-86A Sabres and was again able to lord it over the Chinese Air Force. In all probability, neither the Eighth Army nor the X Corps would have done nearly so well in extricating themselves from the clutches of the Chinese in December 1950 without the intensive close air support they received or without the constant resupply by air not to speak of the evacuation of their wounded by air.[31]

In early July 1951, negotiations began between the representatives of the United Nations and those of the Communist belligerents at Kaesong, but the site of the permanent conference was soon moved to the adjoining village of Panmunjom. By November, a demarcation line had been set up, and the war entered a "stalemate" phase, especially as the Communists had used the respite to establish a 14-mile-deep defense zone, well protected by newly acquired Soviet artillery. During the next 20 months, from the end of 1951 to the Armistice of 27 July 1953, ground fighting consisted mostly of skirmishing between the two forces. There are many authorities who think that the easing of the military pressure by the UN forces during the early days of the negotiations was a mistake—the Communists thereby gained a chance to dig in and had little reason to come to reasonable terms. The very fact that the Communists were willing to negotiate at all was an indication that they were hurting in the second half of 1951. Once the Chinese front was well established in depth, there was no reason not to go on palavering at Panmunjom almost indefinitely. After all, it was costing the UN forces around 30,000 casualties a year to hold the line.

Between 11 December 1951 and the final armistice in July 1953, the sticky point was over the prisoners of war. Since a large number of the prisoners held by the UN was strongly anti-Communist and vehemently opposed to repatriation, the UN negotiators held out for voluntary repatriation only. It may have been that the fate of the Vlasov Army, forcibly repatriated in 1945, haunted the negotiators at Panmunjom; also the fact that so many Communist prisoners were against returning to the "camp of peace" was in itself an indictment of the Communist regimes and a propaganda victory for the so-called "imperialists." Whatever the reasons on both sides, the stalemate at Panmunjom went on for over a year and a half longer. Finally, a change of administrations in Washington and a Dulles "ultimatum" that if the talks were not fruitful in the near future, the United States would broaden the war "in new ways never yet tried in Korea,"[32] i.e., the possibility of the use of nuclear weapons, brought the Chinese to agreement. The fact of Stalin's death in March 1953 may also have had the effect of allowing some elasticity in the Communist position. At any rate, on 27 July 1953, an Armistice Agreement was signed which ended

[30]The classic account of the air war in Korea is that of Robert F. Futrell, *The United States Air Force in Korea, 1950-1953* (New York: Duell, Sloan, and Pearce, 1961). For a shorter account, see Kenneth R. Whiting, "The Korean War," in J.H. Scrivner, Jr. (ed.), *A Quarter of a Century of Air Power* (Air University, Maxwell AFB, 1973), pp. 19-62.

[31]Futrell, *op. cit.*, pp. 237-250.

[32]Mark Clark, *From the Danube of the Yalu* (London: Harrap, 1954), p. 252.

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the war more or less status quo ante bellum; i.e., with a Korea divided very close to the 38th parallel.

4. Professionalism and Military Doctrine in the PLA, 1954-1958.—[33] Any attempt to tote up the pluses and minuses for Communist China as a result of the Korean War is bound to be an unsatisfactory effort, especially in view of the paucity of Chinese writings about the war. On the minus side, one could put the Chinese casualties in the war (from one to one-and-a-half million men), the economic strain on an emerging backward country,[34] the failure of the Maoist military doctrine once the war entered the attrition phase in the restricted area of the narrow waist of the Korean peninsula, and the failure of the Chinese to drive the UN forces out of South Korea. And an even greater minus, from Peking's point of view, was the indefinite postponement of the conquest of Taiwan once the United States changed its attitude toward the Chiang Kai-shek regime as a result of the hostilities in Korea.

In the plus column, it would seem safe to put the following: the victory of an Asiatic Communist army in late 1950 over a modern Western military force and the ability of China to hold the United States to a stalemate for a total of 33 months; the conversion of the PLA from a lightly armed, guerrilla-warfare-oriented force in October 1950 into a heavily armed semimodern army three years later, including the buildup of a respectable air force; the opportunity provided by the Korean War for a regime only one year in power to consolidate a hold over the Chinese people by hammering home the message that the new Communist government represented the national interests of China in the face of American agression on the very borders of the nation; and, finally, the fact that the exigencies of the Korean conflict forced the Soviet Union to provide the wherewithal to build the PLA into a modern armed force, which in turn made Communist China a great power, especially in Asia.

All in all, the pluses seem to outweigh the minuses, at least from the point of view of Peking. Mainland China, by mid-1953, seemed to be a unified nation with the writ of Peking running unopposed throughout the length and breadth of the land. This was something unique in China as the country had been in various stages of chaos ever since the Taiping Rebellion atomized the nation in the middle of the nineteenth century. Furthermore, Communist China now seemed to be an integral part of a Communist Bloc which controlled 65 percent of the Eurasian continent with a total population of over a billion. It is no wonder that the leaders in Peking were filled with euphoria at the end of 1953.

The officers who fought in Korea, however, had a much greater realization of the shortcomings of the PLA as a modern fighting force. The horrible casualties suffered in trying to overcome the UN superiority in firepower by "human-wave" tactics in the winter and spring of 1951 impressed upon them the necessity of a reorganization of the PLA from top to bottom. Furthermore, the introduction of new weapons, largely of Soviet origin, meant the creation of a whole new officer corps trained in the use of these new technological means of warfare. A good record as a guerrilla warrior during the long struggle with the Nationalists and the Japanese was not enough. The new officer must have the ability to supervise the use and maintenance of such weapons as aircraft, antiaircraft guns, tanks, and artillery, and be skilled in the logistics demanded by the new tools. In short, he should be a trained professional with technical competence, not just a semiliterate enthusiast, however brave and determined. In this new accent on professionalism, however, lay the seeds of a long and bitter conflict within the PLA—the conflict between "red" and "expert," and one that is still going on today.

During 1954 and 1955, the whole structure of the PLA was overhauled and rebuilt. In accordance with the new Constitution adopted in 1954, the PRMC was replaced by the National Defense Council (NDC), and a Ministry of National Defense was established under the State Council and headed by P'eng Teh-huai. In February 1955, a system of compulsory military service was instituted. Nieh Jung-chen, Vice Chairman of the NDC, summed up the reason for this when he pointed out that China needed a large number of trained reserves to augment the standing army in times of crisis, and this could best be provided through a relatively short tour of duty in the regular army (from three to five years depending upon the service) followed by long service in the reserves.[35]

The officer corps was made much more professional looking by the institution of a hierarchy of ranks ranging from marshal to lieutenant. There were four grades of officers: marshals, generals, field grade officers, and company grade officers. On 27 September 1955, Mao Tse-tung, as chairman

[33] For an excellent discussion of the problem of professionalism in the PLA between 1956 and 1958, *see* John Gittings, *The Role of the Chinese Army* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1967), pp. 158-175.

[34] Military expenditures came to almost half the budget by 1951, and even the Soviet materiel supplied during the Korean War was *paid for* by the Chinese—some $2 billion worth between 1950 and 1957. *See* Raymond L. Garthoff (editor), *Sino-Soviet Military Relations* (New York: Praeger, 1966), pp. 85-86.

[35] Peter S. H. Tang, *Communist China Today* (Washington, D.C.: Research Institute on the Sino-Soviet Bloc, 1961), Vol. I, p. 402; a more detailed description of the organization of the PLA will be given in Chapter VIII.

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of the People's National Congress, conferred the title of Marshal on the following ten men: Chu Teh, P'eng Teh-huai, Lin Piao, Liu Po-ch'eng, Ho Lung, Ch'en Yi, Lo Jung-huan, Hsu Hsiang-ch'ien, Nieh Jung-chen, and Yeh Chien-ying, while Chou En-lai, as head of the State Council, conferred the ranks of general, colonel general, lieutenant general, and major general on a large number of other officers.[36] The PLA was rapidly becoming a professional military organization and aping the Soviet example all along the way.

Semimodernized though the PLA had become by 1955, it was still lacking the weapons of mass destruction that made the United States and the Soviet Union the superpowers they were: nuclear bombs, long-range aircraft, and sophisticated submarines. It was all well and good to chant Mao's slogan that man was superior to weapons, but even the Soviet comrades, by 1955, had abandoned Stalin's denigration of the efficacy of nuclear weapons. Soviet military theorists were now admitting that a surprise attack which utilized nuclear weapons and long-range delivery vehicles could influence the course and outcome of a war. Like Stalin in the late 1940s, however, what could Mao, who lacked nuclear weapons and delivery vehicles, do except refer to them as "paper tigers." To admit the awesome power of the new weapons could not but lower the morale of the PLA and the populace in general.

There then arose a debate between the General Staff military leaders, who stressed the importance of weapons for the PLA, and the more politically oriented leaders in the Ministry of Defense, who continued to beat the drum of Maoist doctrine, the supremacy of man over the weapons.[37] A real doctrinal struggle was shaping up by 1955, and, inasmuch as the only feasible supplier of modern weaponry was the USSR, the debate had a direct connection with Sino-Soviet relations.[38] By mid-1955, some top members of the General Staff, such as Liu Po-ch'eng, chief of military training, and Yeh Chien-ying, head of the Inspectorate of the Armed Forces, began to echo the then current Soviet thinking on nuclear weapons; furthermore, they were calling for more and better weapons for the PLA, even if they had to be imported. In late 1954 and early 1955, there had been another flare-up in the Taiwan Strait, apparently with the intention of a Communist take-over of Quemoy as the first step in the seizure of Taiwan, but Dulles' "massive retaliation" threat, which implied the use of nuclear weapons, caused the Chinese to abandon the offensive for the nonce.[39]

The PLA, by 1956, was a hybrid—partly modernized and partly a barely postguerrilla army. The influx of Soviet weapons and equipment had been sufficient to build a respectable air force, which possessed MIG-15s and 17s, a number of Il-28 light jet bombers, as well as a token force of Tu-4s (the Soviet copy of the B-29), probably around 3,000 aircraft in all. Furthermore, by late 1956, the first Chinese *manufactured* jet fighters were in the air—*manufactured* meaning *assembled* for the most part. With Soviet help and models, the Chinese Communists were also manufacturing their own small arms and artillery. These were the good years in the Chinese economy, when the rate of growth in the industrial sphere was amazing everyone. In 1957, something like $5 billion, around 8 percent of the total GNP, went into military expenditures, investment in plants for the manufacture of military goods, and for R & D.[40] Much of the overall military outlay, however, probably went into weapons, equipment, and investment in the defense industry since the PLA was paid little, raised much of its own food, and was even used in general construction work on nonmilitary projects. In other words, of the 2½ to 3 million men in the PLA, a large percentage was more nearly self-supporting than in most of the world's armies. Furthermore, in a country with nearly 700 million people, the withdrawal of 2 or 3 million men from the labor force was hardly noticeable from an economic standpoint. The use of the manpower of the PLA in nonmilitary work, incidentally, was a sore point with many of the marshals and generals. They wanted the soldiers available for full time training and not devoting a large part of their time to agricultural work and construction duties in the civilian economy.[41]

The debate between the Ministry of Defense and the General Staff also involved long-range versus short-range views on the PLA's slice of the nation's economic pie. The Ministry spokesmen, representing the views of Mao and his colleagues, argued that it was necessary to make do with something less than the best in weapons in order to devote all the capital possible and the necessary skilled personnel to the building of a solid industrial base which, in turn, would enable China to produce her own weapons and equipment in the future. The General Staff professionals maintained

[36] *Ibid.*, p. 404.

[37] Garthoff, *Sino-Soviet Military Relations*, p. 88.

[38] The best account of the doctrinal debate in the 1954-60 period is in Alice L. Hsieh, *Communist China's Strategy in the Nuclear Era* (Englewood, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1962).

[39] Hsieh, *op. cit.*, pp. 32-33.

[40] Edwin F. Jones, "The Emerging Pattern of China's Economic Revolution," in *An Economic Profile of Mainland China* (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1967), Vol. I, p. 96.

[41] For a detailed discussion, *see* J. G. Godaire, "Communist China's Defense Establishment: Some Economic Implications," in *An Economic Profile of Mainland China*, Vol. I, pp. 155-165.

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that a better equipped PLA was a necessity right then if China were to be in any shape to fend off the American imperialists and their protege, Chiang Kai-shek. They argued in addition that to carry out such national objectives as the seizure of Taiwan, the long-range industrial buildup would be too late. Furthermore, the situation was so serious that only more arms and supplies from the Soviet Union could alleviate the crisis.

It was obvious that the validity of the Ministry's position hinged upon the willingness of the Soviets to come up with a nuclear umbrella for China during the period of the PLA's weakness in sophisticated weaponry, while the position of the General Staff professionals was based on the assumption that the Soviets would supply the weapons they said they needed. During 1957, developments seem to favor the Ministry's point of view: although the USSR continued to supply weapons, they were not first-line equipment; but 1957 was also the year in which the Soviets demonstrated their first ICBM and launched their first Sputnik. Mao was impressed, felt that the Soviets now had a definite edge in the arms race with the United States and were thus in a position to put a nuclear umbrella over Chicom activities that might conflict with American interests, as, for example, in the Taiwan Strait. Mao now stated that the East wind was prevailing over the West wind. As events were to demonstrate shortly, he was far more convinced of Soviet military superiority than was Khrushchev.

Following the debacle of 1949-1950, the Nationalists, in addition to holding Taiwan and the Pescadores, had managed to cling to a few offshore islands along the coast of Chekiang and Fukien provinces: the Tachens, about 200 miles south of Shanghai; the Matsus, off the port of Foochow; and Quemoy, literally in the port of Amoy. In February 1955, the Nationalists had evacuated the Tachens, but had also been bolstered by the so-called Formosa Resolution of January 1955, passed by both Houses of Congress, which authorized the President of the United States to defend the offshore islands if he judged an attack on them to be part of an overall attack on Taiwan. Between 1955 and 1958, the Nationalists reinforced their manpower on the island of Quemoy and strengthened its defenses, while the Communists installed masses of artillery and built airfields in the vicinity of Amoy. On 23 August 1958, the Communists began to shell Quemoy heavily, and the Taiwan Strait crisis had flared up again.

The crisis rapidly became more than just another showdown between Mao and Chiang Kai-shek; it became a major watershed in Sino-Soviet relations. Khrushchev, accompanied by his Minister of Defense, Marshal Malinovsky, met with Mao in Peking between 31 July and 3 August 1958, and they must have discussed the forthcoming attack on Quemoy. But what commitments Khrushchev made, or did not make, are unknown. Apparently Mao, either assuming Soviet backing or trying to smoke out a Soviet nuclear cover, went ahead with the attack on Quemoy on 23 August. But between 24 August and 6 September, when Peking, in the face of American determination to back Chiang's forces on Quemoy, decided to resume negotiations with the United States, Moscow failed to threaten intervention and continually talked about how the crisis could not lead to a world war. It was only when the crisis entered its political phase after 6 September that Khrushchev began to bluster and wave his nuclear weapons. Mao now had proof that the Soviets were not about to provide a nuclear shield for Chinese adventures that could lead to a confrontation with the United States. He had been caught bluffing in the Quemoy affair, and even the scheduled shelling of the island on alternate days after 25 October saved very little face.[42] In addition, the Chinese Communist air force had come off very badly in its clash with Chiang's Nationalist pilots, even before the latter got US sidewinders.

5. The Military and the Power Struggle in 1959-1965.—In 1958, Mao, dissatisfied with the rate of economic growth and determined to get away from dependence upon the Soviets for aid and advice, shoved China into the Great Leap Forward movement. It was an attempt to develop the nation's economy at breakneck speed, using propaganda, inspiration, and massive amounts of raw manpower in lieu of the expertise and economic assistance hitherto obtained from the USSR. Even the collectivization of agriculture was enormously speeded up by the creation of huge "communes." The whole trend in China was shifted to greater "self-reliance" in both domestic and foreign policies, and this came to include the PLA as well. It was no longer popular by 1958, nor safe by 1959, to advocate emulation of the experience of the Soviet Union in either economic or military matters. At the end of September 1959, Marshal P'eng Teh-huai, Minister of Defense, was dismissed along with his Chief of Staff, Huang K'o-ch'eng. He was replaced by Lin Piao, who brought Lo Jui-ch'ing, then Minister of Public Security, along as his own man for the job of Chief of Staff. This turnover of the top personnel in the defense establishment was the culmination of some bitter infighting that had gone on for most of 1958 and the first half of 1959.

[42]Hinton, *op. cit.*, pp. 261-70; for an interpretation of the Quemoy crisis of 1958 *see* John R. Thomas, "The Limits of Alliance: The Quemoy Crisis of 1958," in Garthoff, (ed), *Sino-Soviet Military Relations*, pp. 114-149.

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According to available accounts,[43] P'eng apparently submitted a report to a Central Committee plenum, held in Lushan in August 1959, in which he criticized the Great Leap Forward, apparently in very blunt terms. This, plus his advocacy of military policies repugnant to Mao such as a drastic reduction in the use of soldiers in civilian production work, closer relations with the Soviet Union and the other Warsaw Pact countries in overall defense, and more and better weapons for the PLA, obtainable only from China's Communist allies, made him persona non grata in Mao's book. He was also probably critical of the heavy accent since 1956 on more "democracy" in the PLA, especially such programs as the "officers to the ranks" movement.[44]

But the crux of the dispute concerned the "weapons versus man" debate and relations with the Soviet Union. According to Chinese revelations in 1963, the Chinese had signed an agreement with the Soviet Union on 15 October 1957 in which the latter was to provide the Chicoms with a sample atomic bomb and the technical data on its manufacture. P'eng was with Mao in Moscow when this agreement was worked out and, during 1958 and early 1959, in charge of its implementation. P'eng spent a lot of time negotiating with the Soviets, including a seven-week tour of the socialist countries of Eastern Europe (24 April-13 June 1959) where he talked at length with Khrushchev while in Albania and with Malinovsky in Moscow when he was on his way home. Then on 20 June 1959, a week after P'eng's return to Peking, the whole thing blew up. The Chinese version goes as follows:

> the Soviet Government unilaterally tore up the agreement on new technology for national defense concluded between China and the Soviet Union on 15 October 1957, and refused to provide China with a sample of an atomic bomb and technical data concerning its manufacture.[45]

What seems to have happened was that the Soviets were reluctant to give nuclear aid to China without some control over how the forthcoming weapons were to be used. This command and control problem was a sticky one, and the Chinese later accused the Soviets of trying to bring China under Soviet military control, doubtless an exaggeration. P'eng, the chief negotiator in these matters, was apparently advocating some integration of the defenses of the Communist countries just when Mao was determined to cease depending upon the Soviet Union for either a nuclear umbrella or for arms. As a consequence, P'eng was fired.

Although Mao was able to do in P'eng at the Lushan Plenum, his own position deteriorated in late 1958 and in 1959. In December 1958, Liu Shao-ch'i replaced him as chairman of the government of the PRC, and by late 1959 and early 1960, the Great Leap Forward was in such a shambles that it was being quietly shelved. Mao was later to complain that Liu Shao-ch'i and Teng Hsiao-p'ing, Secretary-General of the Party, "treated me like I was their dead parent at a funeral."[46] But the dismissal of P'eng Teh-huai and his replacement by Lin Piao did leave Mao strongly entrenched in the PLA.

The new Minister of Defense, Lin Piao, immediately began to push the thoughts of Mao as the be-all and end-all of wisdom, especially in the PLA. The ascendency of man over weapons was now the undisputed line. From then on, the Soviet Union was a tainted source as an example to emulate and was labeled "revisionist," the worst sin in the Communist lexicon. Mao, fully confident of the loyalty of Lin Piao, was probably insuring his hold on the PLA, his main pillar of power in the struggle he was about to embark upon within China itself.

Lin Piao instituted a whole series of programs in the PLA to improve its ideological health. There was first the "three-eight working style" (three phrases and eight characters in Chinese), attributed to Mao himself, which called upon each soldier to achieve "a correct political orientation," to cultivate "an industrious and thrifty working style," and "flexible and mobile" strategy and tactics.[47] Then Lin Piao pushed the "Four Firsts," the four fundamental relationships: man superior to weapons, politics ascendent over other work, ideological work superior to routine work, and practice over theory. Then came the "Five-Good" soldier campaign: be a good soldier by studying Mao's works, by being good in military training, in the "Three-Eight" work style, in fulfilling the job, and in physical training. These were some of the

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[43] *See* Gittings, *op. cit.*, pp. 225-233; David A. Charles, "The Dismissal of Marshal P'eng Teh-huai," *China Quarterly*, October-December, 1961; and J. Chester Cheng (ed), *The Politics of the Chinese Red Army* (Stanford, Calif: Hoover Institution on War, Revolution, and Peace, Stanford University, 1966). The work last cited is a translation of the *Bulletin of Activities (Kung-tso T'ung-hsun)*, 29 issues of a secret military journal covering the period from 1 January through 26 August 1961 which is distributed only to Party cadres at the regimental level or higher. It is probably the best source available for the situation in China during the difficult period of late 1960 and early 1961, and much can be inferred from the diatribes against the "opposition" as to why P'eng Teh-huai and others were fired in 1959 and 1960.

[44] On 20 September 1958, it was decreed by the Government Council that all officers, regardless of grade, were to spend a month in the ranks as ordinary soldiers. By February 1959, over 150,000 officers, including 70 generals, had "gone to the ranks," and were not only obliged to eat and live with the enlisted men, but also to perform such menial tasks as cleaning the spitoons and lavatories. *See* Gittings, *op. cit.*, pp. 193-95.

[45] *Jen-min Jih-pao*, 6 September 1963, or *Peking Review*, 13 September 1963; the quotation from Gittings, *op. cit.*, p. 231.

[46] Edward E. Rice, *Mao's Way* (Berkeley, Calif., University of California Press, 1972), p. 184.

[47] Samuel B. Griffith, *The Chinese People's Liberation Army* (New York, McGraw-Hill, 1967), p. 228. General Griffith's book is the best work on the Chinese Red Army to date.

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ways in which Lin tried to bolster the ideological fervor of the troops. General Griffith refers to these strange campaigns as "the mathematical blitz."[48] Finally, in May 1965, all distinctions in rank and insignia were done away with, and officers were henceforth addressed as Comrade Commander of whatever unit, (regiment, division, army, etc.) they commanded. This is, apparently, a desperate attempt of Mao and some of the "Long Marchers" to get back to the camaraderie between the officers and men that prevailed in the Yenan period. Thus between 1956 and 1965, "professionalism" in the officer corps was hard hit—the officer had learned to clean the lavatory, adore the thoughts of Chairman Mao, and give up his epaulettes and titles. If he had to choose between being very "Red" or being very "Expert," he chose "Red" and applied himself to the mastering of Mao's generalities and platitudes instead of math and science.

The PLA has seen very little action between the end of the Korean War in mid-1953 and the present. The recurrent crises over the offshore islands, border skirmishes along the Soviet and Outer Mongolian boundaries, and almost constant anti-guerrilla work in restless Tibet[49] have been about it, except for the Sino-Indian limited war in the autumn of 1962 where the PLA forces gave a good account of themselves, although their opposition was not much to crow about.

By February 1964, Chairman Mao and Lin Piao felt that their work in the PLA had been successful enough so that they called upon the nation to learn from the experience of the PLA in political, educational, and ideological matters. The army was held up as a model of the blending of "Red and Expert," and all other segments of the nation were urged to emulate it. Its Political Department was made the model for a "commissar" system in almost all the branches and levels of industry, commerce, and communications.[50]

The PLA was not only being developed as a Maoist political base, but was also being closely welded into the regional Party structure, or as one authority puts it, Lin Piao was trying "to militarize the party."[51] Between 1963 and 1965, the secretaries of five of the six regional bureaus of the CCP were PLA region commanders, and the top secretaries of the party committees in half the provinces became political commissars in the PLA forces in their respective provincial military districts, thereby bringing a large number of leading party cadres directly under the General Political Department of the PLA.[52] By 1965, the Party and PLA bureaucracies in many of the military regions and districts were intimately interconnected. Lin Piao had politicized the PLA and militarized the Party to a considerable extent.

[48]Griffith, pp. 227-34, has an excellent description of the "mathematical blitz."

[49]*See* George N. Patterson, *Tibet in Revolt* (London: Faber and Faber, 1960), for the details.

[50]Gittings, *op. cit.*, pp. 254-58.

[51]Edward E. Rice, *Mao's Way* (Berkeley, Calif., University of California Press, 1972), p. 201.

[52]Ibid., pp. 201-202.

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CHAPTER VII

The Role of the Military in the Last Decade 1965-1974

BY THE AUTUMN OF 1965, Mao began to lay the groundwork for the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution which was to push China to the brink of chaos. In August 1966, using the PLA to provide the training and the logistics, Mao assembled the first contingents of the Red Guards in Peking, gave them his benediction, and dispatched them throughout China to attack the entrenched bureaucracies in the educational, economic, and party sectors. By January 1967, it was apparent to Mao that his "little generals" were not capable of carrying out their task without help, so he called on Lin Piao and the PLA to lend them assistance. The bewildered soldiers, neither by training nor by disposition inclined to aid and abet anarchy, tended to either stand aside or to favor the so-called "entrenched" bureaucrats. Ergo, the confusion grew apace. By 1968, the PLA was given the job of bringing the Cultural Revolution to an end and of restoring order, a task more to its liking.

By the time of the Ninth Party Congress in April 1969, the PLA commanders of the military regions and districts had supplanted the Party bureaucracy and were apparently enjoying their new powers. The next five years witnessed Mao's efforts to bring the military back under civilian control, a task that is still under way and still not fully accomplished. This chapter is largely devoted to the politicization of the PLA during the Cultural Revolution and the attempts to depoliticize it since the Ninth Party Congress.

1. Origins of the Cultural Revolution and the Events of 1965 and 1966.—The reasons given for the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution are about as numerous as the China watchers writing on the subject. They range from those who see it as caused by a semideified Mao striving to eradicate greedy bureaucrats to those who see the whole thing as a power struggle among the power-hungry autocrats both in Peking and in the semi-autonomous hinterlands. Others see the root cause in Mao's attempt to transform China into a modern industrial nation, on the one hand, and his almost fanatical determination to prevent the consolidation of a bureaucratic-managerial class á la Russe, on the other hand.

There seems to be some agreement, however, that the seeds of the Cultural Revolution were planted by Minister of Defense P'eng Teh-huai's attack on Mao's policies at the Lushan Plenum of the Central Committee in August 1959 and the Central Committee's demonstration of a lack of confidence in Mao's leadership when it replaced him as head of state, the job going to Liu Shao-ch'i. For the next few years, Mao's authority, except in the PLA was in semieclipse. The "moderates," using such un-Maoist mechanisms as material incentives, brought production back to pre-Great Leap levels and even allowed the communes to decentralize to a considerable degree.

Mao fought back. At the Tenth Plenum of the Central Committee in September 1962, he launched a "socialist education movement" to counteract what he regarded as a newly fledged "bourgeois elite," made up of bureaucrats who put their professional interests above revolutionary goals. Their new god was "expertise" and Mao saw this as a move away from contact with the masses. The "socialist education movement," however, was far less than a howling success, thus further embittering Mao. He was convinced, and he was probably right, that it had been sabotaged by the party and government bureaucracies.

Furthermore, as early as 1964, Mao became alarmed at the trends in the cultural field. Not only were the artists and writers aping "Western" forms, but some were even aiming their barbs at Mao himself. For example, Wu Han, a deputy and close associate of P'eng Chen, the first secretary of the party committee in Peking, had published a play entitled *The Dismissal of Hai Jui,* in which he described how a Ming emperor fired an honest and courageous official at the urging of some

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sycophants in the royal court. The analogy was clear—Mao's cashiering of the honest and courageous P'eng Teh-huai. Teng T'o, another of P'eng Chen's deputies in the Peking party machine, wrote a series of essays under the general title of *Evening Chats at Yenshan* and, in one of them, satirized Mao's "the East Wind prevails over the West Wind" as "Great Empty Talk."[1] Mao called upon the Central Committee in September 1965 to condemn the intellectuals who were going astray so outrageously, but his appeal fell on deaf ears.

In October 1965, claiming that the party apparatus in Peking was controlled by his enemies, Mao left the capital and went to Shanghai, where the political climate was more congenial. In November, a member of the Shanghai Party Committee, one Yao Wen-yuan, apparently under the guidance of Mao's wife, Chiang Ch'ing, wrote an article criticizing Wu Han's play and the article got national circulation when published by the PLA's *Liberation Army Daily.* The Yao article is usually regarded as the opening shot in the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution.

P'eng Chen, realizing that the attack on his deputy, Wu Han, was really aimed at him, tried to see Mao to mend his fences. In late December, he was summoned to Shanghai for a three-day conference with Mao; Ch'en Po-ta, Mao's ex-secretary and then editor of *Red Flag;* K'ang Sheng, a security type sometimes called China's "Beria;" and Yang Ch'eng-wu, deputy chief of the PLA General Staff. This pro-Maoist group instructed Peng to demand "self-criticisms" from Wu Han and other offending intellectuals.

Mao then began the undoing of the chief of the PLA General Staff, Lo Jui-ch'ing, who had been in eclipse since November 1965. In early 1966, the accusations against Lo Jui-ch'ing became more and more severe. His main heresy, it seems, was his advocacy of amodernized PLA and the industrial buildup needed to supply the wherewithal to accomplish that. Both would require the patching of relations with the Soviet Union. Mao, however, saw China as strong in manpower and thus would have to fight any invader in a "people's war," a sea of people engulfing the invader as he advanced. You do not, maintained Mao, attempt to fight a technologically superior enemy with his own weapons and strategy; you pit your strengths against his weaknesses. The outcome was the fall of Lo Jui-ch'ing—literally the "fall," since he attempted unsuccessfully to commit suicide by jumping out of a window in March 1966.

This Mao versus Lo Jui-ch'ing clash in the winter of 1965-1966 was more than theoretical to Mao since at that time he was convinced that China was about to be invaded. He told a delegation of Japanese Communists, visiting China in February 1966, that a war between China and America was inevitable in the next year or two, and that the USSR, using the Sino-Soviet defense pact as a pretext, would also invade China. Thus China would be invaded from the south and the coast by Americans and from the north by Soviets. The Japanese returned home convinced that Mao was a bit neurotic on the subject of invasions.[2]

In the meanwhile, the Maoist group was intensifying the attack on P'eng Chen and, by implication, on his superiors, Teng Hsiao-p'ing, the general secretary of the CCP, and Liu Shao-ch'i, the head of state. Why Liu Shao-ch'i picked April 1966 to go on a state tour of Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Burma is hard to fathom, but when he got back, he found himself outgunned in the Standing Committee of the Politburo. Furthermore, in mid-April an editorial in the *Liberation Army Daily* stated that the armed forces were the chief instrument of the dictatorship of the proletariat, that Mao was the creator of the PLA, and that the PLA should be obedient to his instructions. As one author puts it: "The barrel of the gun, from which political power grows, had been openly invoked in support of Mao Tse-Tung."[3] By June, P'eng Chen had been replaced, as had Wu Han and Teng T'o, in the Peking Party Committee. Lu Ting-yi, the Director of Propaganda, was out, and Lo Jui-ch'ing had been officially dumped. Since Lo, P'eng, and Lu were all full members of the Secretariat, the Maoists were seizing effective levers of power in the CCP's central apparatus.

At this point Mao, on 16 May, established a Cultural Revolution group with Liu Shao-ch'i in charge, and the latter created "work teams" to go to government offices, schools, and communes to carry out a rectification campaign. But Mao simultaneously set out to make Liu's "work teams" ineffective and use that ineffectiveness as a club with which to beat Liu. A woman on the staff of Peking University, Nieh Yuan-tsu, put up a large-character poster bearing the injunction: "Bombard the Headquarters!!" She called for support for Mao and the Cultural Revolution and stated that there was hanky-panky going on in Peking University. Since it was just before exams, the

[1] Excerpts from Wu Han's play and Teng T'o's essays can be found in Jack Gray and Patrick Cavendish, *Chinese Communism in Crisis: Maoism and the Cultural Revolution* (New York, Praeger, 1968), pp. 153-58 and 166-71.

[2] Kikuzo Ita and Minoru Shibata, "The Dilemma of Mao Tse-tung," in *The China Quarterly,* No. 35 (July-September 1968), p. 67.

[3] Edward E. Rice, *Mao's Way* (Berkeley, University of California Press, 1972), p. 240.

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students were in a mood to let off steam. Mao had found his "little generals."

By July 1966, Mao, having the PLA firmly on his side, having destroyed the opposition in the Peking Party Committee, and being in control of the Secretariat, decided it was time to return to Peking. To offset rumors that he was in bad health, he made his famous swim, on 16 July in the Yangtze near Hankow—some 15 kilometers in 65 minutes! On returning to Peking on 18 July, he found the students at the various schools in a proper ferment and many of them already on the rampage. Many of them were the recruits for the first covert Red Guards, organized in May and June. Liu Shao-ch'i, immediately recognizing the Red Guards as aimed at him and his colleagues, declared them illegal. But it was too late in that his power at the center had been too badly eroded by that time.

Mao then set about the convening of a plenum of the Central Committee, the first since 1962. It met on the 1st of August, and it was no coincidence that it was also Army Day, the celebration of the founding of the Red Army in 1927. By 8 August, with the help of PLA officers and radical students, Mao was able to cow the Central Committee into approving his 16-point program, the guidelines for the Cultural Revolution. On 18 August, Mao presided over a gigantic rally of tens of thousands of Red Guards attired in uniforms provided by the PLA. The rally was run along the lines of the Nuremberg Nazi get-togethers—cheer leaders leading the youthful Red Guards in rhythmic paeans of praise for Chairman Mao. The rally unleashed a two-month-long reign of terror during which the young fanatics destroyed cultural treasures, raided educational institutions, and beat up thousands of suspected "capitalist roaders," the term given to anyone not acceptable to the Maoist zealots. Soon millions of Red Guards were pouring into Peking to be indoctrinated. By the end of November, Mao had blessed over eleven million of his young "warriors" at eight rallies. They were instructed to attack and destroy "those within the party who are powerholders taking the capitalist road."[4]

In October, a new Cultural Revolutionary group was created to push the movement forward. The director of the new group was Ch'en Po-ta. Chiang Ch'ing was the deputy director, K'ang Sheng was an advisor, and the group also included two members of the Shanghai Party Committee, Chang Ch'un-ch'iao and Yao Wen-yuan. This group, especially Chiang Ch'ing, was to dominate events and determine the tone of the Cultural Revolution over the next two years. Its main task was to bring down Liu Shao-ch'i and Teng Hsiao-p'ing, the top party leaders in Peking, and to destroy the party apparatus in the provinces. The first task was easily accomplished, but the second, the extension of the revolution to the provinces, was to be the reef upon which the movement ultimately foundered.

During November and December, Chiang Ch'ing and her colleagues on the Cultural Revolutionary group went ape. P'eng Chen, Lu Ting-yi, Lo Jui-ch'ing, and P'eng Teh-huai were "arrested" by Chiang Ch'ing's favorite Red Guard contingent and publicly abused. They even lured Wang Kuang-mei, Liu Shao-ch'i's wife, out of the safety of the official compound by phoning her that her daughter was in the hospital. The group was riding high at the end of 1966.

But it was becoming obvious to Mao that the Red Guards in the provinces were not doing as well. The local party leaders were creating their own Red Guard contingents to protect them from the invaders from Peking, and in some cases, they were backed by the local military units. Many of the natural leaders of the Red Guards, those from the families of the party bureaucrats, began to lose their enthusiasm for the movement when it was focused on their own families and some shifted sides. The last of the Red Guard rallies in Peking was held on 25 November, and the word went out shortly afterwards that the wandering Red Guards were to all return home by 20 December and that there would be no more free train rides nor free food after 21 December. It was high time the "little generals" stopped clogging the rail lines. One estimate is that 50 million Red Guards had been shuttled by rail around China between August and December 1966.[5]

2. The Intervention of the PLA in 1967-1968.—On 21 January 1967, a central directive ordered the PLA to support the revolutionary left in its efforts to smash the party committees in the provinces and cities of China. This job of supporting the Red Guards was probably given to the regional forces, one of the two broad divisions into which the PLA was divided. The regional forces were made up of the border troops, the independent divisions and regiments, and the garrisons in the cities and were under the command of the 13 region and 23 military district commanders. The main forces, under the direct command of the headquarters in Peking, were composed of some 36 corps (sometimes called *armies*), each made up of three divisions and some support units, about 45,000 men in all. Furthermore, the air force and the navy

[4]Rice, *op. cit.*, pp. 257-59.

[5]Rice, *op. cit.*, p. 293.

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were under the direct command of PLA headquarters in Peking. The region and district commanders had no control over the 36 corps of the main forces nor over the air force and naval units in their areas. But they did have a good deal of autonomy in the handling of the regional forces.[6]

The provincial military district headquarters were the key organizational link between the party and military bureaucracies, and many of the first secretaries of the provincial party committees were also the first political commissars of their respective military districts. On the eve of the Cultural Revolution, 18 of the 23 military districts had party secretaries concurrently serving as first political commissars as did 11 of the 13 military regions.[7] The ties between the regional military district forces and the party apparatus in the military district were very close, or even interlocking. Thus, when the word came down that the military commanders were to assist the radicals in the destruction of the local party apparatuses, the military commanders were bewildered. As Nelson comments: "The regional forces were as distant from the revolutionary rebels as they were close to the local Party apparatus. . . . No wonder so few military districts and garrisons supported the left wholeheartedly."[8] To make matters worse, how was the military commander to determine which of the contending groups was the truly revolutionary one? If he made the wrong decision, he had Peking down on him, and he might also be attacked by the group against which he had decided—a potent factor in angering many a military commander. Peking, aware of the tendency of the district commander to either drag his feet or even to side with the party *apparatchiki* being attacked, began to use the main forces to take over in trouble spots. Over 20 of the 36 corps were involved at one time or another during the Cultural Revolution in support of the revolutionary rebels.[9]

In June 1967, an organization of industrial workers, known as the "Million Heroes," had been formed in Wuhan to oppose the Red Guards, and the Wuhan Military Region command was involved on the side of new organization. On 14 July, Hsieh Fu-shih, Minister of Public Security, and Wang Li, a fellow member of the Cultural Revolution Group, arrived in Wuhan at the head of a delegation to survey the situation. The region commander, Ch'en Tsai-tao, tried to get the delegation to look at both sides of the imbroglio, but Wang Li, acting as spokesman for the delegation, came out solidly on the side of the Red Guards. Early in the morning of 20 July, Ch'en Tsai-tao's troops began to occupy key points in the city, and a mob of "Million Heroes" grabbed Hsieh Fu-shih and Wang Li, roughing them up in the process. Ch'en Tsai-tao rescued them and carted them off to military headquarters. Peking was outraged—the Minister of Public Security beat up and then arrested!

Lin Piao, during the last ten days of July, moved naval units up the Yangtze to Wuhan and dispatched airborne units to the city. Tseng Ssu-yu replaced Ch'en Tsai-tao as commander of the Wuhan Military Region and the two abused emissaries were returned to Peking. But the whole affair had jolted the military command in Peking and what was left of the government, since neither relished the idea of conflict between the regional and main forces of the PLA. Furthermore, although centrally controlled corps units had been put in charge of some military districts and even smaller administrative areas, it was a dangerous gambit. This tended to politicize main-force commanders and tended to weaken their ties with headquarters in Peking.[10] The use of centrally controlled forces of the PLA was Mao's final trump card in carrying out the Cultural Revolution, and as flare-ups between the regional and main forces in the ensuing months persisted, there was the danger that the main forces, the ultimate base of national political power and national defense, would be severely weakened.

In the meanwhile, it was necessary to create something in the provinces to replace the wrecked party apparatuses and government bureaucracies. As early as January 1967, a Revolutionary Committee was established in the Heilungkiang Military District. The ideal arrangement aspired to in the creation of the Revolutionary Committees was the bringing together of the military command, the "pro-Maoist" party cadres, and the representatives of the revolutionary masses, i.e., the revolutionary rebels, into three-headed committees or, as the blueprint of the Maoist group in Peking read, to form a "Revolutionary Triple-Alliance" consisting of "revolutionary mass organizations," the local PLA forces, and the "revolutionary cadres" (i.e., pro-Maoist party officials who had seen the light).[11] Early on in the game, however, the military leaders and party cadres dominated the committees, with the military on top. For example, the four-man Standing Committee of the Heilungkiang Revolutionary Committee was composed of two military

[6]For details, see Harvey Nelson, "Military Forces in the Cultural Revolution," *China Quarterly*, No. 51 (July-September 1972), pp. 444-47.

[7]*Ibid.*, pp. 449-50.

[8]*Ibid.*, p. 453.

[9]Nelson, *op. cit.*, p. 455.

[10]Nelson, *op. cit.*, p. 458.

[11]Jürgen Domes, "The Role of the Military in the Formation of Revolutionary Committees, 1967-68," *China Quarterly*, No. 44 (October-December 1970), p. 113.

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men, an old party cadre, and a representative of the revolutionary masses.[12] The leading role of the military in the Revolutionary Committees as they were created in one province after another, was almost inevitable. Once the PLA had been instructed to intervene in the Cultural Revolution in January 1967, military units moved in to run industrial plants in the cities, began to administer civil aviation, and took over the police and security organs. The responsibility for maintaining a minimum of public order and some production tended to push the local military leaders to the fore in the new administrative organs in the provinces—the Revolutionary Committees.

During the period from 31 January 1967, with the creation of the first Revolutionary Committee in Heilungkiang, to 5 September 1968, when the last of the 29 Revolutionary Committees was established, a long and arduous process characterized by much factional in-fighting, the military came to dominate the committees. Of the 479 Standing Committee members in the 29 Revolutionary Committees, 235, or 49 percent, were military men, 109 were veteran party cadres, and only 132 represented the revolutionary mass organizations. Of the 29 chairmen, 22 were military men (13 commanders and 9 commissars).[13] It was altogether obvious by mid-1968 that the PLA had become the dominant administrative authority in the provinces.

In Peking, both Lin Piao and Chou En-lai realized, by June 1958, that if various military units did not cease backing opposing armed factions at the local level, the PLA would disintegrate as a viable military organization. In July, representatives of contending factions from many of the provinces were called to Peking to work out agreements, but little agreement seemed to come out of the meetings. Finally, on 28 July, at three A.M., Mao called in a number of Red Guard leaders and scolded them vehemently. This was the death knell of the Red Guards. They were rapidly cleared out of the various institutions they had taken over during the Cultural Revolution. For example, by the end of 1968, two-thirds of the 15,000 students in Peking's Tsingua University had been sent to the countryside to learn from the peasants—a trip that was scarcely voluntary on their part.[14]

In reviewing the role of the PLA during the Cultural Revolution, two dates stand out: 23 January and 5 September 1967. On the first of those dates, the PLA was instructed to intervene in the Cultural Revolution and thereby involve itself in the political maelstrom then raging throughout China; on the second date, the army was ordered to restore order and to use force if needed. As one authority points out, ". . . this was the beginning of the end of the Cultural Revolution."[15] The PLA was more than willing to use force, lots of force, by September since, in the aftermath of the Wuhan Incident in July, the radicals in Peking had been urging the Red Guards "to drag out the handful of power holders in the army," i.e., to attack the district and regional PLA headquarters. Apparently, the army's reaction to this line led to the September 5th order authorizing force. Although the Cultural Revolution sputtered along until early 1969, with first the radicals and then the moderates on top in Peking, the ultimate power belonged to the PLA after September 1967.

In retrospect, the PLA became the dominant force in the Cultural Revolution *malgré lui*. It was initially brought in, reluctantly, by the civilian leadership to aid the Maoist group in an intraparty conflict. Contrary to the expectations of the Cultural Revolution group, however, the army tended to favor the moderate elements, both in the provinces and at the center; it tended to act as a moderating force, especially in the conflicts raging between contending elements at the local level. The military commanders were given the impossible task of simultaneously restoring order and aiding the Red Guards, an insoluble paradox. They had to opt for one or the other of these contradictory alternatives, and by natural bent and long training, they preferred order to the Red Guard anarchy. Forced to enter the political arena, the PLA, in spite of itself, was the dominant political and administrative force in the provinces by the end of the Cultural Revolution.[16]

3. The Role of the PLA in the Immediate Aftermath of the Cultural Revolution, 1969-1971.—On the eve of the Cultural Revolution, China's foreign relations were deteriorating badly. The Chinese had worked assiduously in the first half of the 1960s to build a strong position in Asia and Africa; had quarrelled bitterly with the Soviets at a succession of Afro-Asia People's Solidarity Organization (AAPSO) conferences; and in Indonesia, had won both the Communist Party (PKI) and Sukarno over to their side. On the eve of the Cultural Revolution, however, the whole elaborate policy had disintegrated. Relations with

[12]Domes, *op. cit.*, p. 113.

[13]Jürgen Domes, "Party Politics and the Cultural Revolution," in Frank N. Traeger and William Henderson (eds.), *Communist China, 1949-1969: A Twenty-Year Appraisal* (New York, New York University Press, 1970), p. 90.

[14]Rice, *Mao's Way*, pp. 454-55.

[15]Ellis Joffe, "The Chinese Army after the Cultural Revolution: the Effects of Intervention," *China Quarterly*, No. 55 (July-September 1973), p. 455.

[16]For an excellent discussion of the role of the PLA in Cultural Revolution, see Joff, *op. cit.*, pp. 450-56.

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AAPSO got so bad that the Chinese quit the organization, and the disastrous attempted coup in Indonesia in September-October 1965 led to the destruction of the PKI and the political castration of Sukarno.

During the Cultural Revolution, Peking's relations with the outside world fell into even more disarray. For example, for most of the period there was only one ambassador still at his post, Huang Hua in Cairo; the rest had been recalled for reindoctrination in the "Thoughts of Mao," a process that lasted out the Cultural Revolution. The Red Guards, at one point, took over the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, scattered secret documents about, and carted off the Minister, Ch'en Yi, to subject him to long and arduous public "struggle" sessions. The Soviet and British embassies were periodically harassed by the Red Guards, and the latter was even burned down. In Hong Kong, the local Red Guards rampaged, killing constables and fostering a bus strike, and for a while, Peking cut off food and water to the city. Even Ne Win of Burma, who had tried so hard to get along with his big neighbor, had to break off relations when the Red Guards in Rangoon carried on so outrageously that a Burmese mob burnt out the Chinese diplomatic compound and raided the Chinese section of the city.

All of these events, however, paled into insignificance when compared to the rise in tensions between Moscow and Peking. A succession of events in the early 1960s such as the Soviet ambivalence in the Sino-Indian quarrels, the complete cutoff of Soviet technical and economic assistance to China, the Soviet stance on the Indian-Pakistan War in 1965, and the subsequent Soviet mediation of the war at Tashkent in January 1966, all served to irritate the Chinese more and more. The insults exchanged between Moscow and Peking grew ever more scatological and also more frequent. Finally, the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in August 1968 and the subsequent enunciation of the so-called Brezhnev Doctrine caused extreme alarm in Peking. If, as the new Soviet doctrine asserted, socialist states have the right, or even the duty, to intervene in other socialist states where there is either a domestic or foreign-inspired threat to socialism (a rationalization for the intervention in Czechoslovakia), who would be more vulnerable to the use of such a doctrine than China? Surely, if Moscow is to define "socialism," then Mao's China is the acme of heresy in Soviet eyes.

By the spring of 1969, tensions along the Sino-Soviet border had built up to the danger point. Border incidents had been occurring with great frequency after 1960, and a rather severe flare-up took place in January 1967 along the Ussuri River. According to the Chinese, the Soviets had provoked a total of 4,189 border incidents between October 1964 and March 1969.[17] Mao, in his July 1964 conversation with some Japanese Socialists, had poured oil on an already raging fire when he pointed out that Tsarist Russia had obtained vast tracts of Chinese territory east of the Ussuri, north of the Amur, and in what is now Soviet Central Asia, by pressuring a beleaguered Ch'ing Dynasty into "unequal treaties," and he added that China had not yet presented her account.

The Soviets, alarmed by the rising crescendo of border incidents, began to augment seriously their forces along the Sino-Soviet border in 1967 and simultaneously signed a 20-year defense pact with the People's Republic of Mongolia. The Chinese, with 14 divisions in the Shanyang Military Region, 5 divisions in Inner Mongolia, and 5 more in Sinkiang, had around half a million soldiers in the border areas. This was the setting when, on 2 March 1969, open warfare began on Damansky (or Chen Pao) Island in the Ussuri River.

Damansky Island, one of the many disputed islands in the Amur and Ussuri rivers, is uninhabited and would seem to be a mostly unlikely spot to begin a major international incident. Just how the fire fight began, who was to blame, and how much the event was being manipulated in either Peking or Moscow, is still a puzzle. Most accounts have the Chinese bushwhacking a Soviet patrol and shooting it up rather badly, the Soviets claiming 31 casualties. Two weeks later, on 16 March, following a buildup on both sides, the battle resumed; and this time, the Soviets let it be known that it could escalate into a really serious conflict if the Chinese persisted in their belligerent activities. Peking got the message and the hostilities ceased—at least in that area.[18]

The March incidents along the Ussuri signalled an accelerated Soviet military buildup along the entire Sino-Soviet border, and this, in turn, triggered a Chinese counter buildup. Both countries used the clash over the island to inflame national hatreds, and Western observers began to talk and write about the imminence of a major Sino-Soviet conflict. Imminent or not, the danger of such a war could not be ignored by Peking, and there was general agreement that it was high time to put a stop to the domestic shenanigans that had characterized the Cultural Revolution.

The gunsmoke along the Ussuri had hardly cleared when the Ninth Party Congress was

[17]Colonel D. M. Marks, "The Ussuri River Incident as a Factor in Chinese Foreign Policy," *Air University Review*, Vol. XXII, No. 5 (July-August 1971), p. 54.

[18]Harrison Salisbury, *War Between Russia and China* (New York, Norton, 1969), pp. 180-82; Marks, *op. cit.*, p. 58; for the Chinese view, or case, see Neville Maxwell, "The Chinese Account of the 1969 Fighting at Chenpao," *China Quarterly*, No. 56 (October-December 1973), pp. 730-39.

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convened in Peking on 1 April. It was at this congress that the PLA consolidated its position at the center in addition to its power in the provinces. In the new Politburo, 21 full and 4 alternate members, the military got about half the slots. Lin Piao; Yeh Chun, his wife and in charge of the administration of the Military Affairs Committee (MAC); Ch'en Hsi-lien, commander of the Shen-yang Military Region; Ch'iu Hui-tso, head of PLA Rear Services; Hsu Shih-yu, commander of the Nanking Military Region; Huang Yung-sheng, chief of the general staff; Li Tso-p'ing, political commissar of the Navy; Wu Fa-hsien, head of the air force; Yeh Chien-ying, to become acting chief of staff in late 1971; and Li Teh-sheng, commander of the Anhwei Military District, were all actively engaged in military work. In addition, two of the Old Guard, Chu Teh and Liu Po-ch'eng, were also soldiers and on the Politburo. Of the 170 full members of the Central Committee elected at the Ninth Party Congress, slightly over half were military men (68 commanders and 19 commissars).[19] Furthermore, the Minister of Defense and "Chief" of MAC, Lin Piao, was officially named Mao's successor and his deputy in just about everything. It looked as though Lin and the PLA were in an impregnable political position. With military men sitting in the top slot in 22 of the 29 Revolutionary Committees and holding half the positions in the Politburo and the Central Committee, it would seem that Lin would be able to make his succession stick.

But the Great Helmsman was about to make another of his notorious 180-degree ideological shifts. He had used Lin Piao to back his Leftist policy that unhinged Liu Shao-ch'i and company, and he was now about to go into an alliance with Chou En-lai in a Rightist swing to unseat Lin Piao. As Lin was reputed to have said in 1971, when Mao's intrigues became obvious to him: "Once he [Mao] thinks someone is his enemy, he won't stop until the victim is put to death; once you offend him, he'll persist to the end—passing all blame on to the victim, held responsible for crimes committed by himself."[20] Actually, the Cultural Revolution ended in a three-way conflict: Lin and the PLA, Chou En-lai and the remnants of the government, and the survivors in the Cultural Revolution group. Chou and the remnants of the Cultural Revolution group had no other option than to unite with Mao in an effort to undercut Lin Piao. For the next 28 months (April 1969 to September 1971) this group of strange bedfellows worked at the ruination of Lin Piao and it was eventually successful. How this was done can be seen in broad outline, although the dirty details are still murky.

At the outset, it looked as though Lin and the military were steadily gaining in political strength. The attempt to shift political power back to civilians in the party by reconstructing the Provincial Party Committees boomeranged. The first reconstructed Provincial Party Committee came into being in December 1970 and the process was not completed until August 1971. But of the 29 First Secretaries, 22 were military men, and of the 158 Committee secretaries, 62 percent were military men. "Only Shanghai, the cradle of the Cultural Revolution and the citadel of radicalism throughout its development, retained a predominantly nonmilitary leadership."[21] Apparently, judging from subsequent events, the unity of the PLA in its new power position was more facade than reality.

It would seem in retrospect that Lin Piao and his staunch supporters on the General Staff were in conflict with many of the military leaders in the military regions and districts. Some of these could not forgive or forget the indignities they had suffered during the Cultural Revolution when Lin and his pals at the center were pushing them to aid and abet the Red Guards and the revolutionary left. It was during that period of the Cultural Revolution that some of the regional commanders came to look upon Chou En-lai as the voice of moderation, the man striving to keep the ship of state afloat in a sea of anarchy. The cracks in the army's unity that had appeared during the Cultural Revolution tended to widen as the army became even more deeply involved in politics in the aftermath of the revolution. The main split appears to have been between Lin and some of the most powerful of the military region commanders.

Mao, seemingly somewhat amazed that his Cultural Revolution had brought forth not a victory for the radicals, but a militarization of the party, began to call for a return to civilian control even before the end of the Cultural Revolution. But the military went right ahead in their seizure of the top slots in the reconstructed Provincial Party Committees and a goodly share of power in the central organs such as the Politburo and the Central Committee. Mao, backed by Chou En-lai and his moderates as well as by the remnants of the greatly weakened Cultural Revolution group, then began undermining Lin Piao in earnest. The struggle came out in the open at the Lushan Plenum of the Central Committe in August 1970 when Lin, supported by Ch'en Po-ta, criticized those who had drafted a projected state constitution (Chou En-lai had been the

[19]Joffe, "The Chinese Army after the Cultural Revolution," p. 457.

[20]"Outline of the '571 Project,'" *Issues and Studies*, May 1972, p. 81, quoted in Philip Bridgham, "The Fall of Lin Piao," *China Quarterly*, No. 55 (July-September 1973), p. 439.

[21]Joffe, "The Chinese Army after the Cultural Revolution," p. 466.

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chief architect), which deleted the position of chairman of the PRC (Liu Shao-ch'i's old job). It is somewhat uncertain who Lin and Ch'en had in mind for state chairman; some writers think it was Mao, to keep it warm for his heir apparent, others think Ch'en Po-ta was the claimant, and some think Lin wanted to step into the job immediately. The main objective of the gambit, however, was to retain the position so that it would mean someone was immediately over Chou En-lai, preferably either Lin or Ch'en.[22] Mao was adamantly opposed to the retention of the position and reminded Lin that he had told him (Lin) on six previous occasions that there was no need for a state chairman.

With the battle lines more or less openly drawn, Mao then proceeded with his campaign to get rid of his appointed successor. In January 1971, the commander and the second political commissar of the Peking Military Region, both Lin supporters, were relieved of their duties, and the 38th Army (also pro-Lin) was transferred to another area. Mao also succeeded in inserting some of his adherents into the MAC, thus diluting the authority of Lin and his wife, Yeh Chun, who was head of the administrative office. At the Central Committee Work Conference in April 1971, it was disclosed that several Politburo members who had supported Lin at the Lushan Plenum had subsequently come forth with "self-criticisms." By the early spring of 1971, it was evident to Lin Piao that his position was being seriously undermined.

4. The Fall of Lin Piao, 1971.—In August and early September 1971, Mao went on an inspection trip through the Canton and Nanking Military Regions where he talked with regional and district commanders about the necessity of the PLA's giving up control of the party machinery. Apparently, he also asked for their support in the coming showdown with Lin Piao. He seems to have gained that support. The day after his return to Peking, on 12 September, an aircraft belonging to the Chinese Air Force, a British-built *Trident*, crashed in Outer Mongolia and Lin Piao was heard from no more. Just what happened is still a mystery. Although there were rumors that Lin had died in the air crash in Mongolia, there was no word from Peking authenticating those rumors. It was not until 28 July 1972 that Wang Hai-jung, a young lady close to Mao and an Assistant Foreign Minister, confirmed a Chinese Embassy statement issued in Algiers as true—Lin Piao, according to that statement, had died in the plane crash in Mongolia while attempting to escape after the failure of a plot to oust Chairman Mao.[23] Mao, it seems, had revealed the same information earlier to Mrs. Bandaranaike, Prime Minister of Sri Lanka, and to Maurice Schumann, Foreign Minister of France. Since then, there have been several documents emanating from China, not to mention the plethora of rumors and weird tales. In 1973 and 1974, the Chinese have gone after Lin Piao and his colleagues with a vengeance, and his crimes are multiplying by the day, including purported plans to assassinate Mao.

The main outline of the story being fed to the party faithful in China is as follows: Lin Piao and a number of high-ranking officers plotted a coup d'etat; the plot entailed the assassination of Mao; when the plot was discovered, Lin panicked and tried to escape to the Soviet Union in a *Trident* but left in such a hurry that it was insufficiently fueled and without a navigator, ergo the crash. The Lin Piao plot, or at least an outline of it, has been circulated in China under the title of "Outline of the '571 Project'."[24] Garbled and weird though it is, it attempts to show Lin, on the outs with Mao in late 1970, plotting with some fellow officers on the general staff, especially Air Force leaders, to take over from old "B-52," the code name for Mao. Lin Piao's son, Lin Li-kuo, is portrayed as running about in Hangchow, Shanghai, and Peking trying to coordinate the plot. In another account, "Document No. 24 of the CCP Central Committee," issued in June 1972, a much more detailed account of the Lin Piao plot is given. In this account, Lin and his colleagues attempted, in September 1971, to assassinate Mao when he was touring the south on his inspection trip. They were unsuccessful and the death of Lin is described as follows:

> Seeing that his scheme had been exposed and that his last day was coming, Lin Piao hurriedly took his wife and son and a few diehard cohorts to escape to the enemy, betraying the Party and the state. In the early morning hour of 2:30, September 13, 1971, the Trident jet No. 256 carrying them crashed in the vicinity of Ondor Han in Mongolia. Lin Piao, Yeh Chun, Lin Li-kuo, and all other renegades and traitors aboard were burned to death. Their death, however, could not expatiate [Sic] all their crimes. After Lin Piao's unsuccessful betrayal and defection, Huang Yung-sheng, Wu Fa-hsien, Li Tso-p'eng, and Chiu Hui-tso destroyed many of the evidences to cover up their own criminal acts.[25]

Those who got the ax in the immediate aftermath of Lin's "accident" comprised a relatively high per-

[22] Details are in Bridgham, *op. cit.*, pp. 434 ff. and in E. E. Rice, "Leadership, Party, and Army in Future China," *Pacific Community*, Vol. V, No. 2 (January 1974), p. 176-77; Mao's side of the story in "Mao Tse-tung's Talks to Responsibile Comrades in Nanking and Shanghai Areas During His Inspection of the Troops," *Issues and Studies*, Vol. VIII, No. 10 (June 1972), pp. 95-97.

[23] *New York Times*, 29 July 1972.

[24] A translation of the text is available in *Issues and Studies* (Taipei), Vol VIII, No. 8 (May 1972), pp. 78-83, under the title "The Struggle of Smashing the Counter-revolutionary Coup of the Lin-Ch'en Anti-Party Clique."

[25] *Issues and Studies*, Vol. IX, No. 3 (December 1972), p. 95.

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centage of the top command of the PLA in Peking. The officers accused of being in on the Lin Piao plot were mostly chiefs and deputy chiefs of various segments of the general staff, a number of top air force officers, and quite a few from the navy and general logistics department. The most highly placed of those purged were: Yeh Chun, Lin's wife and director of administration in MAC, Huang Yung-sheng, chief of the general staff, Wu Fa-hsien, head of the Air Force, Li Tso-p'eng, first political commissar of the navy, Ch'iu Hui-tso, head of the general logistics department, Yen Chung-ch'uan, deputy chief of the general staff, and Liang Hsing-ch'u, commander of the Chengtu Military Region. More than 30 more high-ranking officers were involved in the purge. Five of the victims were on the Politburo, 10 were members of the Central Committee, and others were secretaries or deputy secretaries in provincial party organizations in addition to their military positions. In the military structure per se, five were from the general staff, 5 from logistics, four from the navy, and 10 from the air force. The strong representation of the air force may account for the fact that all aircraft were grounded from the 13th to the 16th of September 1971. The anti-Lin Piao group must have feared that the air force might attempt to help the plotters escape. The usual celebration of the anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China on October 1st was called off, probably because of the confused state of affairs in Peking following the ouster of Lin and his colleagues.

The Lin Piao affair, with heads rolling thick and fast at the top levels, left the PLA, as a whole, decapitated. Apparently there was no agreement as to which of the survivors should get which job. Top slots such as the chief of the general staff, head of the air force, and other heads of departments were left in the hands of temporary appointees, men whose titles carried the adjective "acting" to designate the transitory nature of their assignments. The Lin Piao affair, with its wholesale purge of top military personnel, is reminiscent of the mass slaughter of top Soviet officers during the Stalinist Great Purge of 1936-39.

5. The Military in the Current Phase of Chinese Politics, 1971-1974.—Although those close to Lin Piao at the general staff and department levels were purged immediately, Mao was much more careful in his handling of the military region and military district commanders and their political commissars. After all, those people controlled the provincial party machinery by virtue of their positions as chairmen of the revolutionary committees and secretaries of the provincial Party committees. The purge of suspected pro-Lin people in the provinces would have to be carried out with patience and a good deal of finesse.

One of the tactics used by Mao and his entourage was to so blacken Lin Piao's name that anyone with former connections could be regarded as "guilty by association," hardly a cornerstone of English common law, but a rather widely used technique in Communist-ruled countries. Lin was accused of not only plotting to assassinate the Great Helmsman, but also of seeking the return of capitalism in the People's Republic. He was also accused of trying to sabotage the détente with the United States and of dealing with the Soviets for assistance in dumping Mao. Just as Stalin was never satisfied with merely eliminating an opponent, even a potential opponent, but also sought to utterly destroy his reputation, so has Mao dealt with his enemies. Liu Shao-ch'i was not simply a political rival who lost, but had to become a black villain, a "capitalist roader," "China's Khrushchev," etc. Now it was Lin Piao's turn to get the treatment. His military exploits, dating back to the late 1920s, were now downgraded and ridiculed. He was now a man who had long aspired to bring back capitalism and imperialistic exploitation to China, and he had even conspired with the USSR ro return China to the subservient position it had held in the early 1950s. By pushing Lin's criminal activities back into the past, his earlier military associates became vulnerable.

The only trouble with the whole strategem was how to keep Mao from looking like a damn fool. After all, he had made Lin Piao his closest comrade-in-arms, his heir apparent, and had picked him to succeed P'eng Teh-huai as minister of defense in 1959. If the Great Helmsman himself had been fooled by Lin all those years, why blame lesser folk because they too failed to realize what a scoundrel he was? One attempt to offset this potential criticism of Mao was the circulation of a letter from Mao to his wife, Chiang Ch'ing, supposedly written on 8 July 1968. In this letter Mao comments ruefully on his elevation to the rank of "genius" by Lin Piao and on the latter's characterization of his booklets as having "so much supernatural power." He was tempted to speak out against such adulation, but feared that his words would help the "Rightists" and hurt the "Leftists" in the Cultural Revolution. Mao, however, consoled himself with the thought that: "We shall launch another movement for sweeping up the ghosts and monsters after seven or eight years, and will launch more of the movement later."[26] Although there is general agreement that the letter

[26]A translation of this letter in *Issues and Studies*, Vol. IX, No. 4 (January 1974), pp. 94-96.

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was written by Mao, it is also generally agreed that it was written subsequent to Lin's downfall, or that it was revised to include the anti-Lin comments.

By the summer of 1973, the Mao-Chou-Chiang Ch'ing alliance had gained enough control over the party apparatus to convene another Party Congress, and the 10th Party Congress met between 24 and 28 August 1973. It was notable for the shortness of the meeting and the secrecy in which it was held. There were 1,249 delegates, 263 fewer than those in attendance at the 9th Party Congress in April 1969. The Congress elected 195 full and 124 alternate members to the new Central Committee, or 319 in all, some 40 more than the preceding Central Committee. Of the 319 Central Committee members, 100, or 31 percent, were military, 91, or 29 percent, veteran party cadres, and 104, or 32 percent, represented the Cultural Revolution faction. The allegiance of 24 members cannot be ascertained. The military, therefore, lost ground since there had been around 50 percent military men in the 9th Central Committee. The Central Committee, at its first plenary session at the end of the Congress, approved a new Politburo of 21 full and 4 candidate members. Of the 25 members of the Politburo, only 7 were military men, and 2 of those, Chu Teh and Liu Po-ch'eng, were Old Guard decorative members. As Rice points out, the 10th Party Congress reflected the "civilianization" of the CCP.[27]

[27] E. E. Rice, "Leadership, Party and Army in Future China," *Pacific Community, Vol. 5, No. 2(January 1974), p. 182.*

On New Year's Day, 1974, Peking revealed that 9 of the 11 commanders of military regions had been reshuffled, thereby removing them from their "mountain tops," from the regions in which they had built up intimate and long-standing political, economic, and governmental ties. Ch'en Hsi-lien, who had been in command of the Shenyang military region (the three provinces of Manchuria) since 1959, was transferred to command the Peking military region. Hsu Shih-yu, in command of the Nanking military region since 1954, a region controlling about 40 percent of China's industrial output, was sent to head the Canton military region. Seven other military regions got new commanders. The light touch was again revealed, however, since the commanders merely swapped assignments and thus found it difficult to plead demotion.

Military Region	Commander in 1973	Commander in 1974
Shenyang	Ch'en Hsi'lien	Li Teh-sheng
Peking		Ch'en Hsi'lien
Canton	T'ing Sheng	Hsu Shih-yu
Nanking	Hsu Shih-yu	T'ing Sheng
Chengtu	Ch'iu Chi-wei	Ch'iu Chi-wei*
Lanchow	Pi Tung-chun	Han Hsien-chu
Foochow	Han Hsien-chu	Pi Tung-chun
Tsinan	Yang Teh-chih	Tseng Ssu-yu
Wuhan	Tseng Ssu-yu	Tang Teh-chih
Kunming	Wang Pi-cheng	Wang Pi-cheng*
Sinkiang		Yang Yung

**Ch'iu Chi-wei and Wang Pi-cheng had only been assigned to their respective posts in May 1973, so they hardly had time to establish "mountain tops" before the New Year's Day shuffle.*

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CHAPTER VIII

The People's Liberation Army Today

THE TITLE of this chapter is somewhat ambitious as no one can describe the PLA with exactitude as it exists *today*—one suspects that even the top politicians in Peking would be hard put to come up with an accurate description, let alone the outside observer gleaning a hint here and a fact there. What will be attempted is a brief description of the overall organization of the PLA, including its training, education, and weapons as of 1974. But the reader should keep in mind that much of organization today is ad hoc and subject to change at any moment. On the whole, it would seem that, although the PLA was more sheltered from the storm of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution than other institutions in the PRC, even it was greatly affected by the violent winds of change that blew over China during that turbulent era.

Ironically, at the very time that China was severing itself from the USSR, its logical tutor in technology, and was still trying to recover economically from the effects of the Great Leap Forward and the Cultural Revolution, it not only joined the then exclusive nuclear club, going from fission to fusion in record time, but also produced some rather sophisticated military equipment. These developments will be touched on in this chapter, as the future of the PLA can be dramatically changed with the advent of these new weapon systems.

The military leaders who are mentioned in this chapter will not necessarily be in place when this work comes off the press. The turnover in personnel at the top level of the PLA in the present period is kaleidoscopic. Honorable old warhorses such as Chu Teh and Liu Po-ch'eng were assailed in large-character wall posters during the Cultural Revolution, but in the aftermath of that event, the same men appeared again on the reviewing stand with Mao Tse-tung and Chou En-lai. A Yeh Chien-ying seemed to be on the outside looking in at one point, but became acting chief of the general staff a year later. Even Ch'en Tsai-tao, the chief villain of the Wuhan Incident in July 1967, was rehabilitated by 1973, and Li Teh-sheng, who had a meteoric rise between 1967 and 1973, was being attacked in wall posters by April 1974. To say that the command structure of the PLA is in a state of flux is a masterpiece of understatement.

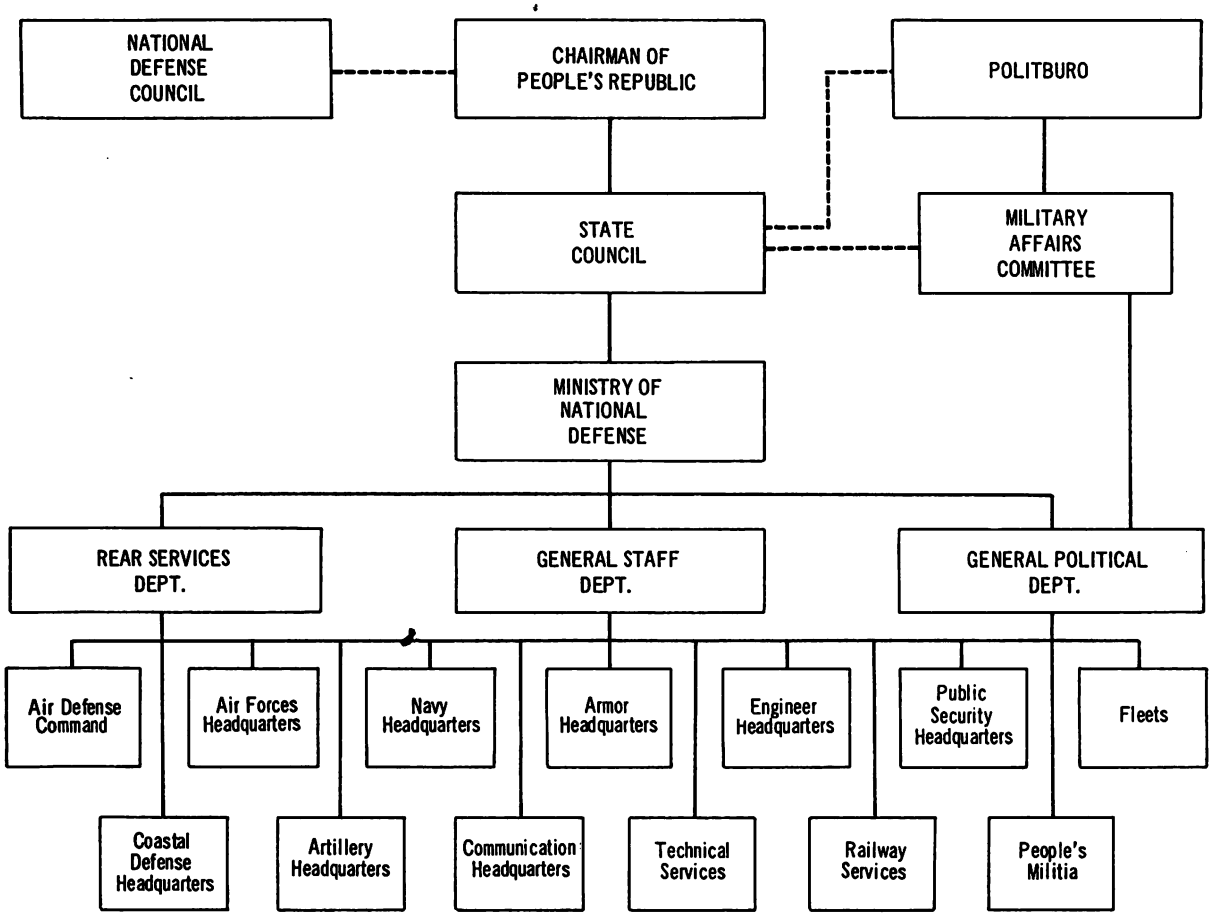
Finally, the top officers of the PLA, like the political leaders of the PRC, are getting old, and personnel changes in the various departments and commands should be extremely rapid in the next few years, if only for geriatric reasons. After all, the PLA celebrates its 47th birthday on 1 August 1974, and the brilliant young officers of its first decade are now very old men. Like Mao, however, they seem reluctant to entrust the PLA to younger men, and there seems to be no age at which retirement is mandatory.

1. Overall Organization of the National Defense of the People's Republic of China.—The PRC, like the Soviet Union, is a double-track affair: the government per se, theoretically organized in accordance with the provisions of the 1954 Constitution, has its legislature, executive arm, and judicial branch in the National People's Congress, the State Council, and the Supreme People's Court, respectively. On the organizational chart of the Chinese People's government, the line of authority runs directly down the hierarchy of the National People's Congress, or its Standing Committee, formerly headed by Liu Shao-ch'i, who was also technically commander in chief of the armed forces; then on through the State Council, headed by Chou En-lai; and, in turn, one ministry of the State Council is that of national defense. In mid-1974, there was no head of state and no minister of national defense, so the old wiring diagram has no validity—and has had no validity since 1966.

The real power lies with the CCP, or, actually, with a small clique within the top echelon of the Party. Authority flows from the Standing Committee of the Politburo of the Central Committee to the

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Chart 1. Organization for National Defense.



Central Committee's Military Affairs Committee (MAC), staffed by personnel apparently devoted to Mao and Chou En-lai. In addition, there is a direct line of authority between MAC and the General Political Department of the Ministry of National Defense, a double-barrelled attempt by the Party leadership to control the PLA, operationally and ideologically. The National Defense Council, formerly with the head of state as chairman, consists of a dozen or so ex-marshals and generals as vice-chairmen, and over 100 high-ranking officers as members; it seems, in spite of its high-sounding title, to play only an honorary role in things military—sort of a "club" for antiquated brass.

Until the downfall of Lin Piao in September 1971, the Military Affairs Committee seems to have been the main source of authority in national defense matters. The 29 issues of the *Bulletin of Activities* for 1961, a classified journal for those with a need to know, which came into American hands, gave a detailed picture of the variety of jobs supervised by MAC—and the range was all-encompassing. MAC dealt with discipline, weapons, organizational matters, ideological questions, training, civil unrest, the People's Militia, and just about every other matter that could have any relationship to military affairs.[1]

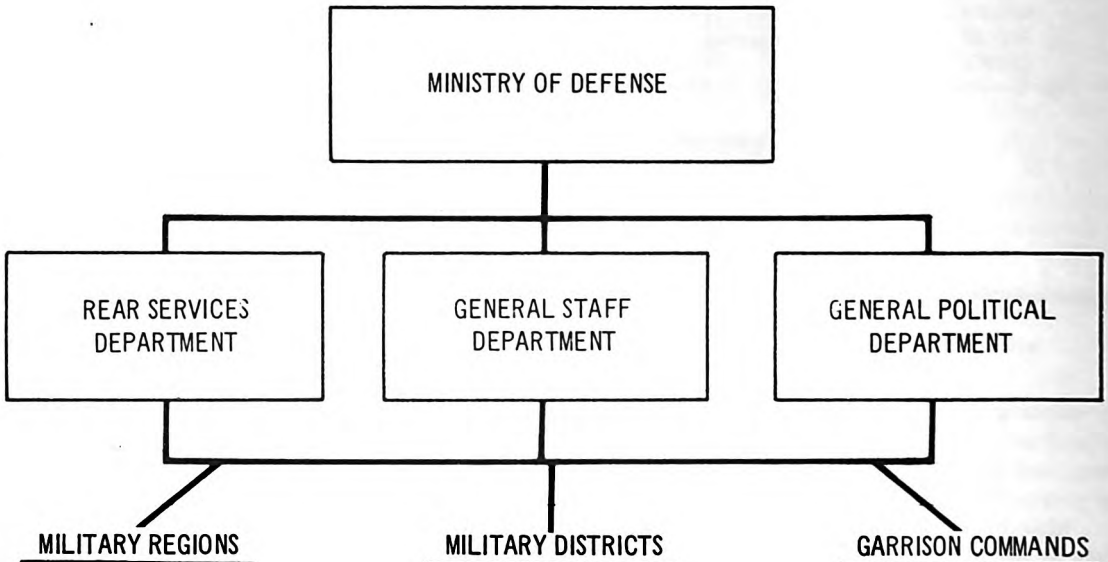
The Ministry of National Defense is organized in a fairly conventional manner. Right under the minister himself are three general departments: the General Rear Services Department, the General Staff Department, and the General Political Department. These, along with the minister and a half dozen vice-ministers, direct a dozen headquarters, ranging from that of the air force to that of the railway services, plus the fleets and the People's Militia. (See Chart 1, Organization of National Defense.) In addition, the ministry has a Foreign Affairs Department, various military publications, a military museum, a film studio, a sports association, and other sections under its immediate control.[2] The General Staff Department is the main instrument through which the ministry coordinates

[1] *See The Politics of the Chinese Red Army: A Translation of the Bulletin of Activities of the People's Liberation Army.*

[2] *See* Appendix B in Griffith, *op. cit.*, for a detailed chart of the organization of the Ministry of National Defense.

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Chart 2. Regional Organization.



MILITARY REGIONS	MILITARY DISTRICTS	GARRISON COMMANDS
Canton	Kwangtung, Kwangsi, Hunan	Canton
Chengtu	Szechuan	Chengtu
Foochow	Fukien, Kiangsi	Lanchow
Kunming	Kweichow, Yunnan	Lhasa
Lanchow	Chinghai, Kansu, Ninghsia, Shensi	Mukden
Nanking	Chekiang, Anhwei, Kiangsu	Peking
Peking	Hopei, Shansi	Shanghai
Shenyang	Kirin, Heilungkiang, Liaoning	Tientsin
Tsinan	Shantung	Wuhan
Wuhan	Honan, Hupeh	Other major cities

~~Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region~~ . . . now merged with the Peking Military Region
Sinkiang Autonomous Region
~~Tibet Autonomous Region~~ . . . . . now merged with the Chengtu Military Region

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and directs the activities of the various commands and services of the PLA. But since the General Political Department is directly controlled by both the Ministry of National Defense and the Military Affairs Committee, and inasmuch as the loyalty of the commanders to the Party leadership is most important in keeping control of the PLA, the role of the General Political Department is undoubtedly of the utmost importance. The commanders of the services and fleets and the commanders of the military regions, districts, and garrisons, have political commissars at their sides to insure their devotion to the ideological line then in the ascendancy and to keep them from going overboard in what they may consider to be professionally desirable.

The PRC is divided into eleven *military regions*.[3] Ten of them are named for the cities in which their headquarters are located, while the eleventh is the Sinkiang Uighur Autonomous Region. Eight of the military regions are subdivided into *military districts*, coterminous with the provinces within the military regions. For example, the Shenyang military region (all of Manchuria) is subdivided into three military districts: Heilungkiang, Kirin, and Liaoning, the three provinces that make up Manchuria. (See Chart 2, Regional Organization.)

The commander of a military region controls the border troops, the independent divisions and regiments, and the city garrisons within his region, which together comprise about half the ground forces of the PLA. He exercises control either directly or through his subordinate military district and city garrison commanders. Each region, district, and garrison commander is flanked by one or more political commissars, and both are supposed to coordinate with the appropriate provincial party committee. Formerly, in the three military regions of the autonomous ethnic areas (Sinkiang, Tibet, and Inner Mongolia), the military commanders also acted as political commissars. But during the Cultural Revolution, Ulanfu of Inner Mongolia and Wang En-mao of Sinkiang were fired. This problem has been largely eliminated since the abolition of the Tibetan and Inner Mongolian military regions. All the major cities have military garrisons, whose commanders control the ground forces in their bailiwicks. They report directly to either the military district or military region headquarters in command of the area in which their city is located.

The main forces of the PLA, under the direct command of the headquarters in Peking, are composed of some 36 corps (sometimes called *armies*), each made up of three divisions plus support units, about 45,000 men in each corps. The region, district, or garrison commanders have no control over these main forces, although orders from Peking may be sent through the regional commanders. In addition, the air force, navy, and airborne forces are under the direct command of PLA headquarters in Peking. Thus, the region, district, and garrison commanders have no control over air force, naval, or airborne units, even if they are stationed within their regions.

2. The Ground Forces.—Estimates of the total strength of the PLA vary, but the usual horseback figure is in the immediate neighborhood of three million men.[4] The great bulk of this manpower, around 2,500,000 men, is in the ground forces. Of the estimated 150 divisions, about 120 are infantry. The size of the divisions is in some dispute among authorities. Ellis Joffe, for example, says that Edgar Snow was told that an infantry division had around 12,000 men; was made up of five regiments (three infantry, one artillery, and one tank), plus four battalions (antitank, medical, engineers, and signal); and had five special companies for reconnaissance, antigas, chemical warfare, and training.[5] The basic infantry weapon is the submachine gun, although rifles and carbines are still widely used. At the squad and company levels, light machine guns are standard equipment, along with 75-mm recoilless rifles and 90-mm rocket launchers. The infantry has mortars ranging from 57 to 160 mm.

In addition to infantry divisions, the PLA has 5 armored divisions, 3 cavalry, 2 airborne, and 20 artillery divisions. The armored divisions are equipped with the Soviet JS-2 heavy tank and the T-34 and T-54 Soviet medium tanks. The Chinese have come up with their own version of T-54, which they call the T-59. The T-59 is an excellent vehicle, which mounts a 100-mm, high-velocity gun and has good cross-country capability. The armored divisions are also equipped with some Soviet SU-109 self-propelled assault guns. The infantry organic to the armored division is transported in APCs. The effectiveness of the PLA's armored divisions is unknown since they have not been used in combat as yet.

General Griffith[6] describes two types of artillery divisions in the PLA—the gun division and the howitzer division. The gun division is made up of

[3]Until the Cultural Revolution, there were 13 military regions. Then the military region of Tibet was put under Chengtu (Szechwan) and that of Inner Mongolia was largely absorbed by the Peking Military Region. Apparently the loyalty of the Tibetans and the Mongolians was somewhat suspect and, in addition, both are located adjacent to potentially hostile powers, India and the People's Republic of Mongolia.

[4]*The Military Balance, 1973-74* (London, International Institute for Strategic Studies, 1973), p. 46, gives the figure of 2,900,000.

[5]Ellis Joffe, *Party and Army: Professionalism and Political Control in the Chinese Officer Corps, 1949-1964*, pp. 153-54.

[6]*The Chinese People's Liberation Army*, p. 221.

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six battalions equipped with 12 122-mm guns and three battalions equipped with 152-mm guns. The howitzer division has 36 122-mm and the same number of 152-mm howitzers plus 24 132-mm rocket launchers. In recent years, the 203-mm gun has been added to the arsenal. During the latter part of the Korean War, the Chinese demonstrated an ability to use their Soviet-supplied artillery and have, no doubt, improved upon that capability since then.

The three cavalry divisions are stationed in the desert-steppe areas of Inner Mongolia, Kansu, and Sinkiang. The terrain in those regions is suitable for cavalry, and the nomadic nature of the inhabitants makes it relatively easy to secure both recruits and remounts. But how the Chinese intend to use the two airborne divisions is somewhat of a mystery since they would be hard pressed to come up with the airlift needed to handle that number of men. Thus far the Chinese have not built indigenous transport aircraft and the transports they have purchased abroad (British Tridents, US Boeing 707s, and Soviet I1-62s) would need very extensive modifications before they could be used effectively in a military role. The 400 or so somewhat obsolescent military transport aircraft available would do well to airlift even one of the two airborne divisions.

The ground forces, then, are composed overwhelmingly of infantry with enough armor and artillery to support relatively limited operations. The infantry, by and large, moves on its feet in traditional Chinese style, as both trucks and decent roads are in short supply. The ability of the Chinese soldier to traverse long distances rapidly is proverbial and was amply demonstrated in the Long March of 1934-1935 and in the movement of troops into Korea in 1950. Furthermore, the Chinese infantry is not roadbound, but can cope with rugged terrain. Operating in open country, e.g. Sinkiang, Kansu, or Inner Mongolia, the Chinese would be at a disadvantage if the opponent were well-supplied with fast tanks, self-propelled artillery, and tracked vehicles, not to speak of the havoc that would be wrought if he had control of the air. But in mountainous areas, which make up a good deal of China, the strong legs of the Chinese soldier would be a distinct asset.

The Chinese have the industrial capacity to supply the needs of the ground forces in weapons. They have been manufacturing their own copies of Soviet light infantry weapons as well as mortars and artillery since the late 1950s and have been shipping sizable quantities to the North Vietnamese for nearly two decades. As noted above, they are now producing their own version of the Soviet T-54 tank, which they call the T-59, and are also building their own APCs. The main lack is transport equipment, ranging from personnel carriers to heavy trucks, as well as an inability to supply adequate amounts of heavy engineering equipment.

3. The Air Force.—The PLA air force is a Johnny-come-lately, dating back to around 1948, two decades after the birth of the Red Army at Nanchang in August 1927. During the civil war, a few Nationalist pilots defected to the Chinese Communists, aircraft and all, and these men and machines formed the nucleus of what became the Chinese People's air force. Lin Piao's men secured a few Japanese aircraft in Manchuria in 1945-1946 while the complaisant Soviet occupiers looked on, and the Soviets also trained a few Chinese pilots in the Soviet Union to fly them. In the spring of 1948, the first aviation training school was established in Manchuria. In 1949, Liu Ya-lou, then chief of staff of Lin Piao's Fourth Army, was made head of the new Chinese People's air force, which had a total strength of about 100 beat-up aircraft. This was indeed a modest beginning—a nonflying commander in chief and a mixed bag of antique planes.[7]

Then came the Korean War, and the Soviets had the unpalatable options of either building up a Chinese air force or of supplying air cover in Korea themselves. They chose the first alternative and immediately began shipping MIG-15s to the Chinese. At the same time they launched an accelerated training program for Chinese pilots. The Soviets delivered hundreds of MIG-15s during 1951, and by December of that year, the Chinese had about 700 MIG-15 jet fighters, 200 Tu-2 piston light bombers, and a total air strength of almost 2,500 aircraft of all types.[8] Throughout the rest of the Korean conflict, the Soviets continued to supply MIG-15s, a few Il-28 twin-jet bombers, and even a few Tu-4s (Tupolev's version of the US B-29). On the whole, however, the Soviets were stingy with bombers; they supplied the Chinese with probably not more than 100 Il-28s by 1954.[9] They were apparently willing enough to provide the wherewithal for a defensive air force, but not the ingredients for a genuine offensive capability.

After the Korean War, the Chinese shifted the bulk of their air force to the coastal provinces opposite Taiwan and proceeded to build up an elaborate complex of bases in that region, apparently still optimistic about the conquest of Chiang Kai-shek's realm. In 1955, the Soviets began to supply MIG-17s, and in 1956, with much fanfare, the Chinese began to produce their own

[7]John Gittings, *The Role of the Chinese Army* (New York, Oxford University Press, 1967), p. 136.

[8]Raymond Garthoff (ed), *Sino-Soviet Military Relations* (New York, Praeger, 1966), p. 85; Gittings, *op. cit.*, p. 137, gives 1,200 to 1,500 as the total by the end of 1951.

[9]Gittings, *op. cit.*, pp. 137-38.

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version of the MIG-17, under Soviet license, in their Manchurian plants. When Soviet assistance came to a sudden end in mid-1960, the Chinese air force had grown to about 3,000 aircraft, of which well over 2,000 were jets. About three-quarters of the machines were fighters: MIG-15s, 17s, and some (100?) 19s; a number of Il-28 light bombers (200 to 400); and a squadron of Tu-4 heavies.[10]

The break with the Soviet Union in mid-1960 was a severe blow for the Chinese air force. Between 1960 and 1965, the Chinese had to more or less lift themselves by their own bootstraps in the aviation business. Starting with only a handful of aeronautical engineers in the early 1950s, by 1963 they had produced some 5,000 aeronautical engineers from Chinese technical institutes.[11] Although able to produce the MIG-17 in quantity by 1960, it was not until the mid-1960s that MIG-19s began to come off the assembly lines in series production; by 1966, the Chinese were selling them to Pakistan.

At the end of the 1960s and in the early 1970s, the Chinese began series production of more advanced aircraft: their own version of the Tu-16 medium bomber, the MIG-21, and a Chinese-designed fighter-bomber, the F-9.[12] The F-9 is the MIG-19 with the airframe modified so as to accommodate two larger and more powerful turbojet engines. It has been in series production since 1970 and is reportedly currently being produced at the rate of around 200 per year.

The PRC now has the third largest air force in the world, around 4,000 combat aircraft. Some 3,600 are jet fighters, 300 light jet bombers, 100 medium jet bombers, and 300 helicopters.[13] The jet fighters include 100 MIG-15s, now being phased out; 1,700 MIG-17s; 1,300 MIG-19s; 75 MIG-21s, no longer in production; and around 400 F-9s, the top fighter in the air force's inventory. The bomber force consists of over 100 Tu-16s (Chinese version) and 300 Il-28s. There are also 10 Tu-4s, the old Soviet copy of the American B-29, more suitable for the museum than for modern combat.

The regime in Peking is determined to create a first class air force and over the last decade has assigned about one-third of the defense budget for the creation of just such a force. At the present time, the existence of some 30 aircraft plants, around 200 major electronic factories, and the relatively large amount of scarce foreign currency being expended on the importation of electronic components would seem to demonstrate the seriousness with which the government is approaching the task. As for POL, since 1965, the PRC has managed to become self-sufficient in petroleum, including jet fuels.

The air force was especially hard hit in the purge of Lin Piao and his "associates" in September 1971. At the present time (May 1974), there is no evidence that the regime has appointed a successor to Wu Fa-hsien, the head of the air force purged in September 1971. In addition to Wu, those purged include four deputy commanders, two deputy chiefs of staff, and four deputy commissars.[14] How many of these people have been replaced is not known to the writer.

3. The Chinese Communist Navy.—The Chinese Communist regime was even later in creating a navy than it was in establishing an air force. It was not until the PLA forces had crossed the Yangtze in April 1949 that the Chinese Communists obtained their first Nationalist vessels, and these were nothing to brag about since Chiang Kai-shek had taken the best to Taiwan, both naval craft and naval personnel. The PLA, a landlocked, predominantly guerrilla force for over two decades was perforce extremely short of skilled seafarers. The job of building the new navy went, in 1950, to Hsiao Ching-kuang, a veteran army man whose career dated back to his days as an instructor in the Whampoa Academy in 1924. He had two relatively long stays in the Soviet Union (1921-24 and 1927-30), but the rest of his experience was that of an infantry commander.

Between 1950 and the end of the Korean War, little progress was made in building a navy. What attention was paid to naval matters was concentrated on how to get an invasion force across the Taiwan Strait and finish off the Civil War. But the interposition of the US Seventh Fleet in 1950 led to the junking of that dream—at least for the time being. By 1956, the Chinese had built a Soviet "W" class submarine, the first of some 20 to be built by the Chinese in Chinese yards, but they were assembled from Soviet components. Also in 1956, they received 4 "Gordy" class destroyers from the Soviets and 6 "Kronstadt" class subchasers. These served as models for a subsequent 18 more built by the Chinese.[15] After the break with the USSR in

[10] *Ibid.*, p. 140; Joffe, *op. cit.*, p. 156; Griffith, *op. cit.*, p. 224.

[11] Charles H. Murphy, "China's Aviation in Great Leap Forward," *Pacific Community*, Vol. 4, No. 3 (April 1973), p. 380.

[12] *Ibid.*

[13] The figures are from Murphy, *op. cit.*, pp. 385-6 and *The Military Balance, 1973-1974*, p. 47. The two sources are pretty close to agreement.

[14] Chang Ching-wen, "Mao's Purge of Lin Piao's Faction," *Issues and Studies*, Vol. IX, No. 7 (April 1973), p. 22.

[15] Captain E. J. Cummings, Jr., USN, "The Chinese Communist Navy," *Naval Proceedings*. According to Cummings, in the 1954-55 period the Soviets gave the Chinese some old *Gordy*-class destroyers, 13 submarines, 6 *Kronstadt*- and 6 *Artillerist*- type subchasers, plus some minesweepers and about 50 old torpedo boats.

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1960, the Chinese were on their own in the naval business.

In 1964, they proved their capability by producing a diesel-powered ballistic missile submarine patterned on the Soviet "G" class boat, although up to now they have not produced the SLMB to go with it.[16] Since the mid-1960s, the naval building program has proceeded rapidly; the new "R" class diesel attack submarine, a large number of fast missile and torpedo boats, and even, since 1969, work on one or more nuclear-powered submarines.[17]

At the present time (early 1974), the Chinese have well over 1,200 naval vessels. These include 1 "G" class, 39 fleet, and three coastal submarines, 6 SSM destroyers, 6 destroyer escorts, 20 subchasers, almost 600 fast motor boats (25 with *Styx* SAMs, 220 MTB, 90 of which are new hydrofoils, and 320 gunboats), plus over 500 landing craft.[18]

These vessels are divided among three fleets: the North Sea fleet, which operates from the Yalu to just south of the Shantung peninsula; the East Sea fleet, whose bailiwick extends down almost to Swatow and includes the Taiwan Strait; and the South Sea fleet, whose responsibility is everything from Swatow to the Gulf of Tonkin. The East Sea fleet, with 700 vessels, has twice the strength of either its northern or southern sister fleet as befits the guardian of the Yangtze and the watchdog over the Taiwan Strait.

There is also a naval air force of around 500 shore-based aircraft, which is made up of 100 Il-28 and Tu-2 light bombers, most equipped for carrying torpedoes, and 400 MIG-15, -17, -19 fighters. These are fully integrated into the air defense system.

The navy is a coastal-defense force with little capability of projecting its strength far from its mainland bases. Originally conceived as a defensive force against the US Navy, in late years it has become more concerned with the Soviet naval threat. In addition, the worldwide energy shortage has focused Peking's attention on the potential of offshore oil. In the last couple of years, the Chinese have denied that either Taiwan or Japan has any right to exploit the Senkaku Islands, and in January 1974, Chinese naval forces expelled a South Vietnamese force occupying the Paracel Islands. Peking is now putting forth claims to the Spratly Islands, which the Chinese call the Nan Sha Islands, some 700 miles south of Hainan. "Coastal defense" will become a somewhat elastic term if the Chinese navy undertakes to exercise a claim over the Spratly Islands, which are much nearer to South Vietnam, the Philippines, and Sabah in East Malaysia, then they are to the nearest point in the PRC.[19]

4. The Railway Corps.—The PLA has, in addition to the more usual engineering corps and signal corps, a special railway corps, probably because of the great importance of railroad transport in the logistics of the Chinese armed forces due to the lack of good highways and the shortage of motor vehicles. This corps is charged with the construction and maintenance of strategic railways, especially those going out to the periphery of the empire. For example, in the late 1950s, the railway corps built a line from Lanchow in northwest China to Urumchi, the capital of Sinkiang, located a thousand miles to the west, in order to tie that troublesome but valuable area closer to central China. The original intent was to extend the line to meet a Soviet rail line at the border of Sinkiang and Kazakhstan, but the deterioration of Sino-Soviet relations led the Chinese to end the line at Urumchi. The railway corps also constructed a rail line from Tatung northwards to the border of the Mongolian People's Republic and thus, connecting with a newly constructed railway in Mongolia, the PRC had a direct connection with the Trans-Siberian Railway at Ulan Ude, just east of Lake Baykal in the USSR. Since the Sino-Soviet split in the 1960s, this railway line has had much less traffic than originally anticipated.

The railway corps is well trained in the rapid repair of bombed trackage and destroyed bridges, a skill that was highly developed in keeping logistic lines open during the Korean conflict and was utilized in North Vietnam. All kinds of techniques, from the construction of bridges just below the surface of the water to prefabricated spans for nighttime installation, were developed by the corps, and there is no doubt of its abilities along this line. Estimates of the number of men from the railway corps who worked in North Vietnam go as high as 50,000, and this was Peking's main contribution in personnel to Ho Chi-minh's war against the south. Keeping the Nanning-Hanoi and the Hanoi-K'unming rail lines open was terribly important to the North Vietnamese as these were the main overland routes for supplies from mainland routes for supplies from mainland China to the beleaguered Hanoi regime.

[16]For an excellent account of the evolution of the Chinese Navy see John R. Dewenter, "China Afloat," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 50, No. 4 (July 1972), pp. 738-51.

[17]*Ibid.*, p. 746.

[18]Figures from Dewenter and from *The Military Balance, 1973-1974*, p. 47.

[19]David Bonavia, "Peking adamant over claim to islands," *London Times*, 6 February 1974.

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5. The People's Militia.—The role of the militia in the Communist scheme of things during the last 40 years has varied considerably. Between the establishment of the first Soviets in the late 1920s and the Japanese War in 1937, the militia was an elite force, recruited to protect the local Communist areas and to work closely with both the regular Red Army and the associated guerrillas.[20] During the Sino-Japanese War (1937-1945), the militia was organized as a local defense force to protect the Communist-controlled areas behind the Japanese lines and to aid the Red Army and its guerrilla units. By the end of the war, there were over two million in the militia. This enormous mass of militiamen was a reservoir for the rapid expansion of the Red Army during the civil war. Immediately following the defeat of the Nationalists, the militia was further expanded to help mop up the remaining Nationalist pockets and to help carry out the land reform movement. By this time, 1950, the militia had grown to a force of 5,500,000 men.[21] During the Korean intervention, hundreds of thousands of militiamen were used to guard the frontiers or to work in Korea itself, and by September 1951, the militia had grown to a strength of over 12 million men.[22] From 1954 until 1957, the period in which the PLA was being rapidly modernized, little was heard about the militia; the new "professionals" were not as enamored of that organization as were the old Yenan hands. In 1957, however, the militia got a shot in the arm when it was integrated closely with the reserve system; upon completion of their tour of duty, PLA conscripts were discharged into the militia. The Chinese give a figure of 30 million for the militia in 1957.

Then, in 1958, came the Great Leap Forward, the creation of the commune system, and the *chuan min chieh ping,* or "Everyone a Soldier" movement, all interconnected.[23] The Chinese maintain that, like the people's communes, the "Everyone a Soldier" movement was a spontaneous popular reaction to the US involvement in Lebanon and Jordan, although it is extremely doubtful that the hundreds of millions of peasants involved could have found either of those countries on a map of the world. The government claimed a total of 220 million people in the militia by January 1959, an exaggeration that matched the rest of the statistics emerging from Peking during the Great Leap Forward period. Apparently, there were several reasons for the creation of a gigantic militia: first, by closely tying the militia into the commune movement, it was thought possible to "militarize" the workers on the huge farms, to do it "by the numbers," so to speak; second, the movement fitted into Mao's concept of how to thwart an "imperialist" invasion of China, namely, to drown it in a vast sea of militiamen; and finally, it provided a way in which the "professional" zeal of many of PLA leaders could be overcome.

By June 1960, Marshal Lin Piao was citing the figure of 250 million men and women in the People's Militia.[24] A close look at the militia, however, reduces the awe initially inspired by the 250-million-man figure. The militia was composed of two categories, the "basic militia" made up of men between 16 and 32 and women from 17 to 22, and an "ordinary militia" of men from 33 to 50 and of women aged 23 to 50. In addition, there was a "rear reserve" of children under 15 and adults over 50 years of age. In general, each commune was organized into a militia regiment, each production brigade into a militia battalion, and a production team into a militia company. The actual number of people in each regiment, battalion, and company varied from region to region.[25] From a military point of view, only the "basic militia," or hard core, was potentially effective as a fighting force, and even in that category, relatively few were trained with actual weapons and engaged in target practice with loaded rifles. Probably between 10 and 20 million were in the hard-core militia and nowhere near that number received military training of much value.[26]

The disasters that overtook the Great Leap Forward and the ruinous state of agriculture resulting from the commune movement must have made the regime reluctant to put arms into the hands of the disgusted peasantry. At any rate, the "Everyone a Soldier" movement slowed down markedly in 1960. The various reports in the *Bulletin of Activities* for 1961 show some reappraisals of the role of the militia.[27]

By early 1961, the commanders of the military districts were being urged to give closer supervision

[20]See Gittings, *op. cit.*, pp. 202-224, for an excellent account of the development of the People's Militia from 1928 to the present time.

[21]Liu Yun-cheng, "The Militia in Chinese People's Revolutionary Wars," *Peking Review*, 21 August 1964.

[22]Chou En-lai, Report on 23 October 1951 to the People's Political Consultative Conference, New China News Agency, 2 November 1951, cited in Gittings, *op. cit.*, p. 207..

[23]George P. Jan, "Red China's Militia," *Military Review*, Vol. XLV, No. 3, (March 1965), p. 80.

[24]*Ibid.*, p. 82.

[25]*Ibid.*, pp. 82-83.

[26]General Griffith *(U.S. Policy with Respect to Mainland China*, p. 302) gives a figure of 10 million for the "hard-core" militia. He states that about half of them were ex-servicemen.

[27]See especially the "Report of Comrade Fu Ch'iu-tao on the Inspection of Work of the Honan Militia," in Cheng (editor), *The Politics of the Chinese Red Army*, pp. 116-123. Fu Ch'iu-tao found that Honan Province was supposed to have 19,980,000 militia members, over 39 percent of the population, but because the 1958 militia movement was so rapid, the organization was impractical. He goes on to cite numerous cases in which militia bands "rob, beat-up, and push around people, rape women, and practice seriously unlawful acts." Fu was head of the PLA's mobilization section and responsible for the militia.

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to the militia; i.e., the militia was being made subordinate primarily to the PLA again. But by early 1962, emphasis was again put on building up the militia, although that campaign was nothing like the all-out effort that had characterized the "Everyone a Soldier" movement in the 1958-1959 period. The new drive put the emphasis on military training for the hard core, and the recruitment was especially heavy in the southeast coastal area (Fukien and Kwangtung provinces) and in Sinkiang.

During the Cultural Revolution, the militia played only a minor role, probably because once the regular army was called in, the generals were not about to build up or allot important tasks to what they considered to be a poorly armed, poorly trained mob of peasants. The regulars have disliked the idea of a strong militia ever since the era of professionalism following the Korean War. Lin Piao, needing the loyalty of the generals, went along with them on this. In the aftermath of the Cultural Revolution, the PLA held enough political power to resist the buildup of the militia. Although the militia was still large in numbers,[28] its military training and equipment ranged from mediocre to abysmal.

In 1973, Mao, apparently more confident of his ability to keep a tight rein on the PLA, began to stress the militia. Radio Peking reported on 18 June 1973 that the whole country was carrying out Chairman Mao's directive to "build up China's militia organizationally, ideologically and economically." The militia is working together with the PLA in patrol, sentry, and general defense duties on China's frontiers and along its coasts, as well as working on engineering projects, railways, water conservancy and other tasks.[29] Then Mao really came on strong for his beloved militia. In a joint editorial in the *People's Daily* and the *Liberation Army Daily* on 29 September 1973, entitled "Organize the Militia Well" (significantly, on the eve of the October 1st national holiday celebrating the birth of the PRC), the millions in the People's Militia were called upon to ready themselves to fight a war in coordination with the regular armed forces, especially in the event of a surprise attack by the Soviet Union. The editorial stressed the necessity of strengthening the urban militia. All regional commanders were directed to "put their main energy" on training the militia.[30] H.D.S. Greenway, commenting on the editorial, pointed out that this was the first time since 1958 that such high-level emphasis had been put on the militia as a military force. The editorial's assertion that a well-trained and well-armed militia would be given equal importance with the field armies and local forces of the PLA seems to Greenway to be a move by Mao to get a powerful militia, under Party control, to offset the PLA's political power.[31] Joseph Lelyveld, reporting from Hong Kong, sees the stress on urban militia, long the stepchild in the overall militia organization, as an attempt to build an armed auxiliary to the Communist Party. He points out that Shanghai, Mao's most dependable base, was held up as a model for the organizing of urban militia. On the whole, the present militia buildup has more to do with internal power politics than preparation against a foreign threat. The urban militia units seem to have a command structure independent of the PLA, although they receive training and equipment from the regular army.[32]

6. Training and Education.—The experience of the Korean War taught the PLA leadership, or at least some of the leaders, several lessons, among them the value of literacy in a modern army. As long as the Red Army was engaged primarily in guerrilla-type warfare against either the Japanese or the Nationalists, and as long as it possessed only simple weapons, the problem of literacy was largely a matter of facilitating political indoctrination; i.e., training a nucleus of troops to keep the army as a whole on the ideological straight and narrow. If the Chinese soldiers captured in Korea were a good sample of the PLA in general, then literacy was not prevalent in the early 1950s.[33] As the PLA acquired the modern tools of war such as motor vehicles, automatic weapons, tanks, artillery, radios, radar, and aircraft, it became mandatory that the illiterate guerrilla warrior learn to read or be replaced by a literate soldier. In 1951, a vigorous campaign was launched throughout the PLA to eradicate illiteracy, and a simplified method of learning characters, invented by Chi Chien-hua, was used. It was claimed that a soldier could learn between 1,500 and 2,000 characters in fifteen days by this method,[34] a claim that smacks of overoptimism, to say the least. By the end of the Korean conflict, the PLA leadership was asserting that the majority of its soldiers could read the training manuals and had also learned elementary mathematics.

[28]One estimate of the size of the militia in 1972 was "15 million in communes, factories, schools, State organizations and enterprises." *Sunday Post-Herald* (Hong Kong), 23 July 1972.

[29]*South China Morning Post* (Hong Kong), 19 June 1973.

[30]*Baltimore Sun*, 30 September 1973.

[31]*Washington Post*, 7 October 1973.

[32]*New York Times*, 28 October 1973.

[33]Roy A. Gallant, "Why Red Troops Surrender in Korea," *The Reporter*, 5 August 1952, gives the figure of ten percent of the prisoners who knew 1,500 characters; i.e., who could read a training manual.

[34]Gittings, John, *The Role of the Chinese Army* (New York, Oxford University Press, 1967), p. 145.

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The role of Soviet military advisers in the modernization of the PLA is not too well documented, and neither is the story of just how many Chinese officers were trained in the Soviet Union; but there is little doubt that sizable numbers were involved in both activities. Estimates of the number of Soviet military advisers in China between 1950 and 1960 range up to 25,000, probably an excessive figure. The number probably reached a maximum during the latter part of the Korean War and the subsequent modernization period of the middle 1950s and then gradually tapered off in the late 1950s. According to the Chinese, the total number of Soviet technical experts, in all categories, withdrawn from China in 1960, came to only 1,390.[35] Therefore, the number of Soviet military advisers must have been small by that time. On the other hand, the value of the Soviet military advisers in China and of the training of PLA officers in Soviet military schools must have been invaluable for the Chinese armed forces during the transition from a guerrilla-type force into a modernized armed force capable of utilizing the technical tools of contemporary warfare.

As was mentioned in the last chapter, even while the PLA was attempting modernization, a resentment of the older officers was ever present—a resentment that manifested itself in the "man versus weapons" debate. In addition, the use of soldiers in nonmilitary tasks such as farming and construction work was resented by the new "professional" officers who maintained that training in the use of new weapons with their complicated technology was a full-time career. The "part-time" soldier (half laborer and half soldier) was being undertrained for his military job. To complicate things even more, there was the inordinate amount of time devoted to the ideological indoctrination of the soldiers, both officers and men. All in all, in comparison with either the Soviet armed forces or the NATO armies, the PLA allots less time to its soldiers for military training per se. Economic activities and political indoctrination take up sizable amounts of the Chinese soldier's time, and even in China, the day has only twenty-four hours.

Between 1951 and the early 1960s, the Chinese established a large number of military schools for the education of their soldiers and officers, especially in technical training. By 1962, there were at least 80 such schools. The list of these schools gives some idea of their coverage:

Marx-Lenin Political Academy, Peking
General Staff and War College, Nanking
General Military Academy, Harbin
Military Research Institute, Peking
Academy of Military Sciences, Peking
Political Schools (4 or more)
Public Security Schools (3 or more)
Advanced Infantry Schools (3 or more)
Basic Infantry Schools (11 or more)
Advanced Artillery School, Mukden
Artillery Schools (5 or more)
Armored Forces School (2 or more)
Naval Academy
Naval Training Schools (6 or more)
Engineering Schools (4 or more)
Air Defense Schools (4 or more)
Military Medical College, Peking
Military Medical Schools (8 or more)
Administration School, Peking
Logistics School, Peking
Finance Schools (2 or more)
Chemical Warfare Schools (3 or more)
Signal Schools (4 or more)
Ordnance Schools (5 or more)
Physical Training School, Canton
Railway Troops School
Submarine School
Other special purposes schools.[36]

How well the military educational system has fared in the last decade is a puzzling question, and all the outside observer can do is speculate. With the firing of P'eng Teh-huai in the autumn of 1959 and the reassertion of the primacy of politics over everything else by his successor, Lin Piao, the professionally oriented officers were hardly in the ascendency. On the other hand, Lin was the director of the main military educational institution during the Yenan period of the Red Army and also spent some years in the Soviet Union where he could examine Soviet military educational processes at first hand. The attack by the Maoist enthusiast on the educational system of China, especially in 1966 and 1967, which resulted in a shutdown of the schools and universities, apparently was never directed at the military schools. Even in China, however, military schools, especially those devoted to advanced technological education, must be somewhat dependent upon the general educational system, and it is hard to see how one system could flourish while the other went down the drain. The overwhelming adulation accorded the "thoughts of Chairman Mao" during the Lin Piao administration of the PLA resulted in an inordinate amount of time spent in political indoctrination at the expense of time previously devoted to technical training in the military schools and in the military units. Just how the memorization of Maoist platitudes was supposed to help aircraft mechanics, radar maintenance men, and submarine technicians in their day-to-day tasks is hard for the outside observer to comprehend, but

[35] *Peking Review*, 6 December 1963.

[36] *Communist China: Ruthless Enemy or Paper Tiger? A Bibliographic Survey* (Washington, D.C., Headquarters, Department of the Army, 1962), Appendix G; Joffe, *op. cit.*, p. 22.

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the Chinese media ground out endless accounts of how technicians were performing astonishing feats of technological legerdemain because of their mastery of the thoughts of mighty Mao. It may be that the military schools and the unit commanders were giving only lip service to this ideological garbage, but the fact that Lin Piao was then Mao's closest comrade-in-arms and head of the PLA makes it difficult to assume that none of the hysterical balderdash rubbed off on the PLA's educational and training systems.

Since the fall of Lin Piao and the advent of depoliticization of the PLA under Mao's direction, the line is now that the PLA should tend to its business of learning how to fight wars and the mastery of its weapon systems. Apparently, the officers and men are to take care of their professional duties and leave the politicking to the civilians. To many PLA commanders, this may be good news, although those who had come to occupy high political positions during and immediately after the Cultural Revolution may resent being sent back to the strictly military life.

The accounts of travellers in China who have been given a view of selected PLA units all stress the dual role of the PLA even today. The soldiers spend a lot of their time raising their own food and even manufacturing some of the items used by the army such as uniforms and equipment of a personal nature. Whether the troops in the more technical services such as the air force, the armored forces, and the airborne forces have to spend part of their time raising hogs is not known to the writer. John Burns, the most widely travelled reporter in China, wrote in September 1971 of an exhibit in Peking that showed the PLA engaged in just about every phase of civilian activity from breeding pigs to digging irrigation ditches, and even a group of MIG pilots harvesting grain in the fields beside the runways at their base.[37]

7. Political Controls in the PLA.—The PLA, like all Communist military organizations, has been since its birth, and still is, under stringent political controls. When Mao Tse-tung and Chu Teh joined forces in the Chingkangshan area in the spring of 1928, they immediately instituted a political control system: Chu Teh became the military commander, and Mao, the political commissar. Mao had plenty of precendents for this procedure. In 1918, Trotsky had created a political commissar system in the Soviet Red Army, initially to control the ex-Tsarist officers upon whom he depended for military skills, but who he felt needed careful watching to prevent treason. After the fighting was over, however, the system was retained; and when the Soviet advisers assisted in setting up the Whampoa Academy, the political officer became an integral part of China's new armies. Chou En-lai, for example, was the deputy director for political education at Whampoa, directly under Chiang Kai-shek.

Mao, building upon a decade of Communist experience, made the political commissar both the sparkplug and the ideological watchdog of the Chinese Red Army. In his view, politics was to be in command at all times and a "purely military view" was one of the major sins to be guarded against. Like Lenin and his associates in the USSR, Mao recognized the absolute necessity of military force in achieving political goals, and, in one of his most often quoted statements, said that "political power grows out of the barrel of the gun." But he then went on to say that the Party commands the gun and the gun shall never be allowed to command the Party. Mao was also fully aware that in a country engulfed in warlordism it would be the major task of the Party to keep the military obedient to its control. Thus from the very beginning, he emphasized and reemphasized the essential nature or the political control system within the Chinese Red Army.

The political officer, however, did much more than just keep the military officers in line with the Party's directives. He also educated the troops, watched out for their physical welfare, insisted upon the maintenance of good relations with the civilian population upon which the armies depended, and worked assiduously at morale building. The political officer in the Chinese Red Army was given the task of "selling" the revolution to both the Red Army itself and the population in general, and he did a first rate job in the period between 1928 and 1949.

During the first 20 years of the Red Army's existence, there was a harmonious relationship between the military and political officers. Ellis Joffe, in his excellent study, summarizes the reasons for this success story:

> First, both the military commanders and political commissars were veteran party members, with much the same experience and background in both political and military work. Second, the close interrelation of political and military tasks in the milieu of insurrection gave little basis for conflict. Third, in many cases the commander and the commissar were one and the same person.[38]

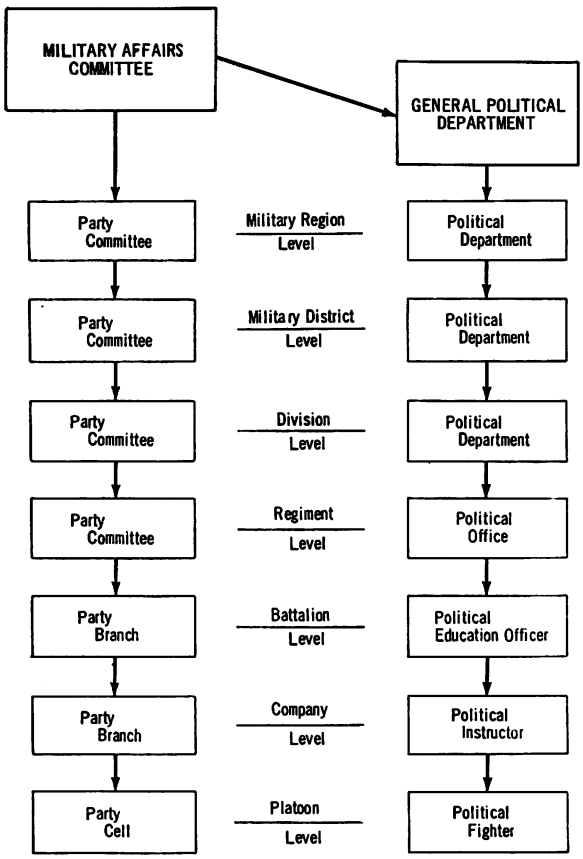
During the last year of the civil war, the influx of

[37] *Christian Science Monitor*, 11 September 1971.

[38] *Party and Army: Professionalism and Political Control in the Chinese Officer Corps, 1949-1964*, p. 68.

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Chart 3. Political Controls in the PLA.



ex-Nationalist soldiers into the PLA diluted the ideological purity of the army and reduced the ratio of Party members to nonmembers drastically. Then came the Korean intervention, followed by the modernization of the PLA during the 1954-1959 period, and less emphasis was put on the political work in the armed forces. The attainment of professional skill was the line for the time being. Several factors combined to diminish the stature of the political officer in comparison with the military officer: the tendency to emulate the Soviet model, the influx of youngsters into the ranks under the new conscription law, and the professionalism of the officer corps with the acquisition of new and more complex weapon systems.

Mao, apparently alarmed at the situation that was developing in the PLA, fired the Minister of National Defense, P'eng Teh-huai, in September 1959 and replaced him with Lin Piao. From 1960 on, the trend was vigorously reversed and political controls were beefed up to an almost unbelievable degree. Under "Chief" Lin's guidance, ideological purity (complete acceptance of the Maoist line) became vastly more important than professional expertness.

Until the Cultural Revolution raised hob with the internal structure of the Party, the political control of the PLA centered in the Military Affairs Committee of the Central Committee (MAC), which was closely connected with the Standing Committee of the Politburo. The MAC controlled the hierarchy of Party committees which existed at all levels from the regiment to the military region headquarters. (See Chart 3, Political Controls in the PLA.) The Party committee in any unit, be it a regiment or a corps, consisted of the military commander of the unit, the political commissar, and one or more members of the unit's staff. The Party committees, directly controlled by MAC, insured absolute obedience to the Party leadership in Peking.[39]

The MAC also had a direct line of authority to the General Political Department in PLA headquarters, thus giving it a second control over the various command levels within the armed forces. Each echelon had its own political department, subordinate to the one above, with a number of sections within it for such things as education, political indoctrination, and counterespionage. The heart of the system was the political group at the battalion, company or platoon level where the eyeball-to-eyeball indoctrination of the troops took place.

To make the system work effectively, there has to be a high ratio of Party members in the armed forces, especially at the company and platoon levels. In 1928, Mao suggested a 50-50 ratio of Party members to non-Party members in combat units, and later the target was reduced to one Party member to two non-Party men. By 1950, it was down to one in four, and the new draft system in the mid-1950s resulted in a rank-and-file too young to be Party members.[40] It was necessary to beef up the New Democratic Youth League's role in the PLA, just as the Komsomols came to play an important part in the ideological training of the young soldiers in the Soviet armed forces. By mid-1953, membership in the New Democratic Youth League had increased to a million.

Then came the Cultural Revolution, the destruction of the Party *apparatus,* and the demise of the New Democratic Youth League. The commanders of the military regions and districts, through their control of first the Revolutionary Committees and then the provincial Party Committees, came to wear both the military and political hats in their respective regions and districts. At the 9th Party Congress

[39]Gittings, *op. cit.*, pp. 106-111, and Joffe, *op. cit.*, pp. 57-72, contain excellent descriptions of the political control system in the PLA.

[40]Gittings, *op. cit.*, pp. 110-11.

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in April 1969, the military commanders obtained a considerable amount of political power at the center as well in the boondocks. At this point, it became a conundrum, as far as outside observers were concerned, as to who was controlling whom: the military the Party or the Party the military.

Mao's purge of Lin Piao and his top colleagues at the center in September 1971, apparently with the acquiescence of the majority of the regional commanders, and his subsequent shuffling of the region commanders in January 1974, would appear to demonstrate a considerable depoliticization of the PLA. The Party seems to be in a stronger position today vis-á-vis the military than at any time since the middle of the Cultural Revolution. The frequency with which the words "apparently," "seems," and "appear" occur in this paragraph, however, reveals the tentative nature of any assumptions concerning the military-Party relationship in China today.

8. China's Nuclear Capability.—Few events in the last decade aroused more apprehensions throughout the world than did the detonation of an atomic device by the Chinese on 16 October 1964. On 17 June 1967, five nuclear tests later, they exploded a thermonuclear weapon. Not only had China joined the nuclear club, but it had also progressed from fission to fusion in less than three years, an extraordinary feat, even granting the benefits that accrue to a late comer in any technological field. Although still economically underdeveloped and predominantly an agrarian nation, China has shown a first-rate capability in research, development, and production of nuclear weapons over the last ten years.

Upon coming to power in late 1949, the Peking regime had moved rapidly toward the development of a nuclear capability. It signed an agreement with the Soviet Union to set up a Nonferrous Metals and Rare Metals Corporation to exploit the uranium deposits in Sinkiang and also established an Institute of Atomic Energy in the Chinese Academy of Sciences in Peking. The Korean War delayed the scientific program, but by 1954, attention was again focused on scientific development. The regime encouraged expatriate Chinese scholars to return to China and many did, including Dr. Tsien Hsuehshen, an expert in nuclear physics and missiles, who was educated at California Institute of Technology and had taught at Massechusetts Institute of Technology and who is now in charge of the Chinese missile program.

A year later, in 1955, the Soviets helped the Chinese set up a chemical separation plant in Sinkiang for the production of U-235, and the Sino-Soviet Atomic Cooperation Treaty was signed in which the Soviets agreed to provide the Chinese with a heavy-water reactor fueled with enriched uranium at the Peking Institute, a reactor which was fully operational by September 1958.[41] The same agreement also provided for a cyclotron for the Peking Institute. In 1956, a contingent of 21 Chinese scientists went to do research at the Joint Institute for Nuclear Research at Dubna in the USSR. Later that year, the Soviets helped set up 39 additional atomic research centers throughout China.

In December 1958, there was issued a "Draft Twelve-Year Plan for the Development of Science and Technology," drawn up by 600 leading scientists and giving high priorities to atomic energy, electronics, and jet propulsion.[42] In 1959, things got sticky between Peking and Moscow, and in mid-1960, the Soviets stopped any further assistance. Whether China had decided to go it alone by 1958 or 1959, the events of 1960 left no choice.

By 1960, China had enough trained personnel and, thanks to the Soviet assistance between 1950 and 1959, enough scientific equipment to launch an accelerated program for the development of nuclear weapons without outside help. It also had rich uranium deposits to draw upon. Between 1959 and 1962, reactors were built at Wuhan, in Shensi and Kirin provinces, at Paotow, and at Chungking; and a very important installation, a gaseous diffusion plant at Lanchow, which probably cost in the neighborhood of $1.5 billion. This plant, when fully operational, could produce enough weapon-grade U-235 for a 20-kiloton bomb in a little over a month.[43] Numerous (more than 40) other chemical separation plants were also built.

On 16 October 1964, the Chinese carried out their first atomic explosion, a low-yield bomb of around 20 kilotons, and, to the amazement of all, they used U-235 as the fissile material instead of plutonium. There is some debate as to whether the U-235 was produced at the Lanchow gaseous diffusion plant or cannibalized from the Soviet-supplied fuel for the reactor at the Peking Institute.[44] A second explosion, a low intermediate yield (between 20 and 200 kilotons), on 13 May 1965, also using U-235, makes the discussion of the source of the fissile material in the first one academic as the material for the second one must have come from the Lanchow installation. The second one may have

[41] Lewis A. Frank, "Nuclear Weapons Development in China," *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, Vol XXII, No. 2 (January 1966), p. 13; Frank says that the reactor could produce enough fissionable material for a 20-kiloton bomb in a year and a half.

[42] *Ibid.*, p. 14; Frank thinks the Chinese had by then decided to go it alone in the development of nuclear weapons and the means of delivery.

[43] *Ibid.*, p. 14.

[44] See the discussion by Frank, *loc. cit.*, p. 14, and a series of letters in the *Bulletin* in the following issues.

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been airdropped.[45] In the next two years, there were four more tests: 9 May 1966, an intermediate yield of between 200 and 1,000 kilotons; 27 October 1966, a low intermediate yield of between 20 and 200 kilotons; 28 December 1966, a test which indicated a major step toward a thermonuclear device which produced a yield of around 300 kilotons; and 17 June 1967, a thermonuclear device in the megaton range.[46] The Joint Committee on Atomic Energy came to the conclusion that the Chinese "now have the capability to design a multimegaton thermo-nuclear device suitable for delivery by aircraft."[47] It was a good guess, as they did air drop a hydrogen bomb with a three megaton yield on 27 December 1968.[48] Between December 1968 and June 1973, the Chinese carried out 7 more tests for a total of 15 up to that time.[49]

Inasmuch as the Lanchow plant has been producing weapon-grade U-235 since 1963 and the Yumen reactor complex has been yielding plutonium since 1967, the availability of fissile material is probably no longer a serious constraint on the production of nuclear warheads. Admiral Moorer, former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, stated in March 1973 that the PRC probably had a few hundred nuclear weapons and that the stockpile is expected to be increased rapidly in the next few years as fissionable material production facilities are expanded.[50] Judging from the nuclear tests to date, the Chinese seem especially interested in thermonuclear warheads in the three-megaton range for delivery by either missile or aircraft.[51]

The Chinese seem to be working on a "triad" of delivery systems: aircraft, land-based missiles, and SLBMs. The elderly I1-28s could be used to deliver weapons on short-range missions, but the F-9, in its strike-craft role, has a radius of 500 miles and the Chinese version of the Tu-16 has a radius of over 1,600 miles. In the missile field, the Chinese have a single-stage MRBM (1,500-mile range), a single-stage IRBM (1,500- to 2,500-mile range), and a multistage IRBM (3,500-mile range). All missiles now deployed are liquid fuelled. The PLA's missile arm, the Second Artillery, appears to have deployed (in late 1973) around 50 MRBMs, 20 or so single-stage IRBMs, and a few multistage IRBMs.[52] There are no SLBMs as yet, although Admiral Moorer expected them to become available in the mid-1970s, simultaneously with the advent of solid-fuelled IRBMs.[53] Predictions of the imminence of a Chinese ICBM (6,000-mile range) have been coming out annually for a number of years, but none seems available as yet.

The Soviets, with Moscow and most of the European USSR within the range of the Chinese multistage IRBM, are worried about the latter's acquisition of an "assured second strike" capability in the near future when the birds are in hardened silos or in caves. The Soviet option of that well-publicized "surgical strike" against the Chinese nuclear capability would then be less an option than a desperate and dangerous gamble.[54]

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[45]Conclusions of the Joint Committee on Atomic Energy, *Congressional Record*, 3 August 1967, H9931.

[46]*Ibid.*

[47]*Ibid.*

[48]Leo Yueh-Yun Liu, *China as a Nuclear Power in World Politics* (New York, Taplinger, 1972), p. 37.

[49]See Harry Gelber, *Nuclear Weapons and Chinese Policy* (London, IISS, 1973, Adelphi Paper No. 99), pp. 36-37, for a list of the 15 nuclear tests with dates, yields, delivery systems used, and location.

[50]Statement before the Defense Appropriations Subcommittee of the Senate Committee on Appropriations, 26 March 1973, p. 32.

[51]Gelber, *op. cit.*, pp. 14-15.

[52]*Ibid.*, p. 15.

[53]Moorer, *op. cit.*, p. 27.

[54]See Gelber, *op. cit.*, pp. 34-36 for a good discussion of the Sino-Soviet situation.

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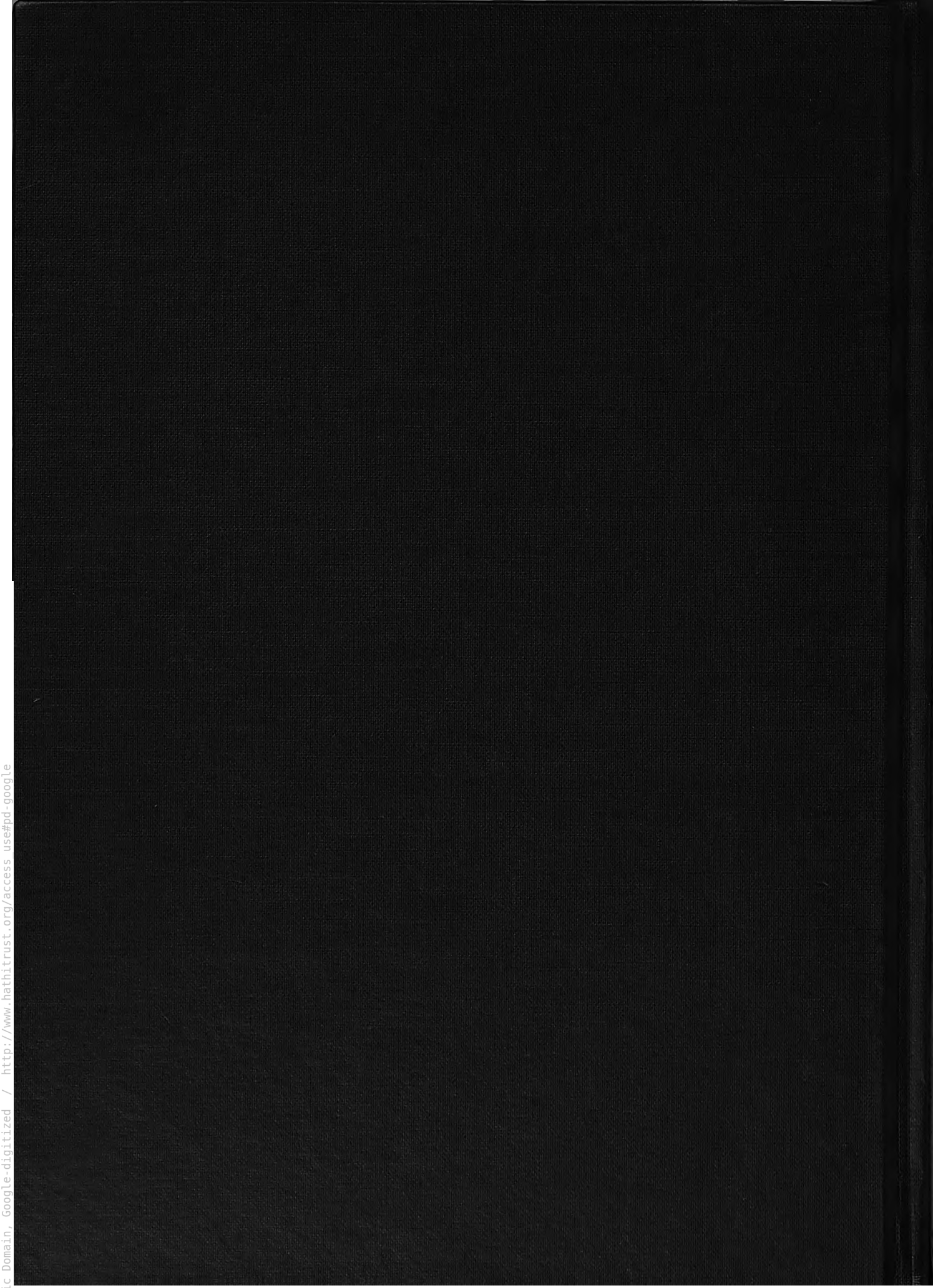
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